

Appendix F

Information on Membership Recruitment and Activation from the Labour Party of Britain

Recruiting members

Introduction

Helping to recruit new members is one of the main ways of enabling continuous regeneration of the Labour Party. New people mean new ideas, new energy and new enthusiasm. We need to examine our organisation to work out how we can build recruitment activity as a central part of our work, and once recruited how we can specially cater for new members. We are particularly keen to recruit more women and young members to the party.

Recruitment activity can be part of all work which involves contact with the local community. Promoting doorstep and telephone contact with Labour supporters in a range of ways will provide recruitment opportunities. For example:

- listening canvasses as part of local campaigns. Increasingly Labour is interested in consulting with local Labour supporters about their view on key policy issues. Such listening canvasses provide an opportunity for contact with Labour supporters between elections and build interest in joining the party.
- petitions on key issues. Organising local petitions will often stimulate interest in joining the party. Door to door work can help establish contact with the local community and build support for Labour's views. Recent examples such as pit closure campaigns, health campaigns, fighting mass unemployment and VAT on domestic fuel show how petitions can stimulate interest in joining the party.
- organising public events on policy issues. Promoting the Labour Party in your local community by holding public meetings, running street stalls and lobbying local institutions such as health authorities can help stimulate interest in joining Labour.

Preliminary review

You can start with a preliminary review which asks questions such as:

- is membership increasing or decreasing?
- how many members joined in the last year?
- what is the proportion of women members and how can this be increased?
- how many members left in the last year?
- what is the profile of people joining and leaving?
- how easy is it to join the Labour Party?
- are special efforts made to run local recruitment campaigns?
- what recruitment methods have proved successful?

These questions may provide useful information which can then help determine what type of campaign you are going to run.

Planning the campaign

There is no substitute for face to face campaigning to recruit new

members. You can use telephone campaigns to complement doorstep work. In these materials we have outlined the ways to do both. The telephone can be an alternative for meeting members on the doorstep, especially in certain conditions. For example:

- in areas where it is difficult to canvass. (blocks of flats with entryphones, accommodation above shops, remote rural areas, elderly people unwilling to open doors)
- where volunteers wish to avoid going out on dark nights or in bad weather

You and your recruitment team must decide the most useful method. You may decide to run doorstep and telephone canvassing side by side where you have the resources.

Doorstep recruitment

You will need to provide for the following in your recruitment plan:

- targets: identify the geographical areas which you will cover and the Labour promises within those areas from your canvass returns
- materials: produce a letter or leaflet relevant to your target audience
- timetable: work out a recruitment timetable which will include building and briefing your team, distribution of recruitment leaflets, follow-up canvassing, assessment of progress

Running your campaign will require consistent effort by your recruitment team during the weeks you have allocated to cover the targeted areas. Make sure that each of your recruiters has got:

- membership application forms with up-to-date subscription rates
- a membership receipt book
- a list of Labour supporters to be canvassed
- the time and place of the next local branch meeting together with the name, address and phone number of the branch secretary and the branch programme for the coming months.

Telephone recruitment

If you have decided to opt for a telephone recruitment campaign you will need the right facilities and very careful planning:

- targets - you will need to select the areas to cover and list the Labour promises in those areas
- telephone numbers - you will need to allocate adequate time to look up numbers for the target addresses selected.
- access to telephones - you should plan access to a bank of telephones if possible, (perhaps in a regional or union office).
- scripts for telephone canvassers - provide a script for volunteers and brief them how to use it.
- mailings for those interested in joining. These should include membership forms, a freepost envelope and Labour Party literature.
- timetable - work out a recruitment timetable which will include identifying targets, looking up numbers, making contact and follow-up mailing

Recruitment doorstep canvassing

Toolkit: recruiting members

Be natural and friendly, but to the point.

Introduce yourself and say you're from the local Labour party.

Check that you are speaking to the right person - 'I understand that you normally vote Labour at elections'.

Thank the voter for supporting Labour.

Remind the voter about the special leaflet sent before your visit.

Explain what joining involves: how much it will cost, and the kind of people they will meet.

If they say 'yes', thank them and help them fill in the application form. Ask if they can pay now - full or part payment at least.

Give them the date, time and venue of your next meeting or social, so that they feel welcome. Offer to accompany them and introduce them to the party.

If they say they 'will think about it', leave them a form with the party's freepost address and say you would be happy to visit again later.

Remember to thank them for continuing to be a Labour supporter.

Measurable targets

<i>Targets</i>	<i>Action</i>
Membership Recruitment 10 per cent increase Postal Votes Register Fundraising Constituency Target Branch Targets Electoral Registration	

Broader objectives

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Action</i>
Develop new techniques telephone canvassing Involving new members special new members meetings Holding regular political education and training sessions e.g. training branch officers policy discussions computer training Making meetings more interesting - review best practice	

Recruitment letter

Toolkit: recruiting members

Dear Friend,

I am writing to you to thank you for supporting Labour in the recentelection - and to invite you to join the Labour Party.

Like our other supporters I am sure you have watched the Tories failures with increasing concern - millions on the dole, a declining health service and education system and a bleak future for many young people.

Labour wants a better society where there is full employment, a high quality health service and an education system which liberates individual potential. We need to transform our economy into a high-tech economy ready for the 21st century.

This task is urgent and vital and we need your support now.

I am asking you to join Labour today. Your subscription will help support our campaigning work.

As a member, you will be informed about national and local Labour activity, you can attend Labour meetings and join our social events. You can have your say in debates on Labour's future and help elect Labour's leaders and local candidates.

If you do want to join Labour then fill in the enclosed form and give it to your local recruiter, who will be calling in the next few days.

You can make a real difference.

Yours sincerely,

BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

Recruitment telephone canvass - general approach

Toolkit: recruiting memb

- Be pleasant
- Be positive

Do

- Smile
- it makes a difference to how you sound
- Introduce yourself clearly
- Speak slowly and distinctly
- Keep to the point
- Be a good listener
- Use the name of the person you are calling
- Say thank you when appropriate

Don't

- Rush
- Engage in lengthy conversations
- Speak in monotonous voice
- Don't use a special telephone voice
- Eat, drink, smoke or chew gum
- Argue

Involving new members

Toolkit: involving members

Checklist

A welcoming leaflet

An invitation to a constituency or branch new members meeting

A personal visit from a branch member

A members' questionnaire asking how they might help

Regular members surveys to find out what they think

Making meetings more interesting to encourage attendance

Issue a branch programme dealing with Labour's key priorities

Get members involved in practical activities e.g. delivering members' notices, helping out at fundraising events, delivering local newsletters

Hold regular social events.

Running the branch

Introduction

Labour party branches are the key unit of Labour party organisation. It's at the branch that new members are welcomed, discussions of policy issues take place, local councillors are selected, election campaigns are run, links with local community organisations are forged and members take up local problems.

This section of the regeneration pack should help you plan a lively and interesting branch programme and involve new members in the work of your Labour party. Certain jobs are particularly important, especially the chair, secretary and treasurer. (Remember that by rule at least two of the officers of the branch shall be women.) With an efficient division of labour allied with co-operative working the branch should flourish as a centre for Labour party activity.

A branch development plan

The main elements of your branch development plan will vary with what stage of the election cycle you are at. However, it should be possible for the branch to aim to achieve a series of objectives during the calendar year. For example:

- new members. Make sure all new members are contacted personally as soon as they join. Send new members details of branch meetings and branch officers and a short introduction to the work of the branch. Hold a social for new members.
- membership recruitment and retention. Designate certain times of the year for special efforts on membership. For example:
 - a recruitment drive during Red Rose Week in
 - new members involved in election campaigns in April.
 - a recruitment drive in conference week to
 - members as well as attracting new members.
- Try to link your membership campaigns with specific campaign issues.
- Making meetings more interesting. Devise an attractive programme based on what members want to discuss. Survey your members to find out their concerns. Think particularly about women members. How many attend? Are meetings held at a place and time to attract women? How easy is it to participate in meetings and how welcome are women members made to feel?
- Preparing for election campaigns. The central activity every Spring when you have elections. Build a network of volunteers. Make sure everyone is trained.
- Local campaigning. Try to build some contact with the electorate between elections. Try a listening survey or organise a door to door petition. Produce a newsletter for all voters.

- Socialise. Organise regular social events.
- Fundraising. Organise a range of fundraising events.

Involving members

One of the great challenges for a democratic socialist party is to promote participative democracy. The constant involvement of members in policy development, local campaigning and building the Labour party is vital to the quality of democracy in the party and the ability of the party to fight and win elections. This means attracting new members into activity, it means holding interesting meetings, it means providing the opportunity for political debate about local and national issues, it means making links throughout the local community and engaging in regular dialogue with local voters. All this requires careful planning.

New members

We need to find a variety of techniques for engaging new members in our work, for example:

- a welcoming leaflet as soon as they join
- an invitation to a constituency new members meeting with the local Member of Parliament or candidate
- special personal visits by the local branch members
- a skills audit of areas in which they might help
- regular membership surveys to find out what members think
- making meetings more interesting to attract new members to attend

Making meetings more interesting

The secret to making meetings more interesting is in the way meetings are planned.

- you need a programme of interesting subjects based on Labour's key priorities - the economy, unemployment, housing, health, education, environment, crime, democracy etc
- you need some good visiting speakers, remember your local MP or candidate and local MEP or candidate
- you should stick to your intention to allocate half your branch meeting to discussing the issue for the month
- you might try new formats for meetings from time to time for example joint meetings with other branches, meetings open to the general public or breaking meetings into small groups or study circles for part of the time.

Manageable tasks

Many members are happy to engage in Labour party activity without regularly attending meetings. Our job is to keep them engaged in supportive activity with a view to building our local election effort.

The skill of the local organiser is to assess what help members are prepared to provide and mobilise them to provide it. This may involve:

- delivering member's notices before branch meetings

- helping out at fund-raising events
- helping with the street stall
- helping with canvassing at election time
- attending social events
- joining in local campaign work on key issues
- delivering local newsletters

The creation of this tier of active Labour members is essential in building election organisation.

A branch programme

You may find the following hints useful for helping you to set up an annual branch programme:-

- agree a programme of subjects with members. Hold a special discussion at the branch dealing with what subjects they want to discuss and debate. Pay particular attention to issues which local women are concerned about.
- agree that the branch will allocate half the time available at meetings to discussion of a special subject at each branch meeting. (it may be a good idea to allocate the first part of the meeting for discussions like this).
- allocate responsibilities in the branch for preparing discussions and inviting visiting speakers
- link your local work with the national campaigning and consultation work of the party
- look out for relevant newspaper cuttings and articles which may help your discussions. Remember Labour Party News.
- think about varying the formats for your discussions (you might try running discussions based on small group activity)
- keep your members informed in your monthly meeting notice

The role of branch officers

One of the main principles of Labour party work is to work co-operatively. In this way tasks are shared and the workload is lightened for all. Branch officers have a particular responsibility for organising the co-operative working of the branch. Co-operative working will include:

- planning meeting agendas in consultation with branch members
- planning and running the local campaign activity of the branch
- organising regular social events which encourage involvement
- running recruitment campaigns
- organising education sessions
- promoting involvement with the local community

In order to ensure the efficient operation of the branch certain tasks are allocated to specific officers. This division of Labour should encourage co-operative working. As we have mentioned half the branch officers shall be women. Their involvement will ensure that women's concerns are effectively represented in the work of the branch and that all our branches pay special attention to reaching out to women voters.

The role of branch officers

Toolkit: running the branch

Branch secretary

- calls the meetings (and arranges for the distribution of meeting notices)
- draws up the agenda for meetings, (in consultation with branch officers)
- records the decisions of the branch and takes appropriate action
- receives correspondence to the branch
- is the main link with the constituency

Branch chair

- conducts meeting and tries to strike a balance between getting the business done efficiently and encouraging democratic debate
- encourages all members to participate, especially new members, and guards against meetings being dominated by one or two individuals, or speakers rambling on
- makes sure that when decisions are taken everyone understands what they are voting on
- arranges appropriate follow-on work in conjunction with branch officers

Branch treasurer

- holds the branch cheque book
- encourages fundraising activities
- receives money for membership and sends it to HQ
- transfers funds to the local constituency
- keeps a record of branch accounts

Branch development plan

Toolkit: running the branch

New members - devise a system which enables personal contact as soon as they join

- special personal visit by local branch member
- invite them to a social event
- keep them informed of life of the branch

Membership recruitment & retention - designate certain times of year for special efforts on membership

Making meetings more interesting - plan an attractive programme based on what members want to discuss

Preparing for elections - plan your election activity well in advance. Build a network of volunteers. Keep your delivery systems ticking over

Local campaigning - try to build some contact with the electorate between elections. Try a local survey

Social events - plan regular social events

Fundraising - Organise a range of fundraising events

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