



Creating a petition in Action Network

It's time to set up a campaign action. Action Network currently has two ways of doing this – A **Petition**, and a **Letter Campaign**.

A **Petition** is a standard action to a named target, or targets, where you deliver or send the petition at a time of your choice. A Letter Campaign is a more complex, and involves multiple targets like elected representatives, which can be matched to your location. See our separate guide on Letter Campaigns.

When you're ready to create your petition, you can follow this template:

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/template-petition>

Contents

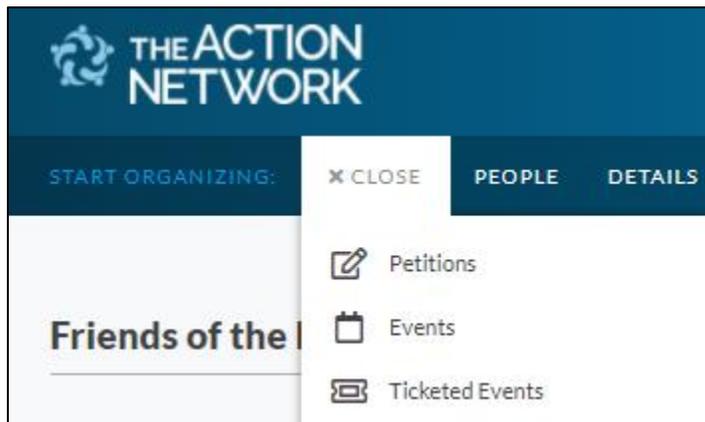
Getting started	2
Adding content to your petition	3
Titles, target and images	3
Your call to action	4
Add creator	5
Adding your petition text	5
The Goal Slider	5
The form	6
The thank you page	7
Sharing options	7
Adding content to the thank you page	7
Managing your petition	8
Useful options	8
Extra options	9

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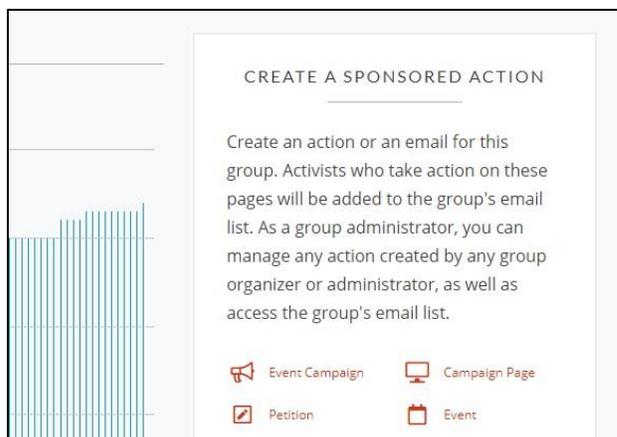
Getting started

There are two ways to begin:

- a) Choose **Petitions** from the **Actions** of the menu.



- b) From the **Create a sponsored** action menu on the right-hand side of your group's main hub page select **Petition**



You'll then be taken to a screen where you can set up your petition. You'll need to enter some details, from the top to the bottom.

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Adding content to your petition

The screenshot shows the 'Create A Petition' interface on the Action Network website. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'ATLANTIC FRIENDS OF THE EARTH > MANAGE PETITION > PETITION SIGN > PETITION THANK YOU'. The 'Action Language' is set to 'English'. The main heading is 'Create A Petition:'. Below this, there is a text input field for 'ADMINISTRATIVE TITLE (OPTIONAL)' containing 'Tom's test petition'. The 'TITLE OF YOUR PETITION *' field contains 'Tell Councillor Tom Wright to back stronger recycling targets for Bigtown'. The 'WHO ARE YOU PETITIONING? *' field contains 'Tom Wright'. There is a button for 'EDIT BANNER IMAGE (OPTIONAL)'. Below that is a rich text editor with a toolbar (HTML, Format, Align, B, I, S, Lists, Image, Video, Table, Link, Line) and the text: 'WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? * Bigtown's beaches are drowning in waste. Every day hundreds of bottles, cans, containers and bits of packaging end up in the sea instead of in a recycling bin. Having recycling facilities along our shoreline for everyone to use could make the world of difference. But there's not a recycling bin in sight on the beachfront. It's just rubbish. Every year we send tonnes of waste from Bigtown to be burnt at Hugetown incinerator - much of which could easily be recycled. Can you take 2 minutes to ask Tom Wright - the leader of the Bigtown Council to up its game so we're not languishing at the bottom of the recycling league table.' Below the text editor are two sections: 'PETITION BY' with an 'ADD CREATOR' button, and 'SPONSORED BY' with a dropdown menu showing 'Atlantic Friends of the Earth'. On the right side, there is a progress bar showing '50,000 Signatures Collected' and a goal of 100,000. Below the progress bar is a 'SIGN THIS PETITION' form with fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Email *', 'Zip/Postal Code *', 'Name on the card', and 'Street Address'. At the bottom, there is a URL field containing 'https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/tell-brigt' and two buttons: 'SAVE & VIEW' and 'SAVE AND GO TO NEXT STEP'.

Titles, target and images

Administrative title – this isn't publicly visible by anyone else. You can use it so you can easily find your work within Action Network eg. Plastics petition, Joe Bloggs MP waste petition

Title of your petition – this is the title people will see. Make sure it includes an active verb and references the target of your action or campaign goal. For example,

Tell Councillor Tom Wright to back stronger recycling targets for Bigtown
is stronger than
Bigtown needs to recycle more

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Who are you petitioning – Add your target here. Who is the petition aimed at?

Add banner image (optional) – you can add a banner image for your petition. Using an eye-catching relevant image will make it more likely to grab people's attention.

- Pick something that is obviously relevant – that will draw them into reading more.
- Avoid using the same image for multiple things eg. an event and a petition
- Follow the imaging size guidelines or the image will crop strangely.
- Follow this guide for how to change image sizes in Microsoft paint: <http://condor.depaul.edu/gandrus/130/docs/Paint.htm>
- If sizing up images is not your thing, an image is only optional, so you can skip it. Or ask for help on actionnetwork@foe.co.uk
- Make sure you have the rights to any image you use. **If you're not sure, don't use it.**

Your call to action

Below the Banner field there's an editable text field for you to explain what your petition is all about. This is the call to action that explains why people should sign your petition. Think about how you can engage people and persuade them to add their name.

Our [6 tips for an effective and engaging petition](#) guide can help with this, or try to follow the structure in the example below:

Outline the problem:

Bigtown's beaches are drowning in waste. Every day hundreds of bottles, cans, containers and bits of packaging end up in the sea instead of in a recycling bin.

Describe the solution:

Having recycling facilities along our shoreline for everyone to use could make the world of difference. **But there's not a recycling bin in sight on the beachfront.**

Give 1-2 key stats or relevant facts and reference the target of the petition:

It's just rubbish. Every year we send tonnes of waste from Bigtown to be burnt at Hugetown incinerator – much of which could easily be recycled.

End by asking people to sign your petition:

Can you take 2 minutes to ask Tom Wright – the leader of the Bigtown Council to up its game so we're not languishing at the bottom of the recycling league table.

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Are there some key words or phrases you can **bold** to help people scan the page and quickly understand what the petition is about? See the example above for an idea of how to do this.

Add creator

We recommend that you don't use this function.

Underneath the main text box you'll see an option to add a Creator. This is a function adds you to the action as an individual.

Ignore this option but check that the sponsor is listed as your group e.g. Example Friends of the Earth.

Adding your petition text

You can then add the text of your petition, which will be what you'll end up presenting to your target e.g.

To: Councillor Tom Wright, Leader of Bigtown Council
From: [Your Petition Signers]

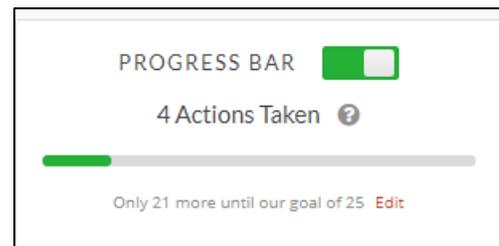
YOUR PETITION TEXT THAT WILL BE DELIVERED TO YOUR TARGET. *

I want Bigtown council to install easy-access recycling bins all along the seafront.

Progress Bar

Head back to the top of the page. On the right-hand side you'll see the Progress Bar at the top – this shows visitors how many people have signed the petition on the live version.

You can enable or disable this function at any time.



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The form

The standard forms asks people to add their:

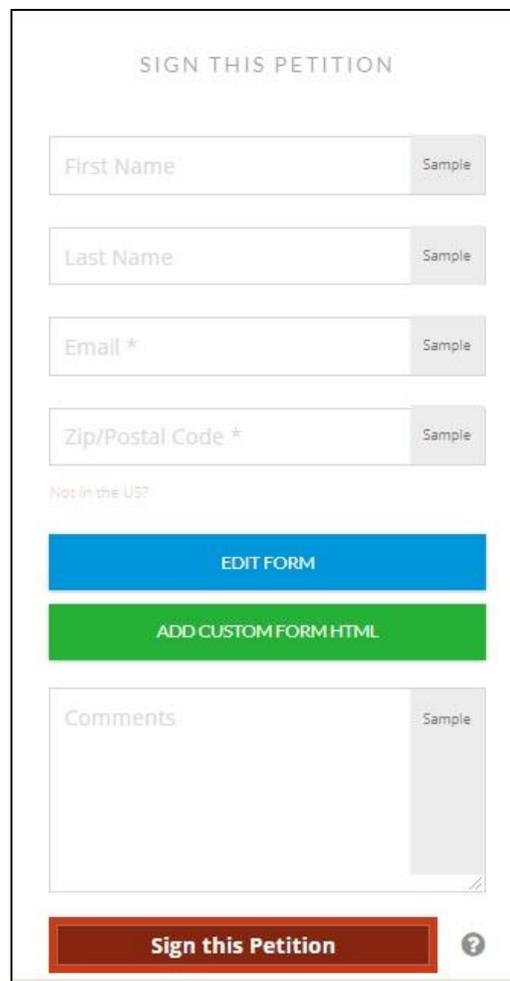
- First name
- Last name
- Email
- Postcode

This video covers how to add custom fields to the form e.g. street address. Watch from 5.00 minutes in:

<https://help.actionnetwork.org/hc/en-us/articles/203756859-VIDEO-TUTORIAL-Common-Action-Concepts>

You can also change the wording on the red button people click on to sign the petition. By default this says **Add your name**.

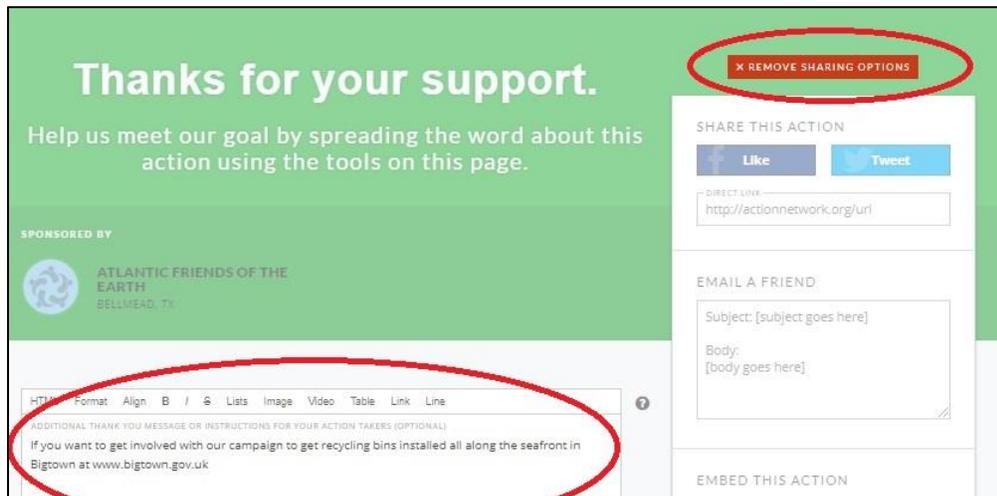
- Click on the blue **Save and go to next step** button at the bottom.
- You'll be taken to the **Petition thank you** page – which is what people will see once they sign your petition.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "SIGN THIS PETITION". It contains several input fields, each with a "Sample" button to its right: "First Name", "Last Name", "Email *", and "Zip/Postal Code *". Below these fields is a link that says "Not in the US?". There are two prominent buttons: a blue "EDIT FORM" button and a green "ADD CUSTOM FORM HTML" button. At the bottom of the form is a large red button labeled "Sign this Petition" with a small question mark icon to its right. A "Comments" field with a "Sample" button is also visible above the red button.

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The thank you page



Sharing options

You can turn off the sharing options if you want to, but they can help get more people adding their name to your petition, so we recommend leaving them on. More information on how to edit these options is below.

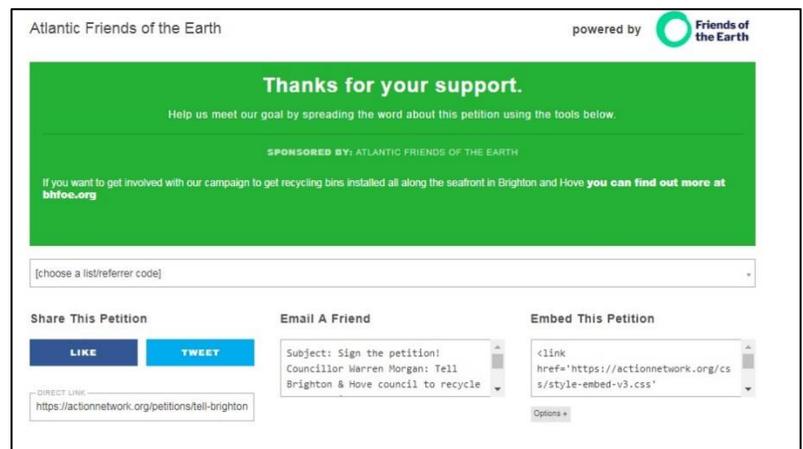
Adding content to the thank you page

There's a box for you to give people more information on your petition, campaign or group. Use it to invite them to your next meeting or even the petition hand-in. You can add links from this section, for example to your group's website.

Here's what it'll look to visitors; this version has the sharing options enabled.

When you've done this, you can click on the red **Save and publish** button at the bottom.

Your petition is now live and people can sign it. You'll be taken to the **Manage petition** page. From here you can do a few things.



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Managing your petition

The screenshot shows the 'Manage Petition' page for 'Tom's test petition'. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Top Section:** 'CURRENTLY MANAGING: Tom's test petition'. It includes a progress bar showing '4 Signatures Collected' out of a goal of 25. Below the progress bar are buttons for 'View Petition', 'Edit Petition', 'Edit Tags', 'Edit URL', and 'Unpublish'. There are also buttons for 'Create Email' and 'Create Report'.
- Author and Sponsor:** 'PETITION BY TOM WRIGHT, BRIGHTON, UNITED KINGDOM' and 'SPONSORED BY ATLANTIC FRIENDS OF THE EARTH, BELLMEAD, TX'.
- Page Wrapper:** A dropdown menu set to 'Powered by Friends of the Earth' with a 'SAVE PAGE WRAPPER' button.
- Navigation Tabs:** 'Statistics', 'Delivery Options', 'Sponsors', 'Response Options', 'Sharing Options', and 'Next Steps'. The 'Statistics' tab is currently selected.
- Share and Email Options:** 'SHARE THIS PETITION' with social media buttons for 'Like' and 'Tweet', and a 'DIRECT LINK' field. Below is an 'EMAIL A FRIEND' section with a subject line and a body text area.

You'll be taken to the **Manage petition** page. From here you can do a few things.

Useful options

- **View petition** – this will open up your live petition in a new window
- **Edit petition** – use this option if you need to make any changes to your work
- **Unpublish** – you can't delete your petition but you can unpublish it, so it's not publicly visible, if you need to. You can re-publish it at a later point too.
- **Create email** – use this to send everyone who's signed your petition an email. See the separate guide on [Sending a follow up email](#) for more on how to do this.
- **Responses** – here you can edit the email people receive after signing your petition.
 - **Thank you redirect link:** direct them to a website of your choice, rather than the default thank you page.

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- **Unpublished redirect link** – direct people to a website of your choice when you close/unpublish your petition.
- **Auto-response email:** edit the email people receive after filling in your form or turn the function off. **Note:** the default info@email.actionnetwork.org address is an unmonitored inbox, so swap this for an address you have access to.
- **Notifications:** get an email whenever someone signs your petition. Not recommended but there if you want it.

Extra options

Report and delivery options – Action Network allows you to email or download the results of your Petition.

Before using this function please confirm you have read our [Data Processing Agreement](#) – which outlines your group’s responsibility around handling data. Contact us on actionnetwork@foe.co.uk

- **Edit URL** – you can edit the url of your petition. See <https://help.actionnetwork.org/hc/en-us/articles/115004543963-Editing-the-URL-of-an-action-or-group> for more information on this.
- **Statistics** – this tab will show how your petition is performing.
- **Next steps** – some useful reading on how to get the best from your petition.
- **Embedding your petition** – if you need to embed your petition in another website, and you’re comfortable doing so, you’ll see the code to do this on the right-hand side.

Unfortunately, this code won’t work on its own. Get in touch on actionnetwork@foe.co.uk and we’ll explain why.

