



Leave to Remove Factsheet

Contents

What should I do if I become aware that my ex-partner's plans to emigrate are imminent?	<u>2</u>
What should I do if the plans are not imminent?	<u>3</u>
What are leave to remove applications?	<u>3</u>
Cross-Applications for Residence	<u>4</u>
What the Court considers when reaching a decision as to whether to grant Leave to Remove	<u>4</u>
Circumstances which individually assist the likelihood of a Leave to Remove application being granted	<u>4</u>
Circumstances which may assist someone in defending against a leave to remove application	<u>5</u>
The Welfare Checklist	<u>5</u>
A defence against the distress argument?	<u>6</u>
Human Rights	<u>6</u>
Emigration to countries within the European Union	<u>7</u>
Leave to Remove and Shared Residence	<u>7</u>
Criticism of the Courts, Leave to Remove Judgments and Payne v Payne	<u>7</u>
Contact Orders. Are they meaningless once the children have emigrated.	<u>8</u>
Other case law	<u>9</u>
Useful reading	<u>10</u>
Relocation: Child Welfare, Needs and Rights. The campaign to improve outcomes for children in relocation cases.	<u>10</u>

You can contact the author by emailing michael.robinson@thecustodyminefield.com

Crown Copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's printer for Scotland.



What should I do if I become aware that my ex-partner's plans to emigrate are imminent?

Your course of action depends on two things:

1. How imminent the emigration is (e.g. is it likely to happen within 48 hours); and
2. Whether or not you have parental responsibility for the children.

Having legal parental responsibility is crucially important in relocation cases, as the consent of the other holders of parental responsibility must be sought (and given) prior to the emigration proceeding. If the other holders of parental responsibility refuse their permission, the parent wishing to emigrate must apply to the court (who can over-ride the need for the holders of parental responsibility to give their consent).

Many fathers incorrectly assume that they have parental rights by virtue of being their children's biological parent. Under current law, mothers automatically have parental responsibility by virtue of being a birth parent, but fathers do not. Biological fathers acquire parental responsibility in one of the following ways:

1. By having been married to the child's mother.
2. If you were not married to the mother, but the child was born on or after 1 December 2003 AND you jointly registered the birth of your child.
3. By having a Residence Order made in your favour by the Court (for Shared or Sole Residence).
4. If the court has granted you parental responsibility via a Parental Responsibility Order.
5. By entering into a signing a Parental Responsibility Agreement with the child's mother if she will agree to this. A separate agreement is needed for each child and the signing must be witnessed by court official.

The Child Abduction Act 1984 made it a criminal offence for a person connected to a child to take or send a child out of the United Kingdom without the appropriate consent (either all other holders of parental responsibility or the court). Where a residence order has been made, the resident parent has the right to take the children abroad for up to 28 days at a time without the consent of the other holders of parental responsibility.

If you do not have parental responsibility for your children, the other parent is under no legal obligation to consult you regarding their planned emigration. It is vital you apply to the court for a Parental Responsibility Order if you believe the other parent intends to emigrate with the children. You should also consider applying for a Prohibitive Steps Order to prevent your children from leaving the UK until such time as the matter can be fully contested and considered by the court if you oppose the relocation.

When applying to the court, you should ask for an emergency hearing. A Prohibited Steps Order can include such restrictions as the children's passports being retained by a third party.

To apply for Parental Responsibility, you need to complete [Form C1](#) which is also available from your local family court's administration department. To apply for a Prohibited Steps Order, you need to complete [Form C100](#). You will also need to pay a fee.

If the emigration is likely to happen within 48 hours and you **do** have legal parental responsibility for the children, then the other parent may not emigrate without your or the court's consent. In such circumstances, you should approach your local police and ask that they circulate details of the 'abductor' and children to all UK points of departure via the Police National Computer. No court order is required for this. The police are likely to ask you for a statement which will set out your concerns, your parental rights, and your opposition to the abduction.

We also strongly recommend that you contact the charity [REUNITE](#) who specialise in advice concerning parental international child abduction and can give further advice regarding prevention and in what you can do if your children are abducted abroad. REUNITE can be contacted on 01162 556 234.



What should I do if the plans are not imminent?

It is often best if the parents can sit and discuss the plans. We do however still recommend you seek legal advice, as once the children have left the country, if the other parent becomes opposed to contact at a later date, maintaining a relationship with your children can become extremely difficult. If you consent to the emigration (or the UK courts grant leave to remove), once the children have left the UK there is nothing that the UK courts can do should contact break down (unless the children emigrate to another EU country, in which case the UK courts retain jurisdiction for the first three months following the move).

If you disagree with the emigration and you have parental responsibility, the parent who wishes to emigrate with the children must seek the 'leave of the court' (the court's permission) before the children can emigrate.

If you do not have parental responsibility but have a good relationship with your ex-partner, it may be that they will be willing to enter into a formal Parental Responsibility Agreement with you prior to moving. To enter into a parental responsibility agreement, you and each existing holder of parental responsibility (normally just the mother) need to complete [Form CPRA1](#) for each child. The agreement must be signed in front of a Justice of the Peace (Magistrate), Justices' Clerk or a Court official who is authorised by the Judge to administer oaths. You will need to complete the Parental Responsibility Agreement and present it along with the child's full birth certificate and photographic evidence identifying both parents (ideally a photo driving licence or passport) to a Family Proceedings Court, County Court, or the Principal Registry of the Family Division where it can be signed and witnessed. Two copies must then be made, and sent along with the original to the Principal Registry of the Family Division.

If you refuse to give your permission for the children to emigrate, it is likely that the parent wishing to emigrate will apply to the courts for leave to remove, to seek the court's permission for the emigration to proceed.

If you believe that the other parent may leave the country without first seeking your or the court's consent, you should apply to the court for a Prohibitive Steps Order, and in that application ask that the children's passports be retained by a third party. To apply for a Prohibited Steps Order, you need to complete [Form C100](#). You will also need to pay a fee.

What are leave to remove applications?

Leave to Remove applications are typically made to the court by the resident parent (or a parent with shared residence) to seek the court's permission to emigrate with the children.

The applications are brought under section 13(1) of the Children Act 1989 which reads:

13 Change of child's name or removal from jurisdiction

(1) Where a residence order is in force with respect to a child, no person may -

(a) cause the child to be known by a new surname; or

(b) remove him from the United Kingdom;

without either the written consent of every person who has parental responsibility for the child or the leave of the court.

While leave to remove applications are often granted, the court's involvement may still be useful, as arrangements for contact should be agreed before the emigration goes ahead. This may involve increased holiday time for the parent who remains in the UK, decisions concerning who covers the cost of travel and accommodation costs, that there must be mirror orders (orders for contact made in the country of relocation as well as in the UK), and other measures to help ensure contact goes ahead as ordered.

Be aware that once the children are habitually resident in a foreign country, enforcement of orders can be very difficult and costly. You are likely to have to travel to the country and seek a contact order in the country where the children live. This will involve legal, travel and accommodation costs.



Cross-Applications for Residence

It is only in exceptional circumstances that a court will interfere with someone's right to move as they wish to. The question before the court is whether the children should move with them, and if they do not, what arrangements exist in the UK should one parent emigrate and the children remain in the UK.

It is common, in leave to remove applications, for the non-relocating parent to make a cross-application for residence. If you are the non-resident parent and are able to care for your children should the other parent emigrate, if you do not feel it is in your children's best interests to emigrate, you should consider applying for residence.

If the emigrating parent has already applied to the court for leave to remove, you should complete [Form C2](#) stating that you are applying for residence. Form C2 is also available from your local family proceedings or county court.

If the emigrating parent has not yet applied for leave to remove (or does not need to because you do not have parental responsibility), you should apply for residence at the same time you apply for a Prohibitive Steps Order. Then, the form C100 can be used for both applications (only one form is required).

When deciding whether to apply for residence you should consider what changes need to be made to your employment, what support you have (e.g. family support for childcare), advantages for your children (e.g. their remaining in their current school, keeping their friends etc), housing etc.

What the Court considers when reaching a decision as to whether to grant Leave to Remove

The case law [Payne v Payne](#) currently defines what a court should consider when refusing or granting a leave to remove application. In that case, Lord Justice Thorpe set out the two hurdles which the resident parent should satisfy before the merits of their application are further considered:

- That their motives for the move are genuine;
- That their plans are well thought through.

We strongly urge any parent involved in a leave to remove case to read *Payne v Payne*, as this is the leading case law and sets out what should be considered by the court.

Circumstances which individually assist the likelihood of a Leave to Remove application being granted

- 1) it can be demonstrated that refusal of permission will be sufficiently emotionally or psychologically harmful to the resident parent or the children's step-parent that it impacts on their care of the child (this is commonly referred to as the distress argument).
- 2) the resident parent or their new partner seeks to return to their country of birth and/or has family in the country they wish to emigrate to.
- 3) there are no concerns as to the resident parent's ability to provide adequate childcare.
- 4) the plans for the move are well thought through.
- 5) there is no intention to disrupt the relationship between the child(ren) and the other parent.
- 6) a support structure exists to assist the resident parent with the child care in the new country (although this is not essential).
- 7) the plans for continued contact with the non-resident parent are practical.
- 8) the resident parent has remarried and the child is in a new family structure.
- 9) the children have step-brothers / sisters within the resident parent's new relationship (the Court would rarely agree to the 'new family' being divided).
- 10) the child has sufficient maturity to understand what impact the move would have on their life and wishes to emigrate.



11) the resident parent is clearly the majority carer. It is our experience that the lower the number of nights per week or fortnight that the non-resident parent has their children stay with them, the higher the difficulty in preventing a leave to remove, and vice versa.

Circumstances which may assist someone in defending against a leave to remove application

- 1) that the resident parent seeks to reduce or prevent the child's relationship with their non-resident parent due to continued hostility. A history of broken contact, refusal to co-operate over schooling/medical matters may assist in demonstrating questionable motive.
- 2) that the plans for the move and the child's subsequent care are not practical. Questions need to be asked such as:
 - a) Who will care for the child if the resident parent (or child) is ill?
 - b) What childcare plans exist? How do these compare to the support structure in the UK.
 - c) Who will pick the child up from school?
- 3) there exist concerns about the resident parent's ability to provide consistent care.
- 4) there are concerns regarding the resident parent's mental health.
- 5) that a strong bond exists between the child and non-resident parent including substantial contact time.
- 6) that the child currently benefits from a shared care arrangement between the resident / non-resident parent.
- 7) the child is sufficiently mature to understand what impact the move would have on their life and wishes to remain in the UK.

CAFCASS (the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) will often be instructed by a judge to meet with the parents and children, and possibly visit their homes and talk to other adults connected to the children to investigate the parent's respective motives and positions and to determine the children's wishes and feelings. The appointed CAFCASS Officer should write a report for the court to consider, and may make recommendations either in favour of, or against, the move going ahead. CAFCASS may also be asked to attempt mediation between the parents to see if matters can be mutually agreed.

The Welfare Checklist

The Welfare Checklist, in section 1(3) of the Children Act 1989, lists a variety of welfare related factors which the court should consider when deciding any matter involving children.

You would imagine that such things as the impact on the child of being removed from school, the loss of their social network and extended family, the loss of familiarity with their home environment, removal from their native culture, and the loss or significant change to their day-to-day relationship with their non-resident parent (or parent with shared residence) would carry great weight with the court. You would be wrong.

It is estimated that 90% of leave to remove cases succeed with the main reason being that to refuse the application would cause the resident parent such distress that this would (in theory) adversely impact on the child's welfare. This decision is rooted in the case law *Payne v Payne* which provides the main guidance for Leave to Remove cases.

In the case *Payne v Payne* at paragraph 26, Lord Justice Thorpe set out the guidance for trial judges to follow in leave to remove cases:

*26. In summary a review of the decisions of this court over the course of the last thirty years demonstrates that relocation cases have been consistently decided upon the application of the following two propositions:
(a) the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration; and
(b) refusing the primary carer's reasonable proposals for the relocation of her family life is likely to impact detrimentally on the welfare of her dependent children. Therefore her application to relocate will be granted unless the court concludes that it is incompatible with the welfare of the children.*



While it is said that the welfare of the child should be the court's paramount consideration, in practice, it is our experience that the impact on the primary carer is considered foremost.

Our opinion was echoed by the New Zealand court of appeal in 2005 when they discarded *Payne v Payne* as an authority in leave to remove cases 'as this case emphasised the weight of one factor above all others'. It was felt that the impact on the resident parent of refusal, in practice, outweighed other child welfare related matters. We would agree that this often happens.

A defence against the distress argument?

In a recent international leave to remove case, [Re W \(Children\) \[2009\] EWCA Civ 160](#), the trial judge challenged counsel's argument that the mother would be adversely psychologically affected should her application be refused. The Judge pointed out that there was no evidence to suggest that the mother would suffer any more than disappointment, and refused her application. The mother appealed the decision, and her counsel criticised the Judge for his view. In the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Wall found that the Judge was entitled to reach that conclusion based on the evidence before him.

The Judge in *Re W*, on the matter of the impact of refusal on the mother, had said:

28. It is a very important consideration. I have to say that I have no medical evidence of significant depression. I heard the mother come back when she was re-called and say that she was suffering and would suffer more if I turned her down. Mr Rowlands put it well when he said there will be very great unhappiness as a result of my decision one side or the other. The father also has had to have some medicaments for depression. It is not a case where I am able to say that the mother will be so savagely or severely damaged that this will get through to the children. She will be disappointed but she will have to consider what she can best do to overcome it if I turn down her application.

Re W is an important case. The trial judge was right that the psychological impact on the primary carer is important, but simply one factor among others of equal and arguably greater importance. Like any argument, there needs to be evidence to support it. 'The psychological impact on the primary carer' mantra should not simply be an unsubstantiated trump card in a barrister's deck.

It should be noted though that while the appeal court upheld the trial judge's right to reach the conclusions he did, that does not mean that the appeal court will not similarly uphold the rights of another judge to hold opinions which differ and which lean in favour of the distress argument.

It is also worth noting the opinions of Professor Mark Berelowitz, a psychiatrist, as stated in a Law Society debate on relocation, that relocation is not a treatment for parental depression or anxiety. On the issue of the distress argument, there is disagreement between the judiciary themselves, and also the psychological community. The importance of the distress argument will come down to the opinion of the individual judge, and how they interpret *Re: W* and *Payne v Payne*.

Human Rights

One question we are often asked concerns the relevance of human rights in leave to remove cases. The parent wishing to move cites their right to freedom of movement, both parents cite their right to family life (which would be affected should either parent win) and the child clearly has a right to family life as well and a UN Convention right to the involvement of both parents in their upbringing.

This matter was addressed by Dame Butler-Sloss in *Payne v Payne* (at paras 81 and 82). Article 8(2) of the Human Rights Act recognises that a court may interfere with the right to family life, where it does so in accordance with the law and where it is necessary for the rights and freedoms of others.



The welfare of the child is of crucial importance, and where in conflict with a parent's rights, the child's rights take precedence. That said, it is commonly held that the current stance of the courts in relocation cases upholds the distress argument as the most important factor.

Emigration to countries within the European Union

If the children are emigrating to a country inside the European Union, be aware that the UK Court will retain jurisdiction for three months after the children have emigrated. This is set out in the Brussels II Revised Regulations (BIIIR) which provides in article 9, in cases within the European Union, jurisdiction is retained by the original State of habitual residence which makes the contact order for 3 months following the lawful removal of the child. The three month period is intended to provide time for any contact order to may be modified, if required, after which time jurisdiction passes to the new country.

Leave to Remove and Shared Residence

A Shared Residence Order may be appropriate should parents live in different countries, but will depend on the amount of time they spend in each household. If you are making a cross-application for residence, or are the emigrating parent, a shared residence order may be appropriate, and has the advantages of showing that you respect the other parent's importance in the children's lives. It is worth noting the judgment in [Re F \(Children\) \[2003\] EWCA Civ 592](#) and the comments by Lord Justice Thorpe and Lord Justice Wilson on this subject (at para 21):

'The judge's approach is in my opinion founded on sound principle. As this court has said recently, a shared residence order must reflect the underlying reality of where the children live their lives. The fact that the parents' homes are separated by a considerable distance does not preclude the possibility that the children's year will be divided between the homes of the two separated parents in such a ways as to validate the making of a shared residence order. This case is a good example of how, in reality, the order expressed by the judge, in providing for the contingency that the mother moves to Scotland and the father remains in England, results in a routine that sees the girls established in an Edinburgh home during the school terms times, and in a Hampshire home during the school holidays. My Lord has worked out the extent to which the mother's half share of the main school holidays will be eroded if the father foregoes much of his term time weekend contact. In reality the mother will be paired down to her irreducible minimum of 12 days. That ensures that the children will have their father's home as their home during school half terms and almost all the school holidays'- Lord Justice Thorpe

'But like my Lord, I consider it perfectly apt to say, without stretching language, that, were the girls to spend term-time with the mother in Edinburgh and all half-terms and almost all school holidays with the father in Hampshire, they would have the benefit of residence with each parent in each of the homes.'- Lord Justice Wilson

Criticism of the Courts, leave to remove judgments and Payne v Payne

At the time of Payne v Payne (2001), the court lacked expert research which has been published in the years following, which confirms the importance of both parents in children's day to day lives. The courts continue to pay insufficient attention to this research. Out-dated case law remains the leading authority.

Consider the following studies published after 2001. We have placed an emphasis on the parts of the research that relate to fathers, and have done so since, in Payne v Payne, there was an assumption that the primary carer and parent wishing to emigrate would be the mother. The research clearly supports that fathers have an essential role (as do mothers), and deprivation of a parent causes harm. This is not a matter of parental rights, but child welfare:

- a) The February 2009 Children's Society Report based on the experiences of 30,000 children found that 'a child's performance at secondary school, self-esteem and well being as an adult is linked especially to the father's input' and 'children are 40% more likely to suffer mental health problems when separated from



their fathers' and 'On average, children are less likely to fail at school or suffer depression the more they see their separated father.'

- b] The 2003 Department for Education and Skill's own research which concluded 'Fathers play an extremely important role in their children's lives and a plethora of research indicates that father involvement is significantly related to positive child outcomes' and 'Father involvement in children's education at age 7 predicts higher educational attainment by age 20, in both boys and girls.'
- c] The report by the University of British Columbia published in December 2008 entitled 'Child Custody, Access and Parental Responsibility' found that 'Sole maternal custody often leads to parental alienation and father absence which is associated with negative child outcomes.' The research discovered that '85% of youth in prison are fatherless', '71% of high school dropouts are fatherless', '90% of runaway children are fatherless', 'and fatherless youth exhibit higher levels of depression and suicide, delinquency, promiscuity and teen pregnancy, behavioural problems and illicit and licit substance abuse.' Equally as concerning were the findings of these and a wide range of other reports that concluded 'These studies found that fatherless youth are more likely to be victims of exploitation and abuse, as father absence through divorce is strongly associated with diminished self-concepts in children (Parish 1987).'
- d] In 2002, the University of Oxford's Department of Social Policy and Social Work found that girls whose fathers are involved in their upbringing are less likely to have mental health problems in later life whilst good father relations can prevent boys from getting into trouble with the police. Dr Eirini Flouri and Dr Ann Buchanan, co-authors of the research also found that 'Good father-child relationships are association with an absence of emotional and behavioural difficulties in adolescence and greater academic motivation too'. Their study is based on the experiences of 17,000 children, stretching back over 40 years.
- e] A further study by Dr Eirini Flouri and Dr Ann Buchanan is even more telling. From the summary of their research notes into ['The Role of Father Involvement and Mother Involvement in Adolescent's Psychological Wellbeing'](#) their study of '2,722 British adolescents aged 14-18 explored whether paternal involvement can protect against low levels of well-being even when maternal involvement and risk and protective factors are controlled for. Results showed that although both father and mother involvement contributed significantly and independently to offspring happiness, father involvement had a stronger effect. Furthermore, the association between father involvement and happiness was not stronger for sons than for daughters. There was no evidence suggesting that family disruption weakens the association between father involvement and happiness, or that father involvement is more strongly related to offspring involvement when mother involvement is low rather than high.' In essence, children need both parents.
- f] Another study by Dr Eirini Flouri, published in 2004, entitled ['Early father's and mother's involvement and child's later educational outcomes'](#), which concluded that 'early father involvement can be another protective factor in counteracting risk conditions that might lead to later low attainment levels.'

It should be noted that under the jurisprudence of European Law, the welfare of the child is of crucial importance, and the judgment of Payne v Payne was made before the impacts on children were properly understood.

Contact Orders. Are they meaningless once the children have emigrated?

Please be aware that a contact order made in this country is of little or no use once the children have moved abroad. Once the children have emigrated, a contact order only has any worth if it is made in the country that the children emigrate to. In some cases, a judge, when considering whether or not to allow the children to emigrate, asks that the emigrating parent obtains a 'mirror order' in the new country, mirroring the contact terms set out by the UK court.

While this places the UK based parent in a stronger position, should contact break down, the UK parent will have to apply to the foreign court to enforce the order, and the expense of travel and foreign legal and court costs may be prohibitive.



A further protection which may be granted by the UK courts includes asking the emigrating parent to consent to charges being placed on UK based assets. This may include having a sum of money placed 'in bond' or a legal charge made against property. Should the parent fail to comply with any UK made order without good cause, those assets may then be seized. This may not prevent a parent from breaking contact arrangements, but will make it financially painful for them to do so.

Other Case Law

M v H [2008] EWCA 324 (Fam)

Key points

- The parents' willingness to promote contact between the child and the other parent was a significant factor in the court's decision.

Re W (Children) EWCA Civ 160

The mother intended moving to New Zealand, was on medication for depression and claimed she would be devastated if leave to remove was refused. The father's case was that his relationship with his children would all but cease if the mother's application was granted and there had previously been problems over contact.

Key points:

- The Judge doubted that contact would be supported by the mother, given the history;
- The need to move to New Zealand to find work was questioned;
- There was no medical evidence to support that the mother would experience anything other than disappointment if her application was refused.

The application was refused, and the trial judge's decision was upheld by the court of appeal.

Re B (Leave to Remove: Impact of Refusal) 2005 2FLR 239

- it was held that there is no difference in principal between a mother who wishes to move to another country for reasons of lifestyle, and a mother who wishes to relocate to her country of origin or for an employment opportunity. Great weight should be given to the emotional and psychological well-being of the primary carer of the children.

R v R (Leave to Remove) [2004] EWHC 2572 (Fam)

Key Points:

- Where an English mother whose family originated in France applied for leave to move to live in France with the children, permission was refused because evidence was given from a psychiatrist that the mother was in need of therapy and her coping mechanism was to "fly".
- The Court held that the mother did not have the emotional stability to establish a new life in another country.
- Her current plans had not been sufficiently or carefully considered and the children's contact with the father would be adversely affected.
- The children would also see much less of both sets of grandparents.

Re Y (Leave to Remove from Jurisdiction) [2004] FLR 330

- Where there is effectively shared residence, then the court is unlikely to give permission to one parent to emigrate with the child.

Re G (Children) 2005 FLR 166

- The Argentinean mother's appeal against the judge's refusal of her application to relocate was allowed. The Judge at first instance had been wrong to refuse her application on the basis that she had not established that she would suffer psychiatric damage if her application was refused. The Judge had understated the impact of refusal on the mother and the children.



Useful Reading (click on the image below)

RELOCATION
The reunite Research

Dr. Marilyn Freeman
 for
 The reunite Research Unit

Funded by The Ministry of Justice

JULY 2009

reunite INTERNATIONAL
 helping families in child abduction

0118 924 1234 | 01448 640 770
 Address: 1100, 1101 & 1102, 2050-2052
 Ave, 44210, 410 2100, 413
 Fax: +44 (0) 118 210 414
 E-mail: reunite@reunite.co.uk

reunite INTERNATIONAL
 International Child Abduction Centre

Registered Charity No. 107706

Child Welfare
 Needs and Rights

**Relocation and
 Leave to Remove**
*The need for a new approach in relocation
 related family law*

A Parliamentary Briefing Report by The Custody Minefield
 In support of Early Day Motion 2059

The Custody Minefield is UK's leading internet based information
 resource on relocation, leave to remove and shared residence
 www.thecustodyminefield.com

October 2009

Relocation: Child Welfare, Needs and Rights. The campaign to improve outcomes for children in relocation cases

At the time of writing this report, Members of Parliament from the three main political parties as well as charities and Sir Bob Geldof were supporting a campaign to afford greater protection for children involved in relocation court cases.

You too can help, by visiting the campaign website, and by asking your MP to support [Early Day Motion 2059](#) which is calling for legislative change to better protect child welfare. Please read our Parliamentary Briefing Report (above right) and visit www.relocationcampaign.co.uk. On our relocation campaign website, we make it easy for you to contact your MP. It will take no more than a few seconds of your time if you use our [Email Your MP](#) facility.