

# Parliamentary Links Day

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Yesterday, scientists, learned societies and MPs gathered in the House of Commons to celebrate science in a 'science and sport' themed Parliamentary Links Day. The Society of Biology organised Links Day on behalf of the scientific community to strengthen dialogue with Parliament, and to provide MPs with a more rounded understanding of the scientific issues we face.



Dr Mark Downs, Chief Executive of the Society of Biology, says: "The day was extremely successful and highlighted the many ways which science and engineering have a positive impact on the Olympics. The Games rely on the latest technologies, from techniques for detecting doping to ways of improving athlete performance. These technologies can have far wider impact than competitive sport. For example, nutrition for elite athletes can also be valuable for patients recovering from operations: both athletes and patients have bodies under extreme stress."

Speakers included the Science Minister Rt Hon David Willetts MP and Dr Julian Huppert MP, along with sportsmen and sport scientists passionate about the Olympic legacy. Dame Sue Campbell, Chairman UK Sport, gave a passionate speech about working with scientists to show that sport is a fundamental right for every child. Dame Tessa Jowell, Shadow Minister for the Olympics also spoke of the importance of using science in policy.

The Speaker of the House of Commons, Rt Hon John Bercow MP opened the meeting. He says: "I know, from my unique vantage point in the House, that Members on all sides continue to raise issues that have a scientific aspect to them."

"It is all the more important that every Member of Parliament should be able to benefit from non-partisan assistance of the kind offered by professional scientific bodies like the Society of Biology, the Institute of Physics, the Royal Society of Chemistry and many others with their proven commitment to public interest."

An [early day motion](#) has been published congratulating the Society of Biology on organising this year's Parliamentary Links Day and welcoming the contribution that scientific societies make to assisting MPs.