Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth

Friends of the Earth

THE ACTION NETWORK

Creating a Letter Campaign in Action Network

A **Letter Campaign** works differently to a petition, in that every time someone takes the action, an email is sent to the target(s).

When you're ready to create your petition, you can follow this template:
https://actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-councillor-tom-wright-to-back-stronger-recycling-targets-for-bigtown/
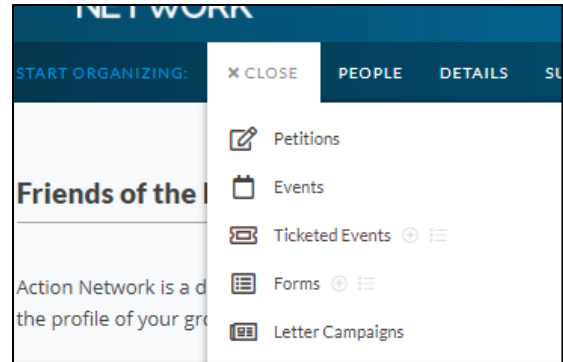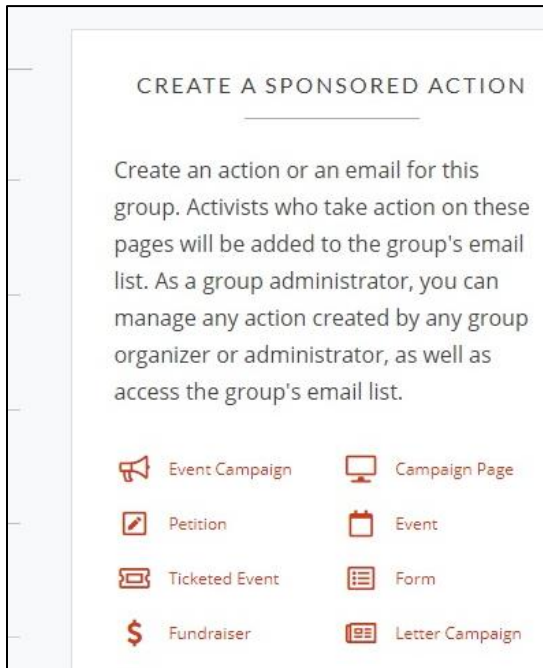
Contents

Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth

Getting started

There are two ways to begin:

a) Choose **Letter Campaigns** from the **Actions** menu.

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

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

Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth

Choosing your target

Letter Campaigns can target one or more people. If you use multiple targets will be sent to all of them every time someone takes action, people won't be able to pick and choose.

- For static targets e.g. a local supermarket manager or leader of the council – you'll need to add a custom target. See the video and instruction on this page.
- For councillor or MPs please contact actionnetwork@foe.co.uk for help

Adding content to your Letter Campaign

Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth

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 letter campaign, Joe Bloggs MP waste letter campaign

Title of your Letter Campaign – 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

Select your target list – pick the target(s) you need from the list.

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 Letter Campaign is all about. This is the call to action that explains why people should get involved. Think about how you can engage people and persuade them to add their name.

See the 6 tips for an effective and engaging petition guide, or try to follow the structure in the example below:

Find me online at

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.

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 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.

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.

Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth
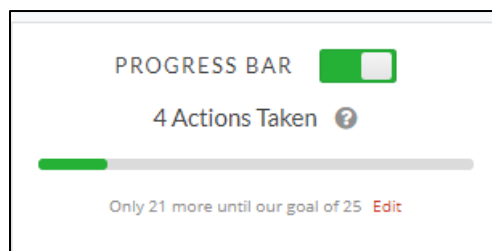
The form

The standard form for a Letter Campaign asks people to add their:

- First name
- Last name
- Email
- Street address
- City
- 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

- Click on the blue **Save and go to next step** button at the bottom.

- You'll be taken to the **Write letter version 1** page**.**

Write letter page

Add your targets

First things first, assign your targets to the Letter Campaign, using the **Select targets** button

Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth

You'll then be able to add or remove targets to your Letter campaign. Use Add all to add everyone in your target list, or search by name to add individually.

You can edit your targets at any time. This short video covers how to test a Letter campaign

Add your letter writing tips

Here you can give people tips on how to write their letter, and compose a draft letter for them to use too.

Use the box titled **Give your activists letter writing tips** to help people compose their letter. Top tips include:

- Asking people to personalise their letter
- Using bullet points (Lists, in the menu) to suggest key things to mention
- Detailing important facts and figures
- Keep this section as short and simple as you can.

Add a default letter

You'll also see an optional field to add a **Default message**.

You can use this to add a template message for people to use, either if they don't have time to write their own, or if you want to help them. There are pros and cons of using this function. Some decision makers will ignore multiple copies of the same letter, but if you leave this field blank, some people will be deterred from taking action as it will be too much work for them.

Only include essential information in your Default message and make sure it can be easily personalised.

If you'd like help on this please get in touch on actionnetwork@foe.co.uk

You've also got an optional field for the **Default subject [line]** if you want it.

If you don't want people to be able to edit the letter, un-tick the tick box above **Send letters**.

You can create different messages for different targets e.g. for councilors in different political parties. Click on **Save and add** version to explore this feature.
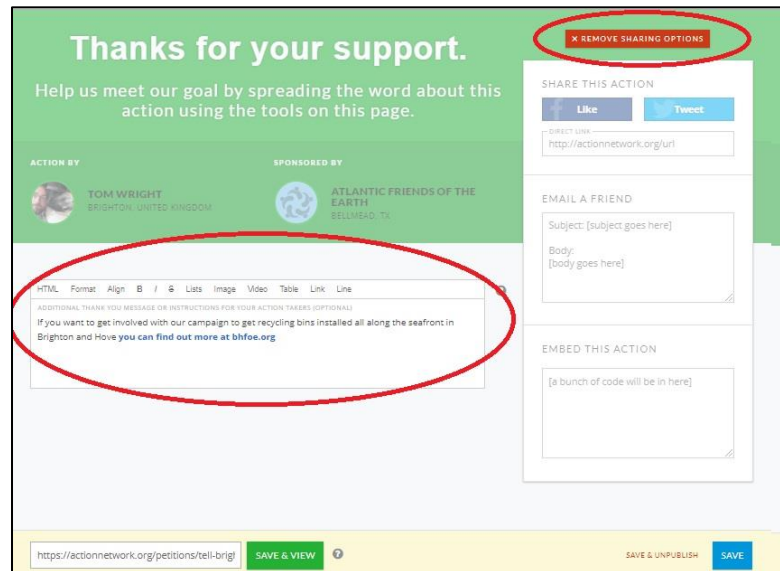
The thank you page

Sharing options

You can turn off the sharing options if you want to, but they can help get more people involved, 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 Letter campaign, campaign or group. Use it to invite them to your next meeting or event. You can add links from this section, for example to your group's website.

The image below shows what a thank you page looks like to visitors; this version has the sharing options enabled.
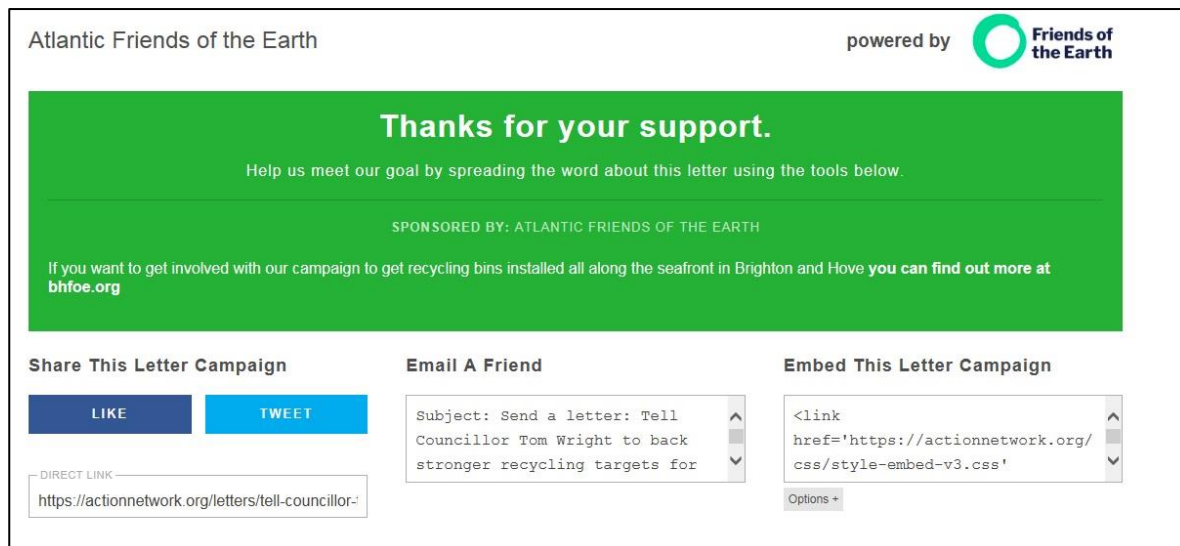
When you've done this, you can click on the red **Save and publish** button at the bottom. Your petition is now live and people can sign it. You'll be taken to the **Manage Letter campaign** page. From here you can do a few things.

Find me online at https://actionnetwork.org/groups/friendsoftheearth

Managing your letter campaign

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

Things that will be useful

- **View Letter Campaign** – this will open up your live petition in a new window

- **Edit Letter Campaign** – use this option if you need to make any changes to your work

- **Unpublish** – you can't delete your Letter Campaign but you can unpublish, 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 taking action.

  - **Thank you redirect link**: direct them to a website of your choice, rather than the default thank you page.

  - **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 takes action. Not recommended but there if you want it.

Extra options

Target report – Action Network allows you to email your petition to your target when you're ready to hand it in. Unless you have written permission from Friends of the Earth **please DO NOT use the Delivery options function to download the data** as a pdf or csv file. If you have questions about this please contact us on actionnetwork@foe.co.uk

-
  Edit URL – you can edit the url of your Letter Campaign. 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 Letter Campaign is performing.

- **Next steps** – some useful reading on how to get the best from your Letter campaign.

- **Embedding your Letter campaign** – if you need to embed your Letter campaign 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.