Why (and how to) engage with policy?

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RESEARCH COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

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Roadmap

- Why engage with policy?
- UK Policy Structures 101
- 5 ways to get your research into Parliament
- Top tips for policy engagement

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Why engage with policy?

- Generate impact (outside of academia)
  - REF
  - Institutional strategy
  - Grant criteria
- Change the world

UK Policy Structures 101

Government

Makes policies and decisions

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Parliament

Questions policies and decisions

Government does not equal Parliament

Government

- Runs the country
- Sets taxes
- Decides public spending

Parliament

- Scrutiny
- Legislation
- Debate
- Approve spending

Needs your research

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Who uses research in Parliament?

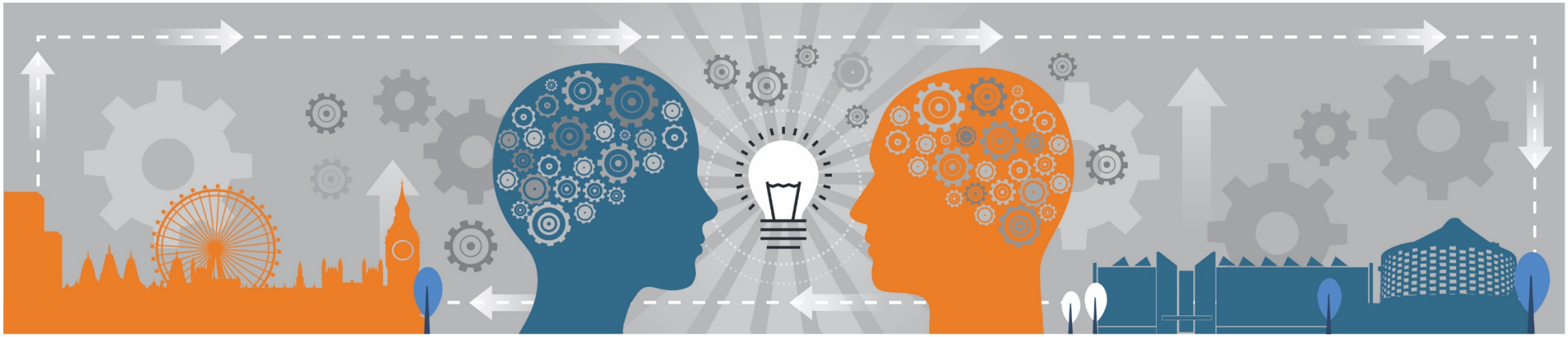
- House of Commons Select Committees
- House of Commons Library
- MPs' Researchers

- House of Lords Select Committees
- House of Lords Library
- Peers' researchers

- All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs)
- Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST)

5 Ways to engage with policy processes

1. MPs and peers
2. Political researchers
3. All-Party Parliamentary Groups
4. Select Committees
5. Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology



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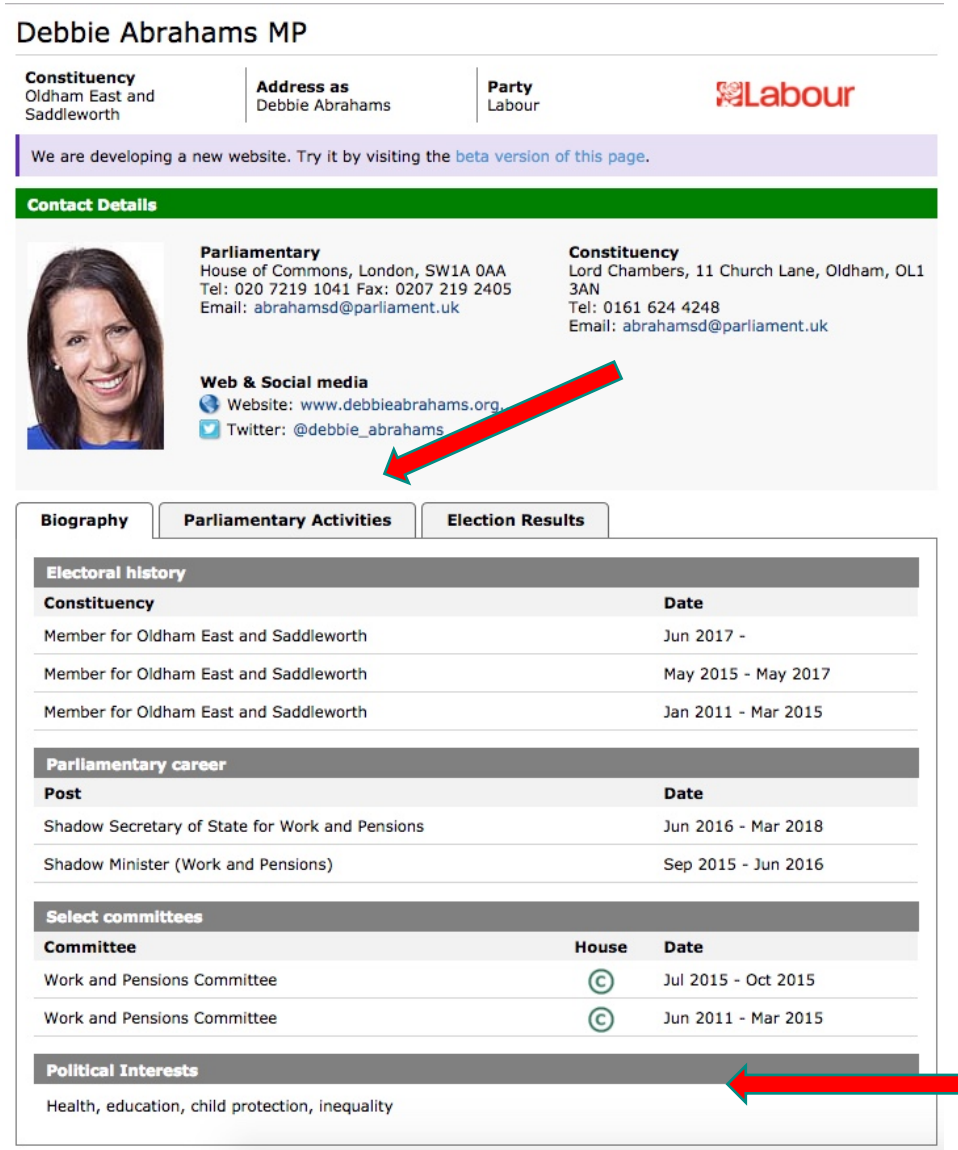
1. MPs and Peers

- Get in touch directly with MPs and Lords

- Find out more @ MPs & Lords interests and activity:

www.parliament.uk



Debbie Abrahams MP

Constituency Oldham East and Saddleworth | **Address as** Debbie Abrahams | **Party** Labour

We are developing a new website. Try it by visiting the beta version of this page.

Contact Details

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Email: abrahamsd@parliament.uk

Web & Social media
Website: www.debbieabrahams.org.
Twitter: @debbie_abrahams

Biography | Parliamentary Activities | Election Results

Electoral history

Constituency	Date
Member for Oldham East and Saddleworth	Jun 2017 -
Member for Oldham East and Saddleworth	May 2015 - May 2017
Member for Oldham East and Saddleworth	Jan 2011 - Mar 2015

Parliamentary career

Post	Date
Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions	Jun 2016 - Mar 2018
Shadow Minister (Work and Pensions)	Sep 2015 - Jun 2016

Select committees

Committee	House	Date
Work and Pensions Committee	C	Jul 2015 - Oct 2015
Work and Pensions Committee	C	Jun 2011 - Mar 2015

Political Interests

Health, education, child protection, inequality

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2. Libraries and researchers

- Send in your research
- Both Houses have libraries
- E: Papers@parliament.uk

3. All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- Offer to present your research to a relevant APPG
- APPGs hold meetings with invited speakers

- ! Check active / funding !
- ! No official status!

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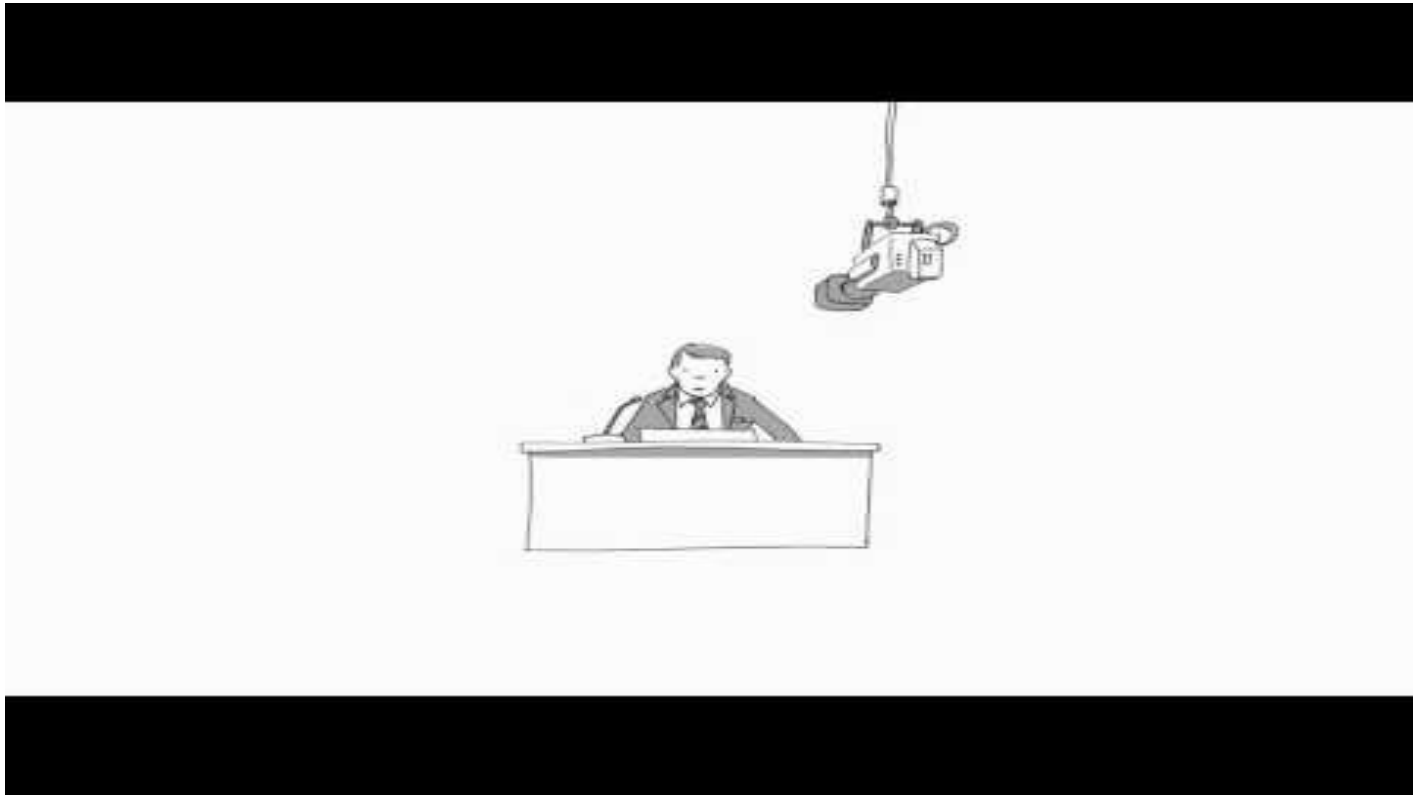
4. Working with Select Committees

- Submit evidence
- Act as Special Advisor
- Video

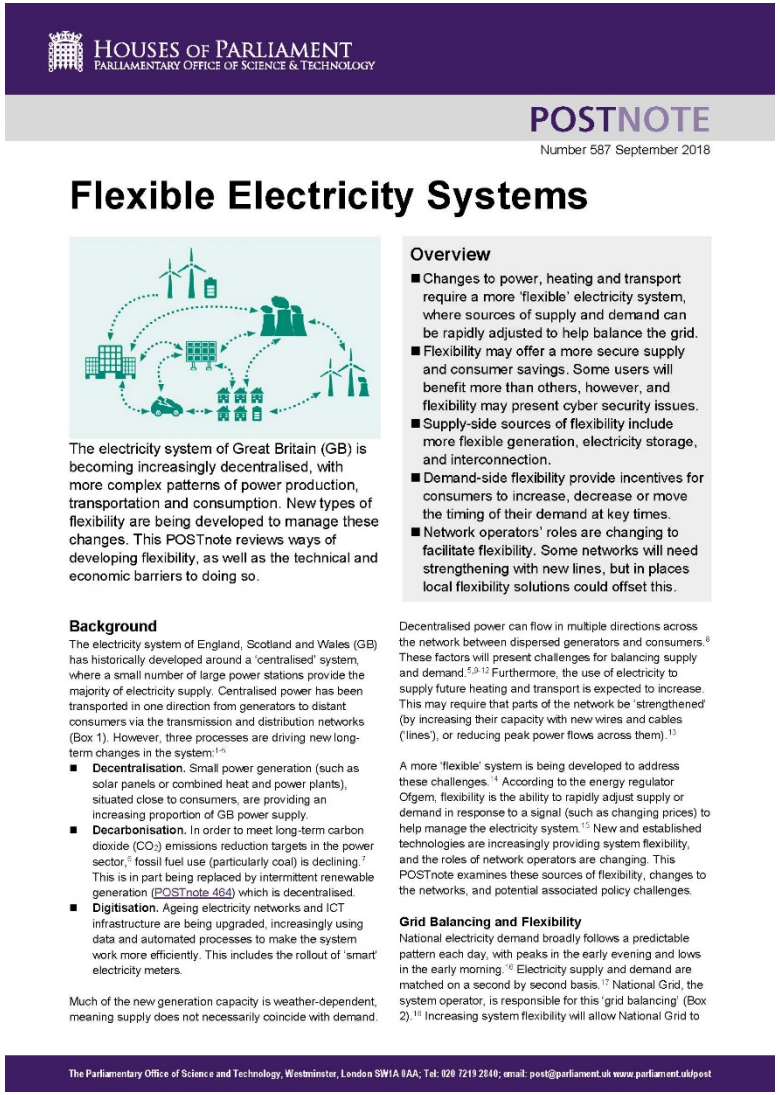
- Find out more via:
  - Twitter
  - Website (A-Z or committee page)
  - Political monitoring service



5. Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology

- Contribute to a POSTnote
- Attend an event
- Become a Fellow

- Physical sciences and ICT
- Social Sciences
- Energy and environment
- Biological sciences and health



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PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

POSTNOTE

Number 587 September 2018

Flexible Electricity Systems

The electricity system of Great Britain (GB) is becoming increasingly decentralised, with more complex patterns of power production, transportation and consumption. New types of flexibility are being developed to manage these changes. This POSTnote reviews ways of developing flexibility, as well as the technical and economic barriers to doing so.

Background

The electricity system of England, Scotland and Wales (GB) has historically developed around a 'centralised' system, where a small number of large power stations provide the majority of electricity supply. Centralised power has been transported in one direction from generators to distant consumers via the transmission and distribution networks (Box 1). However, three processes are driving new long-term changes in the system:[1-5]

- **Decentralisation.** Small power generation (such as solar panels or combined heat and power plants), situated close to consumers, are providing an increasing proportion of GB power supply.
- **Decarbonisation.** In order to meet long-term carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions reduction targets in the power sector,[6] fossil fuel use (particularly coal) is declining.[7] This is in part being replaced by intermittent renewable generation (POSTnote 464) which is decentralised.
- **Digitisation.** Ageing electricity networks and ICT infrastructure are being upgraded, increasingly using data and automated processes to make the system work more efficiently. This includes the rollout of 'smart' electricity meters.

Much of the new generation capacity is weather-dependent, meaning supply does not necessarily coincide with demand. Decentralised power can flow in multiple directions across the network between dispersed generators and consumers.[8] These factors will present challenges for balancing supply and demand.[5,9-12] Furthermore, the use of electricity to supply future heating and transport is expected to increase. This may require that parts of the network be 'strengthened' (by increasing their capacity with new wires and cables ('lines'), or reducing peak power flows across them).[13]

A more 'flexible' system is being developed to address these challenges.[14] According to the energy regulator Ofgem, flexibility is the ability to rapidly adjust supply or demand in response to a signal (such as changing prices) to help manage the electricity system.[15] New and established technologies are increasingly providing system flexibility, and the roles of network operators are changing. This POSTnote examines these sources of flexibility, changes to the networks, and potential associated policy challenges.

Grid Balancing and Flexibility

National electricity demand broadly follows a predictable pattern each day, with peaks in the early evening and lows in the early morning.[16] Electricity supply and demand are matched on a second by second basis.[17] National Grid, the system operator, is responsible for this 'grid balancing' (Box 2).[18] Increasing system flexibility will allow National Grid to

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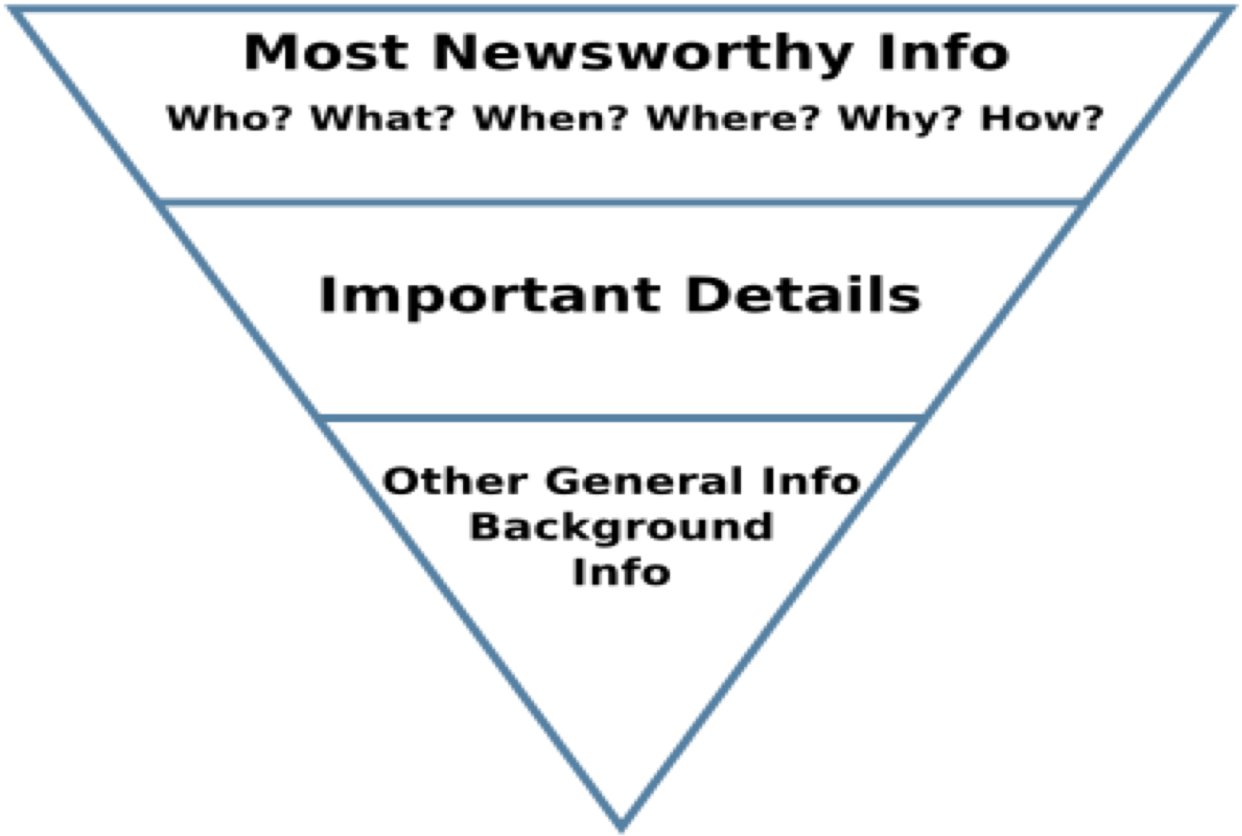
Key to success

- Targeted to the audience
- Solutions not problems
- Stick to criteria
- Get in early
- Publish in non-academic formats

Make headway with headlines

- No one will read your journal article
- Publish newspaper-esque articles



Non-academic publications

- Blogs
- Videos
- Podcasts
- Research and Policy Briefings

blogs.sussex.ac.uk/policy-engagement/
Resources for researchers

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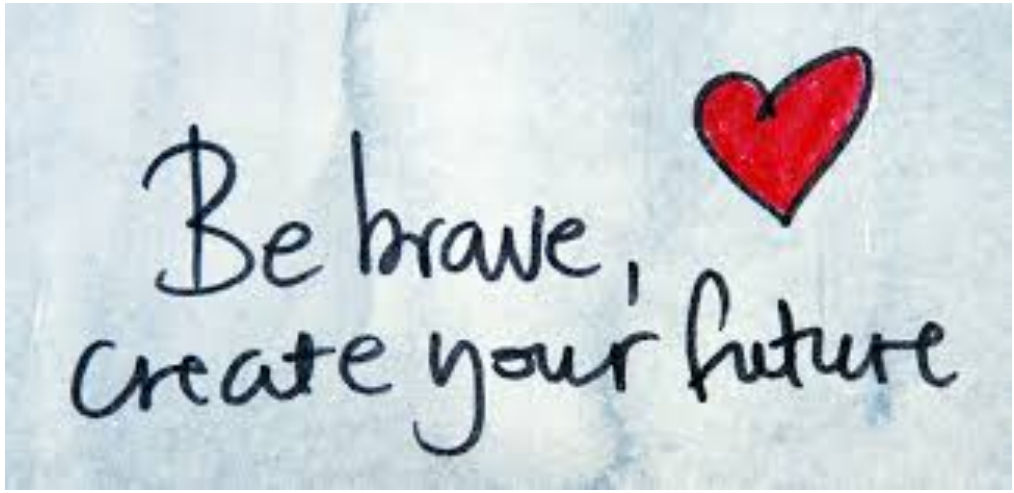
Get out there

What will you do?

- Get on Twitter
- Publish in alternative formats / arenas
- Seize and create media opportunities
- Network