

Making the most of VIP Visits

Why?

...and why it's first.

- Why is the visit important to you?
 - What benefits do you get out of it?
- Media coverage
- Fundraising
- Sense of momentum
- Motivating activists

Why?

- What key message are you hoping to get out of it?
 - On message, in volume, over time!
- What is your visual?
- Remember:
 - REASON
 - MESSAGE
 - VISUAL
- Conceive your ideal media coverage!

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg: Featherstone is ‘the best local champion’ for Hornsey and Wood Green.



“It doesn’t surprise me Labour have brought an outsider in because this is the local Labour party whose record is so lamentable. This is the Labour party that can’t be trusted with peoples finances, this is the party that is driving local shops to the wall by inexplicably jacking up parking prices.”

<http://bit.ly/11vS3GF>

Who?

- Know your VIP– **They aren't all the same!**
- How does that person work with your key message?
- Where are appropriate places to take your VIP?
- Who would be interested in talking to that VIP?
- **What is that person's expertise?**
- **Some examples....**

Who?



- Steve Webb – Pensions Minister
- Pensions policy, state pensions and Pension Credit
- Auto enrolment
- Child maintenance
- Social justice - family policy, including flexible working, childcare and maternity benefits.
- Imagine where you would take him.

Who?



- Norman Lamb - Minister of State for Care and Support
- Dementia
- Local health care
- Adult social care
- Carers
- End of life care
- Mental health services
- Prison services
- Imagine where you would take him.

Where?

- Where fits with your key local message?
- Where gives the best visual and the correct context?
 - A landfill might be the story, but is it the best picture?
 - A school might be nice, but is it fee paying?
- What is the visual you want out of the event at the end of it?
 - Go with a visual in mind!
 - **Don't be afraid to tell the local media what you want the picture to be.**

Visuals

- The good, the bad and the ugly
 - Good visuals
 - Engaging
 - Clear Message
 - Positive
 - Bad Visuals
 - Inappropriate content
 - Poor context

The good....



The good....



The good....



The bad.....



The bad.....



The ugly....



The ugly....



When?

Example itinerary – Nick visit to Eastleigh

14:30 16:00 SO1 car from Putney to Dynamo School of Gymnastics (Hamble Sports College, Satchell Lane, SO31 4NE, Tim Snowball in car)

15:30 LD Candidate Mike Thornton and Eastleigh Borough Council Leader Keith House arrive at Dynamo (Alison Suttie aideing, Peter Wall driving)

16:00 16:05 Greeted at entrance to Gymnasium by Dynamo School organisers Keith and Debbie Richardson, LD Candidate Mike Thornton & Eastleigh Borough Council Leader Keith House (KR advancing, TS staffing)

Briefing on story of Dynamo School of Gymnastics whilst touring gym

16:05 16:20 Meet young people training in gymnastics squad (KR / TS staffing)

Meet pre-school group at coaching session and say hello to community **group celebrating child's birthday party** (KR / TS staffing)

16:20 16:35 Interview with Daily Echo (James Holt coordinating interview / TS staffing)

16:35 16:40 Exit gym, SO1 car to Hamble gravel pit photo opp (Roy Underwood Pavilion, Baron Road, Hamble-le-Rice, SO31 4RA, Mike Thornton in car)

16:40 16:50 Photo at Hamble gravel pit with Mike Thornton and Keith House (KR advancing, TS staffing)

When?

Example itinerary – Nick visit to Eastleigh

- 16:50 17:15 SO1 car to LD campaign HQ (Unit 16, Shakespeare Business Centre, Hathaway Close, SO50 4S, MT in car)
- 17:15 17:20 Sign in at campaign HQ and thank volunteers working in clerical area (HQ downstairs, KR advancing)
- 17:20 17:25 Thank core team working in office (HQ upstairs, KR / TS staffing)
- 17:25 17:35 Private campaign update briefing with Deputy Campaign Manager Dan Purchase and Agent Keith House (HQ upstairs, TS staffing)
- 17:35 17:40 Private meeting with Rumi Verjee (HQ upstairs, TS staffing)
- 17:40 17:45 Video for social media campaign (HQ upstairs, Ben Rathe filming, KR staffing)
- 17:45 18:00 Speech to volunteers in front of Sky pooled TV camera (HQ downstairs, KR / TS staffing, JH coordinating media)
- 18:00 19:15 SO1 car to Putney (TS in car tbc)

The media...

- Make sure you know what your media message is for the visit.
- Prepare a press release and give it to the journalists before the event.
- Take time to speak to the journalists before the visit to brief them, and make yourself available to answer questions at the visit as well.
- Think about media deadlines! When does your local paper go to press? Can they reserve a slot for you?
- How close is the nearest TV studio? What time do broadcast need footage in the can?
- Are you doing media interviews after the visit? Have you left enough time for that?

How?

- What do you think needs to go into a briefing?
- Bear in mind, your VIP may know very little about your venue, hosts, message, local issues, press coverage etc.
- **Assume nothing, but don't overload them.**
- Remember:
 - REASON
 - MESSAGE
 - VISUAL

Follow through

- Don't forget to thank your hosts!
- Consolidate links

REMEMBER

- Be clear on your objective
- Plan your timing carefully.
- Pre brief the media if involved
- Match your visit to your VIP
 - high profile or not?
 - Expertise

The reason for the visit is to benefit YOUR local campaign - so make sure it does!