

# PERPETUAL ENGAGEMENT: The Potential And Pitfalls Of Using Social Media For Political Campaigning (A new POLIS paper)

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Stella Creasy MP

We live in an age where the citizen feels increasingly sceptical about and disconnected from those people who run our lives. Paradoxically, this is also an era when the communicative power of new media technologies mean that the potential for interaction between voter and politicians has never been greater. In this new POLIS report, to be launched at our [Media and Power conference](#) this Friday, Stella Creasy MP attempts to square that circle.

We are past the utopian phase in the adoption of digital communications where we might have hoped that the Internet would automatically bring about more democracy. It's clear that like all good things, digital engagement requires effort, ingenuity and ethics. This paper, based on a lecture given as part of the POLIS Media Dialogues, tries to set out an ideological as well as practical agenda for that task. It is written by a

Labour MP but I think that most of it could apply to an MP from any party and, indeed, to anyone seeking to use social media in a campaign.

Stella Creasy is a committed campaigner for her party and specific progressive causes. Most recently she has [taken on loan sharks](#). As a new MP she now has a place in power. Her challenge is to make it more than a career choice. She believes that the nature of politics in Britain must change and that new communication channels can help in that process – especially at a local level. She is also realistic and honest enough to set out the obstacles and to outline the potential negatives that might result.

This paper is not an instruction manual, though it is packed full of practical insights and ideas. Instead it is part testimony and part manifesto for a new kind of networked political campaigning. We hope that anyone interested in the health of political communications and of representative democracy will find it both stimulating and useful.

Here at POLIS and in the LSE's Department of Media and Communications we spend our time teaching, debating and researching political communications. We are delighted that someone like Stella Creasy who is at the frontline of politics has taken the time out to help us all reflect on the new tools of the campaign trade.

The paper will be launched at our [Media and Power Journalism conference on Friday June 10th](#).

Download the cover and introduction of the report:

[PERPETUAL ENGAGEMENT THE POTENTIAL AND PITFALLS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNINGcover](#)

And the full report here:

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