

Unincorporated associations Unincorporated associations Unincorporated associations must register with us when they make political contributions of more than £25,000 in a calendar year. Once registered, they must report to us certain gifts that they receive. What is an unincorporated association? In general, an unincorporated association is an association of individuals who have come together to carry out a shared purpose. An unincorporated association has an identifiable membership which is bound together by identifiable rules or an agreement between the members. These rules set out how the unincorporated association is to be run and managed. Sometimes the rules might be formalised, for example in a written constitution. However they do not need to be formalised. For example, members' clubs are sometimes unincorporated associations. Book traversal links for Unincorporated associations When does an unincorporated association have to register with us? When does an unincorporated association have to register with us? Unincorporated associations must register with us when they make political contributions of more than £25,000 in any calendar year. This means that you will need to notify us if your association makes either: a single political contribution of more than £25,000 or a number of contributions that add up to more than £25,000 in a calendar year Political contributions are any of: a donation or a loan to a registered political party a donation to a registered non-party campaigner a donation to a registered referendum campaigner a donation to a registered recall petition campaigner a donation or loan to a regulated donee, which is: a holder of elective office a member of a political party a group of party members (also known as a members association) A political contribution only counts towards your total if it is over £500. You must notify us within 30 days beginning with the contribution date – that is, the date that you made the contribution that took your total over £25,000. Any unincorporated association that intends to make political contributions of more than £25,000 should keep records of all gifts they receive that are worth more than £500. Form UA1 and explanatory notes: Notification of political contributions Last updated: 16 February 2022 Book traversal links for When does an unincorporated association have to register with us? Unincorporated associations What does a registered unincorporated association have to report? What does a registered unincorporated association have to report? Once you have registered with us, you must tell us about the reportable gifts received by your association in: the calendar year before you made the contribution the calendar year of the contribution and the calendar year following the contribution A gift includes anything given or transferred to any officer, member, trustee or agent of an unincorporated association in that person's capacity within the association. It includes: any donation to the association of money or property a bequest any subscription or other fee paid for affiliation to, or membership of the association any money spent in paying expenses incurred by the association the provision – other than on commercial terms – of any property, services or facilities for the use or benefit of the association (including the services of a person) Reportable gifts include: a single gift of more than £7,500 two or more gifts given by the same person in the same calendar year which total more than £7,500. You need only count individual gifts worth more than £500 toward this total any additional gift given by source that you have already reported as having given a gift in that calendar year, if it has a value of more than £1,500 Gifts received before the contribution date If you notify us that you have made a political contribution of over £25,000, you must then report any reportable gifts you have received: from the start of the same year the political contribution was made up to and including the contribution date, and in the year before the year the political contribution was made You have 60 days from

the contribution date to report this information to us. You can do this using form UA2. Form UA2: Report of gifts received by an unincorporated association before a political contribution was made Gifts received after the contribution date Once you are on the register, you must report all reportable gifts to us on a quarterly basis. The first quarterly reporting period includes: the rest of the quarter that the contribution date was in, starting with the day after the contribution date ,and the next full quarter The first quarterly report is due 30 days after the end of the first reporting period. Another report is due 30 days after the end of every quarter, finishing with the last quarter of the calendar year following the contribution date. You can make these reports to us using form UA3. Form UA3: Report of gifts received after a political contribution is made Last updated: 14 September 2023 Book traversal links for What does a registered unincorporated association have to report? When does an unincorporated association have to register with us? Unincorporated associations that are also members associations Unincorporated associations that are also members associations Groups of party members, or members associations, must report donations and loans to us under the rules for regulated donees. Members associations that are also unincorporated associations must register with us if they make political contributions of over £25,000 during a calendar year. You should continue to report donations as you receive them, under the rules for regulated donees. You do not need to report gifts which are donations again under the rules for unincorporated associations. If you register with us you will also need to complete Form MA1 at the end of each calendar quarter until your reporting responsibility ends. This form tells us that either you have not received any reportable gifts that quarter, or that you have already reported them under the rules for members associations. This is used instead of the UA3 form. If you receive of the services of a volunteer as a gift, and its value is high enough to be reportable, please contact us for advice. Form MA1 Quarterly report for members' associations that have made political contributions For more guidance on the rules for members associations, please see our guidance on regulated donees . Last updated: 16 February 2022 Book traversal links for Unincorporated associations that are also members associations What does a registered unincorporated association have to report? Declarations and offences Declarations and offences Declarations An individual, who is authorised to represent the unincorporated association, must make a declaration on the notification, and also on any reports submitted to us. The declaration will state that everything in the notification or report is accurate, and that it complies with the law. Offences Unincorporated associations and the individuals authorised to make the declarations for the association should be aware that offences will be committed if: the association fails to give a notification or fails to report to the Commission, without reasonable excuse, within the relevant period the association provides a notification or report that does not meet the reporting requirements set out by the law, without reasonable excuse the authorised individual makes a false declaration Last updated: 16 February 2022 Book traversal links for Declarations and offences Unincorporated associations that are also members associations The register and forms The register and forms Register of recordable gifts to unincorporated associations We publish the registers of unincorporated associations and of recordable gifts to unincorporated associations. This register will not contain the home address of any individual. If you report gifts to us but the notification has not been made, meaning you have no entry on the register, we will not include the identity of any individual making gifts unless we have first given that individual notice. Individuals will then have 45 days in which to make representations as to why their identity should not be

included in the register. Forms Form UA1 and explanatory notes: Notification of political contributions Form UA2: Report of gifts received by an unincorporated association before a political contribution was made Form UA3: Report of gifts received after a political contribution is made Form MA1 Quarterly report for members' associations that have made political contributions Last updated: 16 February 2022 Book traversal links for The register and forms Declarations and offences

Non-party campaigners: Council elections in Scotland Introduction This guidance is for non-party campaigners who are campaigning at council elections in Scotland. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, non-party campaigners must follow rules about how much they can spend on campaign activities in the run up to certain elections. This guidance explains how the rules apply. [Book traversal links for Non-party campaigners: Council elections in Scotland](#)

What are non-party campaigners? What are non-party campaigners? Non-party campaigners are individuals or organisations that campaign in elections, but are not standing as political parties or candidates. Non-party campaigners have to follow certain rules in the run-up to elections. The types of non-party campaigns There are two types of non-party campaigns. These are: General campaigns Local campaigns Campaigns for or against: one or more political parties parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies other categories of candidate Campaigns for or against: one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area You can find more information about the different types of campaigns in our guidance [Non-party campaigners: Where to start](#) . The general campaign rules do not apply at elections in Scotland in 2023. You therefore do not have to register with us or report donations to us, and spending on activities directed only at your members will still count towards your spending total. Last updated: 29 November 2022 [Book traversal links for What are non-party campaigners?](#)

Non-party campaigners: Council elections in Scotland Local campaigns at council elections Local campaigns at council elections If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a council election in Scotland, you are covered by the rules for local campaigns. The Electoral Commission does not regulate local campaigning. Complaints about possible breaches should be made to the police. Under the local campaign rules, there are limits on how much you can spend on campaigning for or against particular candidates in a constituency or local electoral area. These limits are different, depending on the size of the electorate in the relevant area. These spending limits cover spending on most campaign activities, including leaflets, meetings and digital campaigning. Last updated: 17 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Local campaigns at council elections](#)

What are non-party campaigners? The regulated period The regulated period We call the time when the spending limits and rules apply the regulated period. The regulated period starts on the day after the person you are campaigning for or against officially becomes a candidate, and finishes on polling day. You can find more information about polling dates and when people become candidates on our guidance page for candidates and agents . Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for The regulated period](#)

Local campaigns at council elections Spending limits Spending limits During a regulated period, non-party campaigners are subject to limits on their spending on campaign activity. The spending limit for council elections is: £50 plus 0.5p per local government elector in the ward who is registered to vote on the last day for publication of the notice of election in the ward For example If there are 1,000 people on the ward electoral register, your spending limit for campaigning for or against a candidate would be: £50 + (1000 x 0.5p) £50 + (£5) = £55 Your local elections office will be able to give you the number of electors in the ward. You can find the contact details for your local elections office on our [Elections in your area](#) page . You should keep a record of your spending, to make sure that you do not exceed the spending limit. Any spending over these limits must be authorised by the agent of the relevant candidate. The authorised spending will count as candidate spending and towards the candidate's spending limit. Last updated: 17 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Spending limits](#)

The regulated period Reporting Reporting If

authorisation is given, the agent will need to include your spending in the candidate spending return. You will need to give the agent the necessary details for that spending to be included. If you spend more than the limit you must also complete a spending return and declaration and deliver these to the relevant Returning Officer within 21 days of the result being declared. You can find contact details for the local elections office using our postcode lookup . Non party campaigner s75A spending return (PDF) Non party campaigner s75A declaration (PDF) Last updated: 22 December 2021 Book traversal links for Reporting Spending limits Imprints Imprints Whenever printed election material is published, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an 'imprint') to show who is responsible for the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning. Please see our imprint factsheet for non-party campaigners for guidance on using imprints on election material: Non-Party Imprints at Scottish Parliamentary Elections and council elections in Scotland Last updated: 17 December 2021 Book traversal links for Imprints Reporting

Election Pacts Election pacts This guidance is for candidates and parties who are entering an election pact and want information about how the rules work when they do this. An election pact is where a party or candidate reaches an agreement not to stand as a candidate in a seat, in order to give another party or candidate a better chance of winning the seat. There is nothing wrong with candidates or parties reaching this kind of agreement, any arrangement is a matter for them. The aim of this guidance is to ensure that any spending and donations is properly reported. Election pacts are not defined in electoral law but we recognise they are becoming more common. The application of the rules in this area is complex and will vary according to the facts. If you are entering an election pact, please contact us to discuss your individual circumstances. This guidance does not cover non-party campaigners who are not political parties and who are working together or parties and candidates who are working with established non-party campaigners. For more on how this works see our guidance for non-party campaigners . [Book traversal links for Election Pacts](#)

What does an election pact look like? What does an election pact look like When we use the term 'election pact' we mean where a party or candidate reaches an agreement not to stand a candidate in a seat, in order to give another candidate or party a better chance of winning the seat. This could be an informal arrangement in a single seat or a more organised agreement by several parties across several seats. We have considered the rules in the following examples: you are party A and you want to enter a pact with Party B. You publicise this and in doing so promote your party to voters. you are Party A and you reach an agreement with Party B that you will not stand a candidate in a constituency. You do not announce the pact or campaign in any way. You are party A and you reach an agreement with Party B that you will not stand a candidate in a constituency. You announce this publicly but you do not campaign. you are Party A and you reach an agreement with Party B. You publicise the pact and promote the party or candidate of Party B in the constituency. you are Party A involved in a pact with several other parties across constituencies. There are public announcements and campaigning. If your party is campaigning for: a candidate that is not standing in the name of your party another party you might be treated as a non-party campaigner. You should carefully consider in what capacity you are acting and where any spending should be reported. How you report spending will be a matter of the facts in each instance. Last updated: 24 May 2021 [Book traversal links for What does an election pact look like?](#)

Election Pacts Important things to remember about election pacts Important things to remember about election pacts There is nothing wrong with candidates and parties reaching this kind of agreement, however they need to observe the rules and ensure that any spending or donation given is properly reported. Agents need to authorise candidate spending. Where notional spending is being incurred, the candidate or their agent must make use of it for it to be notional spending. A registered political party can also be a registered non-party campaigner. A party who registers as a non-party campaigner will have to complete a separate return to report its non-party campaigner spending. Registered political parties cannot donate, via notional spending or directly to a non-party campaigner. You must ensure that any donation you receive as a non-party campaigner is from a permissible source. Last updated: 10 August 2021 [Book traversal links for Important things to remember about election pacts](#)

What does an election pact look like? Which laws might apply? Which laws might apply? The application of the rules in this area is complex and will vary according to the facts. If you are entering an election pact, please contact us to discuss your individual circumstances. **Party spending** Some spending might be your own party spending. This is likely to be the

case where spending is promoting your own party, for example where you are publicly proposing another party enter a pact with you. Notional spending for the candidate If you spend money promoting another party's candidate and the candidate makes use of that spending, then this will be notional spending for the candidate. The candidate will report it in their spending return as notional spending and as a donation from you. This is likely to be the case where you are working with the candidate on their campaign. You can find more information about how a candidate makes use of something and notional spending here. Notional spending for the party If you spend money that promotes another party and the party makes use of it, this is notional spending for the party. They must report it in their spending return as notional spending and as a donation. This is likely to be the case where you are working with the party on their campaign. You can find more information about notional spending here . Local non-party campaigning If you spend money campaigning for or against a particular candidate in a particular electoral area, and this spending is not used by the candidate, then this is local non-party campaigning. At a UK parliamentary general election, there is a £700 limit in a constituency. Over this limit needs to be authorised by the candidate's agent and appear in their return. This is likely if you are spending money in a particular constituency but doing so independently of the candidate that you are supporting. You can find more information about local non-party campaigner spending here . General non-party campaigning If you spend money campaigning for or against a number of candidates or parties over a number of electoral areas, and this spending is not used by the candidates or their parties, then this is general non-party campaigning. There are registration thresholds for general non-party campaigners in each part of the UK. If you intend to exceed these, you must register with us. Registered non-party campaigners get higher spending limits and must report their spending at the end of each election. This is likely to apply if you are spending money promoting candidates or parties over a number of constituencies, but doing so independently of the candidates and parties you are supporting. You can find more information about general non-party campaigner spending here . Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Which laws might apply?

Important things to remember about election pacts You want to enter a pact with Party B and you publicly announce this You want to enter a pact with Party B and you publicly announce this Where you as a party are seeking a pact and there is public activity around this, spending is likely to be spending promoting your party. For example you might make a public call to other parties to join or arrange a pact to achieve an outcome. Your spending on this is likely to be spending promoting your own party. No other party is involved at this point. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for You want to enter a pact with Party B and you publicly announce this Which laws might apply? You are Party A and you enter a pact with Party B but do not announce it or campaign You are Party A and you enter a pact with Party B but do not announce it or campaign The rules on spending do not cover the organisation of an electoral pact where there is no other activity. There is no spending in this circumstance where the pact has been agreed but not publicised and no campaigning has occurred. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for You are Party A and you enter a pact with Party B but do not announce it or campaign You want to enter a pact with Party B and you publicly announce this You are Party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it but you don't campaign You are Party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it but you don't campaign You are party A and you enter into an election pact with Party B. Party B's candidate will stand in the electoral area. You publicise the pact but you do not campaign for Party B or the candidate. You will

only be required to consider reporting any spending to do with the public announcement. You need to look at this spending to work out if it is: your own party spending by you as the party that is standing aside notional spending by you on behalf of the candidate notional spending by you on behalf of the party that is standing a candidate Where it will be reported depends on the content of the announcement and whether the candidate or party B has made use of it. Where there is co-ordination of the announcement and it is not spending promoting your party, it is likely that this will be notional spending for the candidate or Party B. This is because they are likely to have made use of it and therefore the rules on notional spending apply. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for You are Party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it but you don't campaign You are Party A and you enter a pact with Party B but do not announce it or campaign You are party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it and then campaign You are party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it and then campaign If you enter an election pact and then campaign either for the candidate or party that is standing the candidate, there will be implications for reporting spending and donations. In the first instance the candidate's agent should consider whether any of your spending is used by the candidate in his or her campaign. If so this will be notional spending and must appear in the candidate return. This is likely where you are working with the candidate on their campaign. It is also possible that you could be incurring notional spending on behalf of the party that is standing the candidate. This will be the case where you are working closely with the other party and promoting them in your material. In some circumstances the spending on campaigning by you will be non-party campaigner spending. This is likely where your spending is not used by the candidate or party that is standing, for example you do not tell them about it. Where you campaign for or against a candidate or advise your supporters to do so, then depending on how that occurs, the local non-party campaigning rules may apply to your spending. This is limited to £700 at a UKPGE. When this kind of activity happens across several constituencies or your campaigning is focused on party B, it is likely to engage the general non-party campaigner rules. You will need to consider registering with us. If you register with us you will need to report your spending in separate return from your party return. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for You are party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it and then campaign You are Party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it but you don't campaign You are one of several parties who are part of a large pact across several constituencies You are one of several parties who are part of a large pact across several constituencies Where two or more parties come together to form an electoral pact and do this on a larger scale the general non-party campaigner rules will sometimes be engaged. We are assuming that in this instance there will be some public announcement and some campaigning done by one party for another party or its candidates. Careful consideration should be given as to where the spending on the public facing and organisational activity should appear. In the first instance you should consider whether this is spending: promoting your party notional spending for a particular candidate notional spending for another party If the spending is not candidate or party spending, that is it is independent of the parties and candidates involved, it is likely to be non-party campaigner spending. You should then consider which non-party campaigning rules apply. There are rules around general campaigning by non-party campaigners and this includes for or against a category of candidates. Where there is a substantial network of electoral pacts, it is likely these rules that will cover this activity. This means that spending on certain activities will be

regulated and if you spend over £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland you must register with us as a non-party campaigner. This is a separate registration from your party registration. It means you will need to do a separate return for your non-party campaigner spending. You do not need to report your donations separately. If there are several parties who are working together and some of those parties are acting as non-party campaigners you will need to carefully consider the joint campaigning rules. These rules apply where non-party campaigners are spending money as part of a common plan between two or more non-party campaigners. Last updated: 24 May 2021

Book traversal links for You are one of several parties who are part of a large pact across several constituencies

You are party A and enter a pact with Party B, you announce it and then campaign

Non-party campaigners: Local elections in England Introduction This guidance is for non-party campaigners who are campaigning at local elections in England. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, non-party campaigners must follow rules about how much they can spend on campaign activities in the run up to certain elections. This guidance explains how the rules apply. [Book traversal links for Non-party campaigners: Local elections in England](#)

What are non-party campaigners? What are non-party campaigners? Non-party campaigners are individuals or organisations that campaign in elections, but are not standing as political parties or candidates. Non-party campaigners have to follow certain rules in the run-up to elections. The types of non-party campaigns There are two types of non-party campaigns. These are: General campaigns Local campaigns Campaigns for or against: one or more political parties parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies other categories of candidate Campaigns for or against: one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area You can find more information about the different types of campaigns in our guidance [Non-party campaigners: Where to start](#) . The general campaign rules do not apply at elections in England in May 2022. You therefore do not have to register with us or report donations to us, and spending on activities directed only at your members will still count towards your spending total. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for What are non-party campaigners?](#)

Non-party campaigners: Local elections in England Local campaigns at local elections Local campaigns at local elections If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a local election in England, you are covered by the rules for local campaigns. The Electoral Commission does not regulate local campaigning. Complaints about possible breaches should be made to the police. Under the local campaign rules, there are limits on how much you can spend on campaigning for or against particular candidates in a constituency or local electoral area. These limits are different, depending on the size of the electorate in the relevant area. These spending limits cover spending on most campaign activities, including leaflets, meetings and digital campaigning. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Local campaigns at local elections](#)

What are non-party campaigners? The regulated period The regulated period We call the time when the spending limits and rules apply the regulated period. The regulated period starts on the day after the person you are campaigning for or against officially becomes a candidate, and finishes on polling day. You can find more information about polling dates and when people become candidates on our guidance page for candidates and agents . Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for The regulated period](#)

Local campaigns at local elections Spending limits Spending limits During a regulated period, non-party campaigners are subject to limits on their spending on campaign activity. The spending limit for local elections is: £50 plus 0.5p per local government elector in the ward who is registered to vote on the last day for publication of the notice of election in the ward For example If there are 1,000 people on the ward electoral register, your spending limit for campaigning for or against a candidate would be: £50 + (1000 x 0.5p) £50 + (£5) = £55 Your local elections office will be able to give you the number of electors in the ward. You can find the contact details for your local elections office on our [Elections in your area](#) page . You should keep a record of your spending, to make sure that you do not exceed the spending limit. Any spending over these limits must be authorised by the agent of the relevant candidate. The authorised spending will count as candidate spending and towards the candidate's spending limit. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Spending limits](#)

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will need to include your spending in the candidate spending return. You will need to give the agent the necessary details for that spending to be included. If you spend more than the limit you must also complete a spending return and declaration and deliver these to the relevant Returning Officer within 21 days of the result being declared. You can find contact details for the local elections office using our postcode lookup . Non party campaigner s75 spending return (PDF) Non party campaigner s75 declaration (PDF) Last updated: 8 December 2021 Book traversal links for Reporting Spending limits Imprints Imprints Whenever printed election material is published, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an 'imprint') to show who is responsible for the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning. Please see our imprint factsheet for non-party campaigners for guidance on using imprints on election material: Imprints for Non-Party s: UK Parliamentary elections, and elections in England, Wales and Northern Ireland Last updated: 8 December 2021 Book traversal links for Imprints Reporting

Non-party campaigners: Local elections in Wales Introduction This guidance is for non-party campaigners who are campaigning at local elections in Wales. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, non-party campaigners must follow rules about how much they can spend on campaign activities in the run up to certain elections. This guidance explains how the rules apply. [Book traversal links for Non-party campaigners: Local elections in Wales](#)

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Local campaigns at local elections Local campaigns at local elections If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a local election in Wales, you are covered by the rules for local campaigns. The Electoral Commission does not regulate local campaigning. Complaints about possible breaches should be made to the police. Under the local campaign rules, there are limits on how much you can spend on campaigning for or against particular candidates in a constituency or local electoral area. These limits are different, depending on the size of the electorate in the relevant area. These spending limits cover spending on most campaign activities, including leaflets, meetings and digital campaigning. Last updated: 9 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Local campaigns at local elections](#)

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The regulated period Reporting Reporting If authorisation is given, the agent

will need to include your spending in the candidate spending return. You will need to give the agent the necessary details for that spending to be included. If you spend more than the limit you must also complete a spending return and declaration and deliver these to the relevant Returning Officer within 21 days of the result being declared. You can find contact details for the local elections office using our postcode lookup . Non party campaigner s75 spending return (PDF) Non party campaigner s75 declaration (PDF) Last updated: 8 December 2021 Book traversal links for Reporting Spending limits Imprints Imprints Whenever printed election material is published, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an 'imprint') to show who is responsible for the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning. Please see our imprint factsheet for non-party campaigners for guidance on using imprints on election material: Imprints for Non-Party s: UK Parliamentary elections, and elections in England, Wales and Northern Ireland Last updated: 8 December 2021 Book traversal links for Imprints Reporting

Are you holding a hustings? Hustings intro This guidance is for anyone organising a hustings. Hustings A hustings is a meeting where election candidates or parties debate policies and answer questions from the audience. Hustings provide voters with an opportunity to hear the views of candidates or parties. When all candidates or parties standing are invited, a hustings does not promote any particular candidate or party because they all have the opportunity to speak and be questioned. This guidance explains when spending on a hustings may be regulated and when it is not. Some hustings cannot be reasonably regarded as intended to promote any parties or candidates over any others. We call this a 'non-selective hustings'. Spending on a non-selective hustings is not regulated and does not need to be reported by anyone. The guidance also explains situations in which a hustings can be reasonably regarded as intended to promote the candidates or parties who attend. We call this a 'selective hustings'. In this case either the hustings organiser or the candidates or parties may need to account for the spending. You can choose whether your hustings is selective or non-selective. Book traversal links for Are you holding a hustings? Non-selective hustings Non-selective hustings A non-selective hustings is a hustings that cannot reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against particular political parties or candidates. Spending on a non-selective hustings is not regulated. In our view, your hustings will be non-selective if: you have invited all the candidates or parties known to be standing in the constituency, region or other electoral area, or you have impartial reasons for not inviting certain candidates or parties Impartial reasons may emerge from the following considerations: resources and other practicalities that limit the numbers of people you can invite, for example time or space security concerns local prominence of some parties or candidates over others the number of elected representatives at the local or national level recent election results in the area Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Non-selective hustings Are you holding a hustings? Non-selective hustings: Good practice recommendations Non-selective hustings: Good practice recommendations If you decide not to invite all candidates for impartial reasons, there are some good practice recommendations you should follow if you want to ensure your hustings is genuinely not promoting particular candidates or parties more than others: Inform the audience at the meeting of any candidates or parties standing who haven't been invited Be prepared to explain your impartial reasons to candidates or parties you haven't invited Make sure that candidates or parties you invite represent a reasonable variety of view, from different parts of the political spectrum Allow each candidate or party representative attending a fair chance to answer questions and, where appropriate, a reasonable opportunity to respond to points made against them by other candidates or party representatives Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Non-selective hustings: Good practice recommendations Non-selective hustings Selective hustings Selective hustings A selective hustings is a hustings that can reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against particular political parties or candidates – for example, if you invite some candidates or parties to your hustings and do not have impartial reasons for excluding the others. Spending on a selective hustings may, in certain circumstances, be regulated and count towards your spending limit or registration threshold in the run up to an election. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Selective hustings Non-selective hustings: Good practice recommendations Accounting for the spending Accounting for the spending If you hold a non-selective hustings then the spending will not be regulated. Usually spending on a hustings is low, and it is unlikely that spending on a selective hustings alone will reach a spending limit or

require you to register with the Electoral Commission. If you hold a selective hustings, you should keep a record of how much you spend, along with any other spending on regulated campaigning, and be aware of the registration thresholds and spending limits. There are spending limits in each election. During the regulated period before certain major elections, campaigners will be required to register if they spend over a certain amount. If you spend a large amount of money on organising a selective hustings, or you engage in further regulated campaign activity during a regulated period, then you may need to be aware of the spending limits and registration thresholds. These can be found in our non-party campaigner guidance or in the candidate guidance for the relevant election. Candidate or party spending In some cases the candidate or party will have to account for the spending incurred on a selective hustings. This may be the case for a hustings in any election. If a candidate or party pays a fee to attend the hustings (whether it is selective or non-selective), this will count as election spending and must be reported in the relevant return. In some hustings, the costs of putting on the event will count as election spending for the candidates or parties involved. This will be the case if the hustings is run for the benefit of those candidates or parties. If you think this may be the case, you should contact us before you hold the hustings. Last updated: 24 May 2021

[Book traversal links for Accounting for the spending](#) [Selective hustings](#) [Other considerations for your event](#) [Security and accessibility](#) We do not regulate the conduct or management of a hustings. However we do recommend that if you organise a hustings, you should give some thought to what you will do to ensure the safety and security of the representatives who attend your event, and control the event effectively. It is important that voters have access to information be enable them to make an informed decision when casting their vote. You should therefore think about how you will make your event accessible. Last updated: 10 July 2023

[Book traversal links for Other considerations for your event](#) [Accounting for the spending](#) [Charities running a hustings](#) [Charities running a hustings](#) If you are a charity running a hustings, we recommend you read the guidance from the relevant charity regulator: [Part of UK Regulator](#) [England and Wales Charity Commission for England and Wales](#) [Scotland OSCR](#) [Northern Ireland Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#) Charities must not support or oppose any particular political party or candidate. One way of making sure that a charity does not do this is to hold non-selective hustings featuring candidates from as wide a political spectrum as possible. In some circumstances, charity law allows charities not to invite a candidate or party on the basis of their views or policies. For example, in their guidance for [and Welsh charities](#), the Charity Commission of England and Wales say this could apply to: “a representative from a political party which advocates policies which are in contravention of the charity’s objects, or whose presence or views are likely to alienate the charity’s supporters.” Although they are clear that: “a charity would have to have very strong reasons for deciding not to invite a mainstream political party.” ([Charities, Elections and Referendums](#) p3) It can be justifiable for a charity to hold a selective hustings of this kind. However, in our view, if you decide not to invite a party or candidate on the basis of their views or policies, this is not an impartial reason, in the sense that we have defined in this guidance. The hustings would therefore be selective. If the selective hustings takes place in a regulated period, then the spending will be regulated and count as regulated spending towards your total in the relevant part of the UK. Spending on a hustings is often low. You only need to register with us if you are going to spend over £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland on regulated campaign activity during the

regulated period. In a regulated period for a UK parliamentary general election, there is a limit of £9,750 for regulated spending which affects a particular constituency. Last updated: 24 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Charities running a hustings](#) Other considerations for your event

Non-party campaigners: Where to start What is a non-party campaigner? Lots of individuals and organisations campaign around elections without standing candidates themselves. We call them 'non-party campaigners'. Non-party campaigners are vital to a healthy democracy and, as a society, we must encourage their active participation, including during elections. In many cases, spending on campaigns and activities will not be regulated. However, where there is significant spending on campaigning, there are rules that campaigners must follow to ensure that they provide transparency for voters on their campaign finances. We regulate compliance with those rules. Who is this guidance for? This guidance is for anyone spending significant amounts of money on issues-based campaigns, who need to work out if any of their campaign spending is regulated. [Book traversal links for Non-party campaigners: Where to start](#) What are the rules for non-party campaigners? What are the rules for non-party campaigners? There are two types of non-party campaigns. These are: General campaigns Local campaigns Campaigns for or against: one or more political parties parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies other categories of candidate Campaigns for or against: one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area Local campaigns Local campaigns are subject to a spending limit. For example, the limit for campaigning for or against one or more candidates in a constituency in a UK Parliamentary general election is £700. The Electoral Commission does not regulate local non-party campaigning and this guidance does not cover the local campaign rules in detail. Complaints about breaches of the local campaign rules should be made to the police. General campaigns The Electoral Commission regulates general non-party campaigns. Spending on the following activities can be regulated: election material canvassing and market research public rallies or public events press conferences or other media events transport in connection with publicising your campaign The rest of this guidance document is about the general campaign rules. Last updated: 24 May 2021 [Book traversal links for What are the rules for non-party campaigners?](#) Non-party campaigners: Where to start Elections Act 2022: Changes for non-party campaigners - overview Elections Act 2022 - an overview of changes for non-party campaigners The Elections Act 2022 ('the Elections Act') introduced new laws for non-party campaigners at: UK Parliamentary general elections (UKPGEs) Northern Ireland Assembly elections The laws do not apply to: Scottish Parliament elections Senedd elections except where the regulated periods for these elections overlap with a regulated period for a UKPGE. The changes came into force on 24 November 2022 but will only apply to a UK Parliamentary general election held after 24 November 2023. If a UK Parliamentary general election is held before this time, the current spending laws for non-party campaigners will apply. The changes that affect NI Assembly elections will, however, apply to the next set of these elections. The Elections Act makes changes to: who can spend money on campaigning at elections who can submit a notification to the Commission when you need to report your spending (which is called 'controlled expenditure' in legislation) Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Elections Act 2022: Changes for non-party campaigners - overview](#) What are the rules for non-party campaigners? Elections Act 2022: Code of Practice for non-party campaigners Code of Practice The Elections Act also introduced a duty on the Electoral Commission to produce a statutory code for non-party campaigners at UKPGE and NI Assembly elections. We are committed to preparing a Code that reflects the law and is as clear and helpful as possible. The Code will explain the spending and donation controls that non-party campaigners must comply with. It also provides a new statutory defence for non-party campaigners who comply with the Code. The Code will be different from

other types of guidance that we produce because it will be approved by the UK Parliament. On 24 November we will launch our consultation on the draft Code of Practice. The consultation will run for 8 weeks until 20 January 2023. Further information about our consultation can be found [here](#). We aim to submit the final draft to the Minister in early March 2023 for their consideration. The Minister may amend the draft before it is laid in Parliament for approval. We will publish detailed guidance for non-party campaigners, that includes case studies and examples, to sit alongside the Code once it has been approved by the UK Parliament. We expect this to be in the summer of 2023. Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for Elections Act 2022: Code of Practice for non-party campaigners](#)
[Elections Act 2022: Changes for non-party campaigners - overview](#)
[Elections Act 2022: New limits on campaigning by non-UK individuals and organisations](#)
[New limits on campaigning by non-UK individuals and organisations](#)
[The Act introduced new restrictions on who can campaign at UKPGE and NI Assembly elections. Individuals and organisations that are not based in the UK, do not have a UK connection or are not on a UK electoral register cannot spend more than £700 on regulated campaign activity. A non-party campaigner can only spend more than £700 on regulated campaign activity if they are:](#)
[an individual registered on a UK electoral register or resident in the UK](#)
[a UK registered company which is incorporated in the UK and carries on business in the UK](#)
[a UK registered trade union](#)
[a UK registered building society](#)
[a UK registered limited liability partnership which carries on business in the UK](#)
[a UK registered friendly, industrial or provident society](#)
[an unincorporated association that has its main office in the UK and carries on the majority of its business or other activities in the UK](#)
[a body incorporated by Royal Charter](#)
[a UK charitable incorporated organisation](#)
[a Scottish partnership which carries on business in the UK](#)
[an unincorporated association with the requisite UK connection](#)
[Unincorporated association with the requisite UK connection](#)
[The Act introduced a new type of organisation that can spend money on regulated campaign activity. An unincorporated association has 'the requisite UK connection' if it consists of two or more persons, all of whom are registered overseas electors. Unincorporated associations with the requisite UK connection \(unlike unincorporated associations that have its main office in the UK and carry on the majority of its business or activities in the UK\) are not eligible to submit a notification to the Commission and cannot spend more than £10,000 on regulated campaign activity.](#)

Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for Elections Act 2022: New limits on campaigning by non-UK individuals and organisations](#)
[Elections Act 2022: Code of Practice for non-party campaigners](#)
[Elections Act 2022: New notification threshold](#)
[New notification threshold](#)
[Any non-party campaigners intending to spend more than £10,000 on regulated campaign activity in the period \(known as the 'regulated period'\) before a UKPGE or NI Assembly election must notify the Commission. The regulated period for non-party campaigners at a UK Parliamentary general election is the 365-day period leading up to, and including, polling day. For NI Assembly elections, this is the four months immediately before polling day. In the event of an extraordinary NI Assembly election, the regulated period starts on the day on which the extraordinary poll is announced. Only the following types of individuals or organisations are eligible to submit a notification: an individual registered on a UK electoral register or resident in the UK](#)
[a UK registered company which is incorporated in the UK and carries on business in the UK](#)
[a UK registered trade union](#)
[a UK registered building society](#)
[a UK registered limited liability partnership which carries on business in the UK](#)
[a UK registered friendly, industrial or provident society](#)
[an unincorporated association that has its main office in the UK](#)

and carries out the majority of its business or other activities in the UK a body incorporated by Royal Charter a UK charitable incorporated organisation a Scottish partnership which carries on business in the UK If you do not fall into one of these categories you cannot spend more than £10,000 on non-party campaigning at a UKPGE or NI Assembly election. You must give a notification to the Commission and that notification must be in force before you spend more than £10,000 on regulated campaign activity. Example 1 - campaign spending of less than £10,000 A campaigning group, Wildlife Britain, which is a UK registered company incorporated in the UK and which carries out business in the UK, intends to spend £8,000 at a UKPGE held after November 2023. This money will be spent on creating and printing leaflets in support of a group of candidates that support its policies. These will be distributed in the two weeks before the election. Since their total expenditure is under £10,000, they do not need to send a notification to register with us as a non-party campaigner or report their spending after the election. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Elections Act 2022: New notification threshold Elections Act 2022: New limits on campaigning by non-UK individuals and organisations How to notify us to register as a non-party campaigner How to notify us to register as a non-party campaigner If you want to register as a non-party campaigner, you can make an online notification by visiting PFR Online . Alternatively, you can send us your notification by filling in Form TP1 and sending a signed copy of the form to us by email. In your notification, you can indicate whether your spending will fall below the reporting thresholds at UKPGEs. Please note, however, this reporting threshold will only be applicable for UK Parliamentary general elections held after 24 November 2023. When we receive your notification, we will consider the information you have provided and confirm in writing when your notification is in force. Your registration lasts for 15 months from the date on which you delivered a registration notification to us, but if it is due to expire during a regulated period it will be automatically extended until the end of that regulated period. If you want to renew your registration, you must send us Form TP3 no sooner than one month prior to the 12 month anniversary of your original notification and no later than three months after that date. Your notification will expire if you do not submit your renewal to us during this time. If your notification expires and you want to re-register, you will need to make a new notification. You can also renew using PFR Online . New restriction on registered political parties notifying as non-party campaigners If you are a registered non-party campaigner, you will not be able to register as a political party until you are no longer registered as a non-party campaigner. Registered political parties can no longer submit a notification as a non-party campaigner. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for How to notify us to register as a non-party campaigner Elections Act 2022: New notification threshold Elections Act 2022: Reporting threshold Reporting threshold The Act introduced a reporting threshold for registered non-party campaigners. Only registered non-party campaigners who spend more than £20,000 in England, or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland must record and report their spending and donations. In the Act, this is called the 'lower tier spending limit'. We call this the 'reporting threshold'. You can choose to notify the Commission at the time of registration that you do not intend to spend more than £20,000 in England, or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. Non-party campaigners who make this declaration do not need to report any spending or donations to us either in the pre-poll period or after the election, as long as their spending remains below the reporting threshold. These campaigners must, however, ensure that they comply with the law around the control of

donations, only accepting donations over £500 from permissible sources. If you are incurring spending in more than one nation of the UK, you will become subject to the requirements of the reporting threshold if you plan to exceed the spending limit on controlled expenditure in any of the nations. If, however, you do not exceed the reporting threshold limits in any of the nations, you will remain exempt from the reporting requirements. Once a non-party campaigner is registered, they may change their notification in relation to the reporting threshold if their spending intentions change. Non-party campaigners will not be penalised for withdrawing or submitting a notification once they are registered, but they must not exceed the reporting threshold until their notification has been processed by us and is in force. If you intend to only incur spending in either Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, then the notification threshold (£10,000) and the reporting threshold (£10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland) are the same. You therefore do not need to make a declaration when you notify us, and you must record and report your spending and donations.

Example 2 - regulated campaign spending below the reporting threshold A registered non-party campaigner, Save the Trees, chose to include a declaration that they would not exceed the reporting threshold at UKPGEs when they submitted their notification to register with us. During the regulated period at a UKPGE held after November 2023, they spent a total of £33,000 across England, Scotland and Wales on controlled expenditure. Save the Trees spent £18,000 in England, £9,000 in Scotland and £6,000 in Wales on its campaigning activities at the election. As a registered non-party campaigner, they needed to ensure that they complied with the controls on receiving and accepting permissible donations over £500. They also made sure that they did not spend in excess of the reporting threshold before withdrawing their declaration with the Commission (which, in this case, they did not need to do). Since they did not exceed the reporting threshold in any nation in the UK, they did not need to submit quarterly or weekly pre-poll donation reports in the regulated period or report their spending and donations after the election.

Example 3 - regulated campaign spending above the reporting threshold Alex Smith, an individual who is on the electoral register, has a budget of £33,000 to spend at a UKPGE in December 2024. They intend to use this money supporting their parties of choice on political adverts. They wish to spend £25,000 in England and £8,000 in Northern Ireland. As they are spending more than £10,000, they must send a notification to register with us before they spend more than £10,000 across both areas. Additionally, since they intend to spend more than £20,000 in England, they must comply with all the controls on receiving and accepting donations, record keeping, receiving and paying invoices within the statutory timescales, quarterly and weekly pre-poll reporting during the regulated period and post-election spending and donation reporting.

Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for Elections Act 2022: Reporting threshold](#) [How to notify us to register as a non-party campaigner](#) [Elections Act 2022: Reporting at a UKPGE](#) [Reporting requirements at a UKPGE](#) [If you intend to spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in either Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland on controlled expenditure at a UKPGE, your spending will exceed the reporting threshold. As a result, you will be required to report your spending and donations. Non-party campaigners who meet the reporting threshold must ensure that they:](#)

- [Submit quarterly donation reports during the regulated period of a UKPGE](#)
- [Submit weekly donation reports during the regulated period of a UKPGE](#)
- [Report their campaign spending and donations after a UKPGE within the statutory deadlines](#)
- [Prepare a statement of accounts for the regulated period \(unless the campaigner is an individual or has prepared a statement of accounts for another legal purpose\)](#)

The

spending limits that restrict the total amount a non-party campaigner can spend on regulated campaign activity during a regulated period have not been changed by the Elections Act 2022. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Elections Act 2022: Reporting at a UKPGE](#) Elections Act 2022: Reporting threshold What spending is regulated? What spending is regulated? If you spend money on one of the five activities during a regulated period, you need to apply two tests to your spending to decide if it is regulated: the purpose test the public test For your spending to be regulated, it must meet the purpose test. In addition, for three types of activity, the public test must also be met. The purpose test The purpose test is met if your activity can reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against: one or more political parties political parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies other categories of candidates, for example, candidates who went to a state school, or independent candidates (who are not standing in the name of a political party) This test applies to any of the five campaign activities. The public test The public test is met if your activity is aimed at the public or a section of the public. Your members and committed supporters do not count as members of the public. This test applies to: election material canvassing and market research public rallies or public events For more details on the public test, please see pages 7-8 of [Overview of regulated non-party campaigning](#) It is important that you think carefully when applying the tests for regulated spending, because there are electoral offences linked to failing to follow the rules. Most of the rest of this guidance document focuses on how to apply the purpose test to your campaign activities. Last updated: 24 May 2021 [Book traversal links for](#) What spending is regulated? Elections Act 2022: Reporting at a UKPGE Does your campaign activity meet the purpose test? Does your campaign activity meet the purpose test? You can work out whether your campaign meets the purpose test by looking at the following: whether it includes a call to action to voters tone context and timing how a reasonable person would see your activity These factors should be considered as a whole rather than individually. You can use the questions below to help you look at these factors. If, on balance, the answer to the questions is 'yes', then it is likely that your campaigning activity meets the purpose test. If one or two of the answers is 'yes', that does not necessarily mean that your campaign activity meets the purpose test. The questions are a guide for how to decide whether the activity is reasonably regarded as intended to influence voters in who they vote for. Call to action to voters. Is your campaign asking people to vote for or against a particular political party, parties or category of candidate at an upcoming election? Can it reasonably be seen as implicitly asking them to? Would someone think that your campaign is asking them to? It is unlikely that a public campaign without an explicit or implicit call to action to voters will meet the purpose test. Tone. Are you negative or positive towards: a political party or parties, a category of candidate, or a policy closely and publicly associated with a party or category of candidate? Context and timing. Context: Are you campaigning on a policy that will make a voter think of a particular party or category of candidates? For example: Does the policy clearly represent an area of difference between political parties that the voters you are targeting are likely to be aware of? Are the policy and political parties' views on it prominent in public debate at the time that you design and launch your campaign? Are you campaigning as a reaction to a policy or position of a political party? Timing: Did your campaign start close to the date of an election? The closer the election is, the more likely it is that a reasonable person would think that your campaign is intended to influence people to vote for or against a political party,

parties or category of candidate. If your campaign has been running for a long time prior to the election, it is less likely that a reasonable person would think it is aimed at the election. How would a reasonable person see your activity? Would a reasonable person think your campaign is intended to influence people to vote for or against a political party, parties or category of candidate at an upcoming election?

Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Does your campaign activity meet the purpose test? What spending is regulated? Purpose test: Intention Purpose test: Intention When you intend something, you can in some circumstances be reasonably regarded as having a different intention, or a further intention. The primary intention of your campaign may not be to influence voters. For example, you might run a campaign with one or more of the following intentions: raising awareness of an issue influencing political parties to adopt a policy in their manifestos campaigning for or against government legislation providing information to voters encouraging people to register to vote encouraging people to vote, but not for anyone in particular A campaign that can be reasonably regarded as having one of these intentions will not meet the purpose test unless it can also be reasonably regarded as having the intention to influence voters to vote for or against a political party or category of candidates. Even if your primary intention is something else, your campaign will still meet the purpose test if it can be reasonably regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against a political party or category of candidates. For example, suppose for example your intention is to influence political parties to adopt a policy. If you go about this by identifying and promoting parties and candidates who have already adopted the policy, then this will meet the purpose test. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Purpose test: Intention Does your campaign activity meet the purpose test? Purpose test: Campaigning on an issue Purpose test: Campaigning on an issue Campaigns that mention political parties or candidates In almost all cases, an activity will meet the purpose test if it: explicitly promotes political parties or candidates who support your campaign's aims implicitly promotes some parties or candidates over others, for example by setting out or comparing the merits of the positions of political parties or candidates on a policy Campaigns that do not mention political parties or candidates If your campaign does not mention candidates, parties, or elections, then your spending is less likely to be regulated. This is because on the balance of the factors - in particular 'call to action to voters' and 'tone' - your activity is less likely to meet the purpose test. In order for an activity to meet the test, the voter needs to know which way they are being persuaded to vote. However, your campaign might identify a political party, parties, or group of candidates implicitly, without naming them. This could happen if a policy or issue is so closely and publicly associated with a party, parties or category of candidates that it is effectively a shorthand for them in your campaign. In this case, your campaign will meet the purpose test if, after assessing all the factors, it is reasonable to regard your campaign activity on the policy as intended to influence voters to vote for or against those political parties or candidates. Specific policies may be more likely than more general issues to be closely associated with parties or candidates. Example: 'Social care' and the 'dementia tax' at the 2017 UK Parliamentary general election Example: 'Social care' and the 'dementia tax' at the 2017 UK Parliamentary general election 'Social care' was a prominent issue at the time, but most prominent parties had a range of policies and positions on it. The general issue was not closely and publicly associated with any party or category of candidates. A campaign on social care would have been unlikely to meet the purpose test unless it specifically mentioned parties or

candidates. The 'dementia tax' was a particular clear and prominent policy of the Conservative and Unionist Party at the election, announced as part of their manifesto during the campaign. It was closely and publicly associated with them. A campaign against the dementia tax would have been much more likely to meet the purpose test on the balance of the factors – particularly because the very phrase 'dementia tax' is one that was coined and used by the Conservatives' opponents in that election campaign. Case studies from recent elections Our case studies give examples of issues-based campaigns from recent elections and explain whether or not they met the purpose test: Non-party campaigner case studies from recent elections Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Purpose test: Campaigning on an issue Purpose test: Intention What happens if the policy I have been campaigning on is adopted by a political party? What happens if the policy I have been campaigning on is adopted by a political party? A political party may publicly adopt policies that you are already campaigning for or against. If your campaign did not meet the purpose test before the party changed its position, your planned campaign remains unlikely to meet the test. However, as a result of the party changing their position, you might enhance or increase your spending on the issue over what you originally planned. In this case, the further campaign spending will be regulated if it can reasonably be regarded as intended to promote or criticise the party. As usual you should assess your campaign using the factors we have set out . For example, if you welcome a political party's commitment to a policy that you have campaigned on, and it is clear that you would welcome a commitment from any political party, this will typically not meet the purpose test. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for What happens if the policy I have been campaigning on is adopted by a political party? Purpose test: Campaigning on an issue Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities Some organisations have restrictions on their political activities, for example in their constitution, or charities who are bound by charity law. These organisations may find that abiding by these separate restrictions means that they are less likely to carry out activities that meet the purpose test. This is because the restrictions mean that many of the sorts of campaigns that meet the purpose test are prohibited for those organisations. For example, charities must remain independent of party politics and must not support a political party or candidate, or create a perception of support as a result of their actions or participation. If you are a charity and abide by charity law and guidance from the relevant charity regulator, in most circumstances your campaign activity is unlikely to meet the purpose test. Part of UK Charity regulator Website link England and Wales Charity Commission for England and Wales Scotland OSCR Northern Ireland Charity Commission of Northern Ireland You will still need to be aware of the non-party campaigner rules in case your activities meet the purpose test. In some circumstances, charities can and do carry out campaign activity that is regulated under electoral law. In the recent past, for example the UK Parliamentary general elections in 2015 and 2017, charities have conducted campaigns that met the tests for regulated spending, and have registered with us in accordance with the rules. Our case studies from recent elections provide examples of issues-based campaigning that will be helpful when applying the purpose test to your own campaigns. If you are planning a campaign and you are still unsure how it fits in with the rules for non-party campaigners, please get in touch and we can provide advice. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities What happens if the policy I have been

campaigning on is adopted by a political party? Purpose test: The regulated period in an early UK Parliamentary general election Purpose test: The regulated period in an early UK Parliamentary general election The non-party campaigner rules under PPERA only apply in the period before certain elections. This is known as the 'regulated period'. Election type Length of regulated period UK Parliamentary general elections 365 days before polling day Scottish Parliamentary elections Senedd elections Northern Ireland Assembly elections 4 months before polling day In an unscheduled UK Parliamentary general election, such as the 2017 UK Parliamentary general election, the time between the election's announcement and polling day is typically shorter than the length of the regulated period. When this happens, the regulated period will still run for 365 days. It will therefore have started before the election was announced. This does not happen in unscheduled elections to the Scottish Parliament, Senedd or Northern Ireland Assembly. It is a feature of early UK Parliamentary general elections. Campaign activity before an election is announced The retrospective nature of the regulated period may concern campaigners due to uncertainty about whether the rules apply. However, most campaign activity undertaken before an election is announced is unlikely to meet the purpose test. First, many campaigns are purely issues-based rather than focusing on candidates or parties. Policies and issues may not be sufficiently closely and publicly associated with a party, parties or category of candidates for the campaign activity to meet the purpose test. This is especially true when the campaigns were intended to take place outside of an election period, since then they are less likely to have a call to action to voters, or even to mention parties or candidates. Second, you are unlikely to be reasonably regarded as intending to influence people to vote in an election when you do not know or expect that the election is happening. Therefore, where this was the case, your activity is unlikely to have met the purpose test. The likely exceptions to this are if either: you ran campaigns which met the purpose test in a different election in the regulated period – for example you campaigned in local elections earlier in the year you anticipated or made reference to the future election before it was announced – for example "Vote Conservative in the coming election", or "Unseat MPs who voted for austerity". If you spend money on campaigning like this at any time, then you will need to keep a record of what you have spent. This is so that if an early UK Parliamentary general election is called, you will know how much regulated spending you have incurred in the regulated period. Last updated: 17 December 2021 Book traversal links for Purpose test: The regulated period in an early UK Parliamentary general election Purpose test: Charities and other organisations with limits on their political activities Staff costs and other overheads Staff costs and other overheads You will need to include staff costs, as well as other overheads, where they are associated with your regulated activities. Staff costs that are associated with your organisation's general, non-campaign related activities do not count as regulated campaign spending. If you have a member of staff working on regulated campaign activity as well as your organisation's other work, you will need to count a proportion of the staff salary which reflects the time spent working on regulated campaign activities. If your organisation already has an established way of apportioning these costs, you may decide to calculate staff costs incurred in relation to regulated campaign activities in the same way. In each case you should make an honest and reasonable assessment of the amount you have spent, based on the facts. You should be able to explain what the assessment is based on. Examples of calculating staff costs and overheads: Example 1 A member of staff estimates that they spent half of their time working on regulated activity during the

regulated period. You treat half of what you pay that staff member during the regulated period as regulated spending. Eg2 staff costs Example 2 You are planning an online campaign that will meet the purpose and public tests. From your budgeting and team planning you have estimated in advance that your Campaigns team will spend 20% of their time working on it for three months of the regulated period. If this estimate turns out to be correct, you count 20% of the staff costs for the Campaigns team for three months towards the spending on that online campaign. Eg 3 staff costs Example 3 Carrying out a canvassing campaign, your office telephone bills increase. The increase in the telephone costs counts towards the regulated spending for your campaign. You could estimate this increase by looking at your telephone bill at the same time last year, and calculating the extra you have spent this year. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Staff costs and other overheads Purpose test: The regulated period in an early UK Parliamentary general election Joint campaigning Joint campaigning If you and another campaigner are incurring joint spending in a joint campaign, then the regulated spending by each campaigner counts towards the regulated spending total for both campaigners. This is to stop campaigners combining their spending limits to avoid the rules. What we mean by joint spending We recognise that campaigners may come together to campaign in a variety of ways, and that these might change over the course of a campaign. Under electoral law, joint spending means spending money on regulated campaign activities where there is a common plan or arrangement between one or more non-party campaigners. You cannot be incurring joint spending if you are not planning on spending money – for example if the work is going to be done by volunteers. You are unlikely to be incurring joint spending if you: campaign on the same issue without a common plan or arrangement speak at another campaigner's event without being involved in any other way have informal discussions with another campaigner, or keep each other informed, in a way that does not involve decision-making or coordinating your plans endorse another campaign without having any further involvement – for example if you: sign a letter written by another campaigner add your branding to another campaign publicise your support for another campaign You are likely to be incurring joint spending if: you have joint advertising campaigns, leaflets or events you coordinate your regulated campaign activity with another campaigner – for example, if you agree that you should each cover particular areas, arguments or voters another campaigner can approve or has significant influence over your leaflets, websites, or other campaign activity For more on the joint campaigning rules, please see Joint campaigning for non-party campaigners Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Joint campaigning Staff costs and other overheads

Delivering the annual canvass - Wales Delivering the annual canvass - Wales The following guidance has been produced to support Electoral Registration Officers (ERO's) in planning for and delivering the annual canvass. It has been developed in close consultation with colleagues across the electoral community including the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Association of s (AEA), the Scottish Assessors Association (SAA), the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG) and the Welsh Electoral Practitioners Working Group (WEPWG). It reflects the ERO's legal obligations and what we, the AEA, the SAA and the ERRWG believe that EROs should expect of their staff in planning for and delivering the annual canvass. The guidance is directed towards the ERO and the duties they carry out. As these duties may, in practice, be carried out by deputies and/or appointed staff, we use the term 'you' throughout this guidance to mean the ERO and whoever is carrying out the ERO's functions on their behalf. Throughout this guidance we use 'must' to refer to a specific legal requirement and 'may / should' for recommended practice. The guidance has been produced based on, and should be read in accordance with, the requirements set out in section 9D of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and in the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001. The endnotes in this guidance refer to the relevant provisions that have been amended by The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 and The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2020. To help you use this guidance we have produced a Q&A document that should answer any initial queries you may have. Questions and answers document for the new style ERO guidance Updates to our guidance Change log Date of update Description of change February 2023 Updates to the requirement to Notify anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document June 2023 Application and determination deadlines updated for the Publication of the revised register following the annual canvass Book traversal links for Delivering the annual canvass - Wales Developing plans for the annual canvass Developing plans for the annual canvass Developing plans for the annual canvass This section contains guidance on how to develop your plans for the annual canvass. It covers project planning and risk management as well as some considerations for planning the delivery of specific processes. What is the annual canvass? The annual canvass requires you to contact all residential addresses in your area to help you establish if the information you currently hold on the electoral register is complete and accurate. There is a legal framework that sets out the statutory requirements of the annual canvass. Within this framework you, as Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), will need to make a number of decisions, helping you to determine the most appropriate approach to the canvass within your area each year. Last updated: 25 March 2021 Book traversal links for Developing plans for the annual canvass Delivering the annual canvass - Wales Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Part of your statutory duties as ERO includes the delivery of an annual canvass. As part of this, you must: disclose data to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of a national data matching exercise known as the national data match step 1 (and, in addition, you also have the discretion to carry out local data matching) take into account the results of national data matching when making a decision on the allocation of properties to canvass routes carry out the required statutory steps for properties allocated to each canvass route provide training, where necessary, to staff who will deliver the canvass on your behalf publish the revised version of the register by 1 December (except for where an

election is held between 1 July and 1 December, in which case the publication of the register can be delayed until up to 1 February the following year) 2 provide statistical information about your revised register to the Secretary of State as required, for example the number of parliamentary and local electors you have registered by constituency. 3 As ERO, you are also a data controller and have a statutory responsibility under data protection legislation to ensure that personal data is kept securely. Any breach could constitute an offence and could result in a loss of confidence in the electoral registration process. 1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 13(1)(a) of RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 44, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Developing plans for the annual canvass What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Project plans and risk registers are vital in helping to support the effective delivery of the annual canvass. We have developed a template registration plan that you might find helpful. Template registration plan (XLS) To inform these, you will need to make some key decisions which will help you map out how you will deliver the whole canvass process. These should include: when your canvass will begin when and how you will identify any properties you want to canvass via Route 3 – the defined property route, including how you will identify the responsible person for those properties and when you will contact them when you plan to undertake the national data match step whether to carry out local data matching and, if so, when you will do so a review of the size of your canvass areas to ensure they are suitable to support your plan for canvass delivery and follow up how and when you will allocate properties to canvass routes what type of communication methods you will use for each route what response mechanisms you will make available for the canvass and how you will ensure they are set-up in advance the timescales for sending your canvass communications for all routes how you will follow up with any non-responders (where required) when, and on what basis, canvassers will be recruited and paid what contingency arrangements you will need should an election take place during your canvass, including how you will redeploy resources to target registration in those areas where the election is taking place when and how you will publish your revised register Once you have established your high level plan you can start to plan the specific detail of the canvass process. You will need to identify the activities you need to carry out to deliver your high level plan, and capture these and the timescales for their delivery. Some of the key activities you will need to ensure are covered in your plan are outlined on the following pages. Last updated: 17 December 2020 Book traversal links for What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Preparing for data matching Preparing for data matching Preparing for data matching preparing your register for data matching, ensuring that it is as up to date as possible to help increase the number of successful matches returned as part of your results booking the date for your national data match and confirming when it will take place and when the results will be received establishing which individuals or groups of data will be excluded from the data match (for example, special category electors) preparing for any local data matching, including identifying what data sets you will use and when you will carry out the matching for each of these sets establishing when and how you will analyse all data matching results and determine which canvass route households will be allocated to ensuring

flexibility in your plans, when and how you will revise them if the outcomes of data matching are not as you expected preparing an audit trail of any actions and decisions taken which relate to changing a route allocation from one route to another based on data matching results Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for Preparing for data matching What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Staffing and resources Staffing and resources Staffing and resources checking your resource assumptions and ensuring that sufficient funding will be available ensuring the availability of support staff from across the organisation, such as IT and frontline/call centre staff reviewing your staffing structure to identify if current staffing levels remain sufficient developing a staff training schedule, to include data protection considerations, for the different types of staff involved in the canvass ensuring any storage requirements are sufficient, both for printed forms and scanned forms, and that you are not retaining personal data for longer than is necessary establishing how and when you will promote and communicate key canvass messages briefing your media and communications teams about the key messages and dates and establishing how you will use your local authority website, press releases and social media platforms to encourage responses Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Staffing and resources Preparing for data matching IT and suppliers IT and suppliers IT and suppliers reviewing any supplier arrangements that are in place and considering what, if anything, may need to be revised; and, if necessary, liaising with your procurement team to ensure that any procurement complies with legislation engaging with your chosen printer to agree written contracts and establish timescales deciding on and making arrangements for any automated response mechanisms you will offer (for example, telephone and online response channels) scheduling the proofing of materials and detailing when any data is due to be sent or received reviewing your IT arrangements, including checking your scanners and other hardware is in good working order Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for IT and suppliers Staffing and resources Data protection considerations Data protection considerations engaging with your Data Protection Officer regarding your plans for delivery of the canvass reviewing your document retention policy and any privacy notices in line with data protection legislation developing any necessary data sharing agreements ensuring written contracts are in place with contractors or suppliers Last updated: 23 May 2023 Book traversal links for Data protection considerations IT and suppliers What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Your project plan should also detail how you will monitor the effectiveness of the decisions you make and the activities you undertake to enable you to evaluate the impact of your actions. This should help you to refine your approach for the current canvass, wherever possible, and should also inform your plans for future canvasses. The performance standards for EROs , and the tools and templates available to support them, will assist you in understanding the impact of your activities, help identify where improvements can be made and support you to report on your own performance locally. You should use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities to identify what works and what doesn't and where improvements can be made. The framework is designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and what is not working so well. The standards, and the supporting tools and templates, should also help you to demonstrate locally – whether within your local authority, to elected members, or more broadly – how the activities you are carrying out contribute to the provision of

an efficient and effective electoral registration service and, ultimately, will help to ensure that everyone who is eligible and wants to vote is able to do so. Last updated: 20 April 2020

[Book traversal links for What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities?](#)

[Data protection considerations](#)

[How can I manage risks to the annual canvass?](#)

How can I manage risks to the annual canvass?

When planning for and delivering your annual canvass you will need to consider the risks to the canvass and how you will mitigate these, ensuring that these are captured in a risk register. This risk register should be kept under regular review and you should use it to:

- record any risks identified, including the seriousness of any risk by indicating both the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact of the risk if it did occur
- monitor and document any changes to these risks
- record actions identified to mitigate the risks
- monitor and record how mitigating actions are being taken forward

We have developed a template risk register that you might find helpful. The template provides some example risks and suggested actions for mitigating those risks. [Template risk and issues register \(XLS\)](#)

In addition to the risks identified in the template you should also identify any other risks, including ones specific to your local circumstances, and how you would mitigate those. Last updated: 16 April 2020

[Book traversal links for How can I manage risks to the annual canvass?](#)

[What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities?](#)

[Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties](#)

[Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties](#)

The identification of potential Route 3 properties should take place at an early stage in your planning. This section contains guidance on how to identify Route 3 properties and how and when to identify and make contact with a responsible person for each property. Last updated: 3 June 2020

[Book traversal links for Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties](#)

[How can I manage risks to the annual canvass?](#)

[What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them?](#)

[What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them?](#)

Route 3 – the defined property route, involves collecting the information required for the canvass for specified types of properties from a responsible person, where one can be identified. Using Route 3 could be more effective and efficient in getting accurate and complete responses for properties with multiple residents than canvassing using an alternative route. The identification of potential Route 3 properties and the responsible person for those properties should take place early in your planning for the annual canvass as this will have an impact on the allocation of properties to different routes. If you are not able to identify and make contact with a responsible person for a property before finalising your allocation of properties to canvass routes, you will be unable to proceed with canvassing that property via Route 3. Last updated: 26 November 2020

[Book traversal links for What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them?](#)

[Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties](#)

Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3?

Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3?

The properties that can be canvassed via Route 3 (the defined property route) are defined in legislation as:

- 1 Registered residential care homes
- Houses of multiple occupation
- Student accommodation: for example, student halls of residence
- Hostels

To be canvassed by Route 3, a property must also be either:

- 1 a property at which persons reside who together do not form a single household
- 2 or a property where you have attempted to deliver a document in the previous 18 months but have been unable to do so.

3 In addition, to be able to allocate a property to Route 3 you must believe you are more likely to get a response using Route 3 than via an alternative canvass route,

4 and you must have been able to identify a responsible person to provide the information required for the canvass. Accessing other local authority records or reviewing

information from the previous canvass could help you to identify other properties in your database that may meet the criteria to be canvassed via Route 3. You will need to be satisfied that the criteria specified in the legislation is met for any other property you choose to canvass under Route 3. Which properties cannot be canvassed using Route 3? The legislation specifically provides that Route 3 cannot be used for ordinary blocks of flats, 5 which should be able to be effectively canvassed via Route 1 or Route 2 as appropriate based on the results of data matching. In addition, where information you hold shows that the property is only occupied by persons under the age of 18 you cannot use Route 3 to canvass the property: in such cases, you must use Route 2 – the unmatched property route. 6 Also, properties where all registered individuals are a category of elector that must be excluded from the national data match step, such as anonymous electors, are not eligible to be canvassed via Route 3. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(2), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBF(3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBA(6), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? A responsible person is defined as being any person who lawfully holds or has access to and may lawfully disclose information to the ERO in respect of each person who is residing at a property and is eligible to be registered. 1 Data provided by the responsible person will help you to establish who is and is not resident at a property, but cannot be used for any form of block registration: you will need to carry out the appropriate registration activity – such as starting the ITR or review process – based on the data provided to you. You will need to ensure that the information you hold on responsible persons for Route 3 properties is reviewed regularly. You should ensure that the information is up to date and that the details of anyone who is no longer associated with a property are removed. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(8) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? You will need to establish contact with those individuals who you think may be suitable to act as the responsible person for a Route 3 property. You should make your initial contact as soon as possible in the planning stage of your canvass; only once you have identified and confirmed a responsible person for a property can you allocate it to Route 3. As there are no prescribed contact methods under Route 3, you will need to consider the most appropriate way to make initial contact with these individuals. The purpose of the contact at this point is: to establish whether the identified individual is able to act as the responsible person 1 to provide an explanation of the role and responsibilities of a responsible person to communicate your statutory right to

request information from a responsible person about the residents in a property to communicate the responsible person's requirement to respond to your request to establish the communication methods that will be used going forward to identify an alternative individual as a responsible person for the property if the person you have contacted is not able to comply with your request. You should ensure that you record the steps you have taken to make contact with these individuals and to confirm that they are able to provide you with the information required by the canvass. You will also need to consider the best method of communication for Route 3 properties, based on the property type and the contact information you hold for the responsible person. Whilst you will need to identify and make initial contact with the responsible person at Route 3 properties at an early stage in your planning, you may decide to canvass different Route 3 properties at different times. For example, you may decide to ask the responsible person for student accommodation for the information required for the canvass shortly before term-time begins, rather than at an earlier stage of your canvass.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 16 April 2020 [Book traversal links for When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties?](#) You will need to decide if data sharing agreements are necessary with any of the responsible persons for Route 3 properties you have identified in your area. The information you receive from the responsible person will contain personal data, which is being shared between two data controllers. Whilst data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is nevertheless good practice to have a data sharing agreement in place. Having a data sharing agreement in place with the responsible person will demonstrate that you are both acting in accordance with data protection legislation and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. Our guidance on data protection for EROs and ROs provides information in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. Last updated: 17 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? Planning for data matching](#) Planning for data matching Data matching is an integral part of the new canvass and you will need to plan how and when you will carry this out. This section contains guidance on the things you will need to consider when planning for national and local data matching. Last updated: 3 June 2020 [Book traversal links for Planning for data matching](#) Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? The national data match step involves the checking of information about existing electors on your register, against data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). By default all properties start allocated to Route 2 – the unmatched property route. The results of the national data match, along with any local data matching you have undertaken, will help you determine whether the property as a whole is matched or unmatched and you must use this information to help you to allocate that property to the appropriate canvass route. 1 Once allocated to the appropriate canvass route, you can determine which type of contact to make in relation to each property during the canvass. 1.

Regulation 32ZBA(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations

2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? Planning for data matching What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? Whilst it is important to ensure you have processes in place to maintain your register throughout the year , carrying out additional register maintenance ahead of the national data match step should help to ensure that the information you provide is as accurate and complete as possible. This should then help to ensure more accurate results, which in turn can help you to maximise the efficiency of your canvass and make best use of your available resources. This preparatory work should include the following steps: Ensure that any outstanding activity is up to date You should, wherever possible, conclude reviews and determine any deletions needed as a result of these prior to the national data match step. You should ensure that any other required deletions are determined prior to the national data match step. You should follow up on any outstanding queries, exceptions and attestations to ensure as many electors can be added to your register as possible. You should check any individuals held in your system as potential electors in properties against other records, or identify any new potential electors that should be added to properties. Potential electors are not registered electors but are individuals who are recorded in your EMS, likely as a result of local data mining or a returned canvass form, who may be eligible but have not yet registered to vote at the address. This information is useful because it may indicate that there are changes required to the register for that property, with individuals potentially being resident who have not yet made a successful application to register. Potential electors at an address may also be indicative of the need to capture additional changes for those individuals who are currently registered at the property. Ensure that your property database is up-to-date You should ensure that each address has a unique property reference number (UPRN). If not, you should liaise with the Local Land and Property Gazetteer team to ensure that UPRNs are attached to each property. You should review any records you hold that will help you to identify certain types of properties and if possible make sure these are reflected in your system – for example, identifying that a property is a care home, house in multiple occupation (HMO) or student accommodation may have an impact on the route you may choose to allocate the property to. You should check whether the information you hold for empty and void properties is up to date. You should identify which local data sources are available to you that will contain the information you need to do this and update your records accordingly. Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? The national data match will need to take place before you begin your canvass activity. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities intend that the service will be open from 1 June until end of August, and will provide a booking tool to allow you to choose your preferred date for your data match. If this date is not available, you will need to choose another. To help you decide when you want to conduct the national data match step you should consider guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the timeframes for booking and conducting the national data match step. In order to identify the most appropriate date for your national data match you will need to have considered timings for undertaking your additional preparatory work on the register

as this should be carried out before you send your data. As the national data match will need to take place before you begin your canvass you will also need to think about when you want to begin your canvass and ensure that your canvass activities are scheduled for after data match has taken place. Once your national data match date is confirmed and you know which date you are working towards, you will need to revisit your canvass plans to make sure they are still workable, making any adjustments that you identify as necessary. This may include revising the dates on which you plan to start sending canvass communications for each of the three canvass routes. Last updated: 16 March 2022

[Book traversal links for How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step?](#) [What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step?](#) [What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching?](#) [What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching?](#) As well as carrying out the mandatory national data match step, you have discretion to match all, or part, of your electoral register against locally held data sets (such as council tax or housing benefit data). 1 This can take place before or after the national data match step, or both before and after the national data match. The outcome of the national data match along with any local data matching you have undertaken will influence the allocation of properties to canvass routes and determine which type of contact you are required to make in relation to each property during the canvass as a result. Working with other council departments

Working closely with other council departments may help you to work more effectively and efficiently with local data. If a consistent approach to data collection can be agreed with other departments, it will be easier to use multiple data sets for your own purposes. When receiving local data sets from other teams or departments, you should consult with your EMS supplier to check how the data should be formatted. You may find that significant time and resources are required to properly prepare the data before it is suitable to be imported into your EMS system. Other departments within your council may have more experience with manipulating data effectively. You should consider working with these departments, and potentially seconding skilled colleagues if possible, to assist you with ensuring your local data is ready to upload to your EMS in a timely manner. When setting up a new working relationship for the sharing of local data, you may want to have an initial telephone conversation or face to face meeting to discuss your aims and agree working arrangements. Some of the points it may be useful to cover in your initial contact include: outlining the legislative requirements of the canvass, and your rights to access data explaining the benefits that can be gained by the increased use of data matching discussing the level of support that can be offered to you and your team agreeing a shared approach to working with data, potentially through the use of a data sharing agreement establishing a clear timeline for your work together agreeing how you will communicate going forward agreeing an approach to evaluation of your work together at the end of the canvass consideration of whether any council or service privacy notices should be updated You are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. Further information on the collection and sharing of other contact details such as email addresses and telephone numbers can be found in our guidance on planning for canvass communications . Establishing partnerships and setting out plans for both the sharing and processing of local data may initially take some time and effort, but should become less intensive in subsequent years as working practices and relationships are embedded. As people become familiar with their roles in the process, what data they need to provide and what is expected of them, you should see

improved results and a more efficient, streamlined process. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(8) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 May 2023 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? What is local data? What is local data? Local data is any set of data which is collected by another body, or by any local authority, including your own. Examples of local data open to you include: council tax data adult social care data local authority billing and payments data parking permits data school, college and university admission data blue badge data customer service records payroll data registrars data housing and rent data green/garden waste subscription data council-run facility membership data (for example, libraries or gyms) Other sources of information, such as personally knowing someone or word-of-mouth, are not considered to be sources of local data. Your powers to request local data As ERO, you are legally entitled to access local data sets and to inspect and make copies of records kept in whatever form by: 1 the council which appointed you any registrar of births, deaths and marriages, including any superintendent any person, including a company or organisation, providing services to, or authorised to exercise any function of, the council; this includes those that are providing 'outsourced' services under any finance agreement There are no statutory or other restrictions, including data protection legislation, that can be used to refuse disclosure of such information to the ERO. 2 You are also legally entitled to require any other person to give you information required for the purposes of maintaining the electoral register. 3 EROs are able to access such data in line with data protection provisions as there is a lawful basis for its processing; the performance of a public task in the public interest. In the event that any person does not co-operate with your request it may be appropriate to point out that there is the potential of a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum £1,000 for failing to provide the information required. You may also wish to discuss with your Data Protection Officer whether a Data Sharing Agreement could facilitate access to local data. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 35 and 35A of The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 2, paragraph 1(5) of the RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 23, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 August 2023 Book traversal links for What is local data? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? How should I select my local data sources? How should I select my local data sources? As a minimum, each local data set should include: First name Surname Postal address Data sets which also include the following fields may help to improve the quality of the match results: Middle name(s) UPRN data Date of birth Previous names Age of data, for example when it was created or last updated Local data sets do not have to include data for all properties on your register and could be more focussed on specific property types or groups of individuals. For example, you may have data from social services or education departments which may only cover some of your electorate, but which may still be useful. How do I ensure a data source is of high quality? You should ensure that you only select data sources that are high quality. A high quality data set is one where the information within it is reliable, trusted, current and accurate. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have a resource available on how to assess the quality of local data which can be found below: Department for

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Testing local data guidance Part II and annexes (PDF) You should also consider what data standards and good practices exist in relation to the local data sources you wish to use and whether the data holder follows them. For example, the Department for Work and Pensions has set out detailed guidance on good practice for the processing and use of council tax benefit and housing benefit data, which includes guidance on the checking of evidence provided to local authorities and how to deal with fraud. An ERO for an area that delivers its benefits service to these standards should be able to be confident in using benefits data for local data matching. When determining the quality of a local data source you should take into account when it was last updated and whether the source(s) of the data are reliant on information provided by individuals with no checks by the local authority on the accuracy of the information. For example, applications for library membership may be based entirely on information provided by the service users and so you may conclude that, as a result, library data is not suitable for local data matching. In addition to being able to trust that the local data source is of high quality. You also need to consider any cost implications associated with processing local data and, if there are any costs, whether they make the best use of the resources you have available to you. For example: Will work need to be carried out manually by you and your staff to ensure the data is useable or will you need support for the data matching from another team, such as from IT, to manipulate the files? Can the data file be managed by a partially automated process by loading it into your EMS system or similar? Will you need to purchase any new or additional software or licenses for any existing software? You should test new local data sets before you use them. You should talk to your EMS provider about how your EMS system may help you to do this in practice. You should evaluate the effectiveness of your local data sets each year using the data accuracy scores provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. These scores will provide an indication of how effective the different local data sources have been in matching electors. This will enable you to make more informed decisions about using local data sets in future canvasses. Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for How should I select my local data sources? What is local data? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? If you have decided to undertake any type of local data matching you will need to decide when it will take place. Local data matching can be helpful when undertaken either before or after the national data match step, or indeed at both stages. Your decision around the timing of any local data matching may depend on: when the data can be provided to you and when you plan to use it, for example the most up to date student data is likely to be available at the beginning of the academic year how recent the data is; local data will be most accurate and useful for data matching if it has been recently updated the size of the data set and whether you are carrying out a partial or full register match; this may have an impact on the amount of time you have to analyse the results before allocation of properties to canvass routes the format in which the data is held and whether it will need to be processed before you can use it Carrying out local data matching before the national data match step may allow you more time to analyse your local data matching results. Alternatively, carrying out checks of data that is regularly updated locally, such as council tax data, after the national data match step and as close as practicable to making your decision on the allocation of properties to canvass routes may improve the quality of your data match results, enabling you to allocate more properties to the most appropriate route. Checking empty and void properties as part of local data matching Local data matching

could include a check of the information you hold on empty or void properties. If you are going to compare empty and void properties against local data sources such as council tax records, your plan should reflect this and make provision for when and how you will carry it out. Empty and void properties are not exempt from the annual canvass but they are automatically excluded from the national data match step. This is because there are no individual elector details to match against DWP records. If your local data matching can't confirm properties as empty or void, they will need to be canvassed via Route 2 – the unmatched property route. If you are able to confirm that properties remain empty or void, they can be allocated to Route 1 – the matched property route. It is important to remember that once a property has been assigned to a route, you must take all the necessary steps before closing the chase cycle. You cannot use local data to close a chase cycle. Last updated: 26 May 2021 [Book traversal links for When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? How should I select my local data sources? Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data? Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data? Where you request to inspect and/or take copies of data, the holder of the data cannot use a statutory or other restriction, including data protection legislation, to refuse the disclosure of data to you. 1 Whether you carry out local data matching yourself, or outsource local data matching, the information you receive will contain personal data which is being shared between two data controllers. Whilst UK data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is good practice to have a data sharing agreement in place. Such agreements demonstrate that all parties are acting in accordance with data protection legislation and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. Do I need a data sharing agreement when using data held by a local authority? Where you are receiving information from your own council to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered, or identify those people who are registered but who are not entitled to be registered a written agreement between you and the council regulating the processing of the information should be in place and this agreement should include details about data transfer, storage, destruction and security arrangements. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 23, The Representation of the People \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2001](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

Last updated: 14 August 2023 [Book traversal links for Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? Planning for canvass communications Planning for canvass communications You will need to carefully plan how you will deliver your canvass communications. This section contains guidance on the things you will need to consider when planning your canvass communications and on the response mechanisms you will make available for electors. Last updated: 3 June 2020](#) [Book traversal links for Planning for canvass communications Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data? What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications? What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications? Before planning the canvass communication channels to use, you will need to have read the guidance for each of the canvass routes; Route 1 , Route 2 and Route 3 so that you have an understanding of the communication types and contact requirements for each route. As part of your planning you will then need to decide which communication channels you will use for each contact stage in each of the routes. Some of the key](#)

considerations for each communication channel are outlined on the following pages. You should also take into account that legislation requires you to undertake follow-up activity within a reasonable period of time. A reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation. In our view it should be no longer than 28 days and may, in some circumstances, be shorter, for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place. Last updated: 26 November 2020

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#) [Planning for canvass communications](#) [How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#) [How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#) [How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#) You can collect email addresses and phone numbers directly from householders and electors, and you may be able to access them through inspecting local records. You should look for opportunities to collect email addresses and phone numbers from canvass communications and other electoral correspondence throughout the year, such as voter registration forms and absent vote applications. You should capture as many email addresses and phone numbers as possible during the canvass alongside your other actions when processing canvass responses. Whenever you collect email addresses and phone numbers from electors, you should ensure that it is clear to them that the provision of these is optional, and you should set out how you will process and use the information in your privacy statement. Can I collect email addresses and phone numbers from other local records? You are legally entitled to inspect and make copies of local records such as Council Tax and customer service records, for the purposes of your registration duties. 1 Relevant councils are expressly permitted to disclose information contained in local records to enable you to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered. 2 2 We have produced further guidance on the records you can inspect to identify new electors, including what you can use the information for, and advice on whether data sharing agreements are needed between the council and the ERO. However, you are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. To access and use additional contact information, such as email addresses and phone numbers from local records you will require: a data sharing agreement to be in place between the council and the ERO, and the council to have informed individuals about the potential sharing of such information through their privacy notice You will therefore need to engage with relevant council departments, holding constructive conversations with them and your data protection officer, to gain support for your approach to using e-communications. This could be tied in with your wider conversations about accessing local data for the purposes of your registration duties such as local data matching. You should work with council departments and the data protection officer to develop data sharing agreements and to identify privacy notices which will need to be updated, so that when contact details such as email addresses and phone numbers are collected, the necessary consent is given for these details to be disclosed to the ERO. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further information on data protection considerations. What if the council uses a customer records index? Some councils have adopted a customer records or citizen index, to keep customer records in one central database. Such records are collated from a range of customer contact information and are likely to be up to date and accurate. As the data in such databases is collated from sources across the council it is likely that data sharing agreements and privacy notices will already be in place for maintaining their customer records index which may only need minor changes to allow for the disclosure of additional contact details to the ERO.

You should contact your DPO to understand what you may need to do locally. Checking the accuracy of the information you collect In order to reduce the number of emails or text messages that go undelivered due to errors in phone numbers or email addresses, you should carry out quality checks on the contact information you have collected. You could export the data into a spreadsheet to assist with this, or see if your EMS system can produce reports which could help to highlight inaccuracies in your data. You should check for obvious errors such as domain names in emails being misspelt, incorrect use of punctuation or spaces in email addresses, and phone numbers with missing digits. You could then cross reference scanned images or paper applications to check and correct any contact details that contain errors. Ensuring that the contact details you hold are up to date and accurate will increase the number of messages delivered correctly and will reduce the administrative burden of dealing with email bounce backs when processing. For more information on managing bounce backs, please see responses to Route 1 e-communications . 1. Regulation 35, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 35A RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 a b Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers? What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications? Using electronic communications Using electronic communications Using electronic communications Where you decide to use e-communications, you will need to identify the steps needed to set these up and reflect these in your plans. You will need to decide whether to manage e-communications in house or via an external provider, and you may decide to take different approaches for different types of e-communication. For example, you may choose to send emails yourself and outsource SMS messaging to an external provider. Any person who will be processing personal data for use with any e-communication channels must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. You will need to create template communications in advance where you are using emails, SMS, or other written electronic communications. Our guidance for Route 1 and Route 2 contains detail of what information must be included and captured in e-communications and we have produced template emails that can act as a basis for your e-communications. You will also need to ensure that you have mechanisms in place to track and monitor the dispatch of e-communications to ensure that you have an audit trail of all contact attempts with properties and electors throughout the canvass. Monitoring the success of contact attempts using different contact methods will help you to evaluate their effectiveness and refine your approach as needed for future canvasses. The data set out in the performance standards for EROs will also help you to understand the impact of your activities and where improvements can be made. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Using electronic communications How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers? Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications It is important that recipients of your e-communications trust them and have confidence that they are legitimate, so that they pay attention to the information provided and respond and take necessary action as needed. Some residents may not be used to being contacted by the ERO or the council through e-communications, so you should think about how you can prepare them for being contacted this way, for example through press releases and social media messages. We have produced canvass resources to support you with public engagement, including social media templates which can be used in the run-up and throughout the canvass to raise awareness. You should also work with the communications team in your council to raise awareness about the

canvass. As well as using e-communications during the canvass, you could consider the benefits of contacting electors through these methods outside the canvass period, for example in the run up to an election. To help increase confidence that emails are official you should ensure that recipients can clearly identify that they are from you by including your council name in the subject line and your logo in the body of the text. If you are using a generic outbox to send emails, you could also personalise the message to include the householder's name in the greeting. You should proactively inform recipients that you are contacting them because you hold their information on your electoral register database so that they can be confident that their data has been used legitimately. Even if you are encouraging residents to reply using an automated response method, you should include dedicated contact details for queries, as well as a link to your website with details of your privacy notice and how recipients can opt out of further e-communications, in order to promote confidence in the legitimacy of the communication and meet all data protection requirements. We have produced an email canvass communication template to support you when contacting householders by email. The email template can be used for either Route 1 or Route 2 communications. The email template is not prescribed, however we recommend that you use it because it has been tested with the public. Further guidance on the content of your e-communications is given in what information should an e-communication contain? Last updated: 27 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications](#) [Using electronic communications](#) [Managing messages and responses](#) [Managing messages and responses](#) [Managing messages and responses](#) As set out in using electronic communications you will need to ensure that you have resources and systems in place for sending e-communications and for tracking and monitoring responses. If you are managing this in-house, you will need to liaise with your IT department to discuss how they can support you, which could include: setting up a generic mailbox, with sufficient capacity to deal with your estimated volume of likely responses based on previous years and/or the number of emails you plan to send as part of your canvass the proposed timescales for sending your communications, so that any additional help desk support can be factored in any additional opportunities to check your data before sending your communications whether to send messages in batches advice on how to avoid e-communications being treated as 'spam' or 'junk' how to track and monitor responses, including the management of bounce backs (guidance on the processing of bounce backs can be found in responses to Route 1 e-communications .) [Using external providers and messaging platforms](#) You could decide to use an external provider or a messaging platform to send e-communications to residents, both during and outside the canvass period. This may involve providing the contact details you hold for residents to a provider who will send the messages on your behalf. You will need to be satisfied that the provider complies with data protection legislation when processing data. Some messaging platforms, such as the UK Government's 'Notify' service, can be integrated with your EMS system, which would enable you to monitor responses through your existing software. The following case study describes how this has been utilised in Tower Hamlets: [DLUHC - Notify Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May edition \(DOC\)](#) Last updated: 21 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Managing messages and responses](#) [Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications](#) [Contacting electors by telephone](#) [Contacting electors by telephone](#) [Contacting electors by telephone](#) If you are contacting electors via telephone you will need to decide whether to manage these calls in house or via an external provider. You will also need to plan in advance the scripts your staff or external providers will use for their conversations. We have

provided a template script for use by staff contacting electors by telephone. Telephone script for canvassers (DOC) It may also be useful to provide a list of possible FAQs and suggested responses for your call handlers based on your approach to the canvass in your area. You will also need to ensure that you have mechanisms in place to track and monitor the placing of phone calls, to ensure that you have an audit trail of all contact attempts with properties and electors throughout the canvass. Monitoring the success of contact attempts using different contact methods will help you to evaluate their effectiveness and refine your approach as needed for future canvasses. Last updated: 3 June 2020 [Book traversal links for Contacting electors by telephone](#) Managing messages and responses Using printed communications Using printed communications You will need to decide whether to use an in-house or an external printer to print your canvass communications. Whoever you use, you should be satisfied they will be able to cope with the complexity and volume of printed material to be produced. You should ensure that data protection principles are met in any contract tender exercise, and document your decision-making process. Whenever you use a processor, data protection legislation imposes a legal obligation to formalise the working relationship with them. Whether you are using an in-house or external printer, you must have a written agreement or contract in place. This will help to ensure that the requirements of data protection legislation will be met, including the requirements relating to appointing a processor. Following the national data matching step, and any local data matching, you will have allocated all of your properties to the appropriate canvass routes, made decisions about which communication channels you plan to use for canvass communications at each stage and how you will manage their distribution. You will then be in a position to confirm with your print supplier the number of printed canvass communications that you require. You will need to agree a detailed production schedule with your supplier for your printed canvass communications which should include: Timescales for proofing canvass communications The volume of printed canvass communications for each route Printer deadlines for sending data Dates the printer will deliver canvass communications to you (where canvass communications are being delivered back to you ready for onward delivery) Scheduling of delivery dates from the printer to Royal Mail, other delivery services or your offices for the purpose of hand-delivery Timing of the production and dispatch of any follow-up communications where required We have designed templates for each of the different printed canvass communications, some of which you are required to use. You can find more information on the template communications and how to use these in our forms and letters guidance . Your printer will need to produce proofs of the templates for printed canvass communications, and you will need to check these. We have produced a proof checking factsheet which you can use to help quality assure your processes. Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) We have also produced a contract development checklist to support you in your work with contractors and suppliers. Contract development and management checklist (PDF) Once you have approved the template proofs you should send test data to ensure that data fields appear correctly. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs highlights the importance of having a robust proof checking process in place when working with a processor in order to detect any errors and avoid data breaches before they occur. If you are planning to use Royal Mail or other delivery services you should consider the delivery options they offer and any discounts based on the types and volumes of printed communications you expect to send out to determine which option will best meet your needs. Last updated: 26 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Using printed communications](#) Contacting electors by telephone How should I decide which response

mechanisms to make available during the canvass? How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? You will need to decide which response mechanisms you will make available for electors. These may vary for the different canvass routes and the different contact stages within routes, and should be considered alongside the outward contact methods you intend to use. Potential response channels include: Website E-mail SMS Post Telephone In person You should ensure that your chosen response mechanisms are designed to meet elector expectations and enable them to respond as easily as possible where needed. For example, if you contact some electors via email, they may well expect to be able to respond online, such as by a return email, rather than a different channel. You could also consider the demographics of your local area to help inform your decisions. For example, if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or areas with high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet the needs of your electors. If you decide to use automated response services – which would typically involve using security codes to log onto a website or respond by an automated telephone or SMS response service – you will need to decide whether to manage this internally or to outsource the work to an external supplier. If you are using an external supplier, you will need ensure that they will be able to meet your requirements before agreeing the process for setting the service up, finalising contracts and reflecting your decisions in your canvass plans. Any person who will be processing personal data for use with response services must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? Using printed communications Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass As part of your planning you will need to think about what staff you require to carry out the canvass. This section contains guidance on how to identify what staff you will need and plan for the delivery of any necessary training. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? The council which has appointed you as ERO is under a legal obligation to provide you with the necessary staff to enable you to fulfil your statutory duties. 1 The decisions you have made on your approach to delivering the canvass will impact on the number of staff you may need. You will need to consider how you will resource the following: Managing the local data matching exercise If you are carrying out local data matching, the volume and the timing of this may have an impact on the amount of staff time you will need. You will also need to consider any additional work needed to get the data into useable format for data matching purposes. Analysis of the data match results If you are carrying out local data matching, you should consider the staff resource required to make decisions where national and local data match results conflict. You will also need to consider the staff-time required for the property allocation stage. Dealing with questions from the public about the canvass process Establish the staffing levels required by thinking about the timings for your canvass activity across the different routes and identifying the likely peak response periods. Your decision on whether these queries will be managed by a contact centre or by the electoral services team will also have an impact on the amount of staff required. Processing responses You will need to consider the staff required to manage multiple response channels, deal with any conflicting responses and undertake

any additional registration activity necessary - for example sending ITRs, undertaking reviews and deletions. Hand-delivering communications (where undertaken) If you are hand delivering canvass communications, you will need to consider the geography and size of the canvass areas. Canvass areas can vary in size to help maximise canvass response rates, allowing you to take into account the varying geography and demographics of different parts of your registration area. For example you may want to allocate fewer properties over larger geographical areas, such as rural locations. The size of canvass areas will also be affected by the staff resource available, the more staff you have, the smaller your canvass areas may be. You may wish to review your canvass areas following the allocation of properties to canvass routes in order to ensure that canvassers have sufficient time to contact all non-responding properties/individuals based on the number of Route 2 properties in that area. You will also need to consider the likely volumes of canvass communications that you intend to deliver by hand. For example, are you hand delivering some or all of the canvass communications and at what stage for each route? You will also need to consider the impact on staff resource requirements where you are combining hand delivery with a property visit. Undertaking personal contact via telephone or property visits The decisions you have made on how you will carry out the personal contact requirements for Route 2 properties will impact on the size of canvass areas and the staff resource you will need to ensure you maximise the effectiveness of personal canvassing. For example: the stage of the canvass that personal contact will take place will have an impact on the volume of properties requiring contact. The more properties that require personal contact, the smaller the canvass area may need to be the size of the canvass area will be impacted by the number of staff undertaking personal contact attempts by either visit or by telephone if by telephone whether it will be done by your electoral services team, or a contact centre the size of the canvass area may depend on how many personal contact attempts you will make, the more attempts you plan to make, the smaller the canvass area may need to be if you are combining any follow up of ITRs for individuals within a property with any personal contact attempts the smaller the canvass area may need to be You will also need to review your existing canvass staff database. You should review the performance of canvassers who have worked on your canvass before and any whose past performance has been unsatisfactory should not be used again. You should then make contact with those you wish to invite to work on the canvass again bearing in mind that existing or experienced canvassers may not be available and you may need to undertake recruitment to identify and select new canvassers. Where you need to undertake recruitment of staff to work on any part of delivering the canvass, you will need to take into account the length of time required for recruitment and plan accordingly. You should liaise with your HR contact to ensure they are aware of your requirements and can provide you with the necessary support. You will also need to ensure that your recruitment plans are fully reflected in your canvass plan. 1.

Section 52(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 2 June 2020 Book traversal links for How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? Your duty to maintain the registers of electors includes the provision of training to all the staff you have appointed to assist with delivery of the canvass. 1 You should review the training needs of both permanent and temporary staff, including canvassers. It is important that all staff understand their particular role and any statutory obligations associated with the work they are

undertaking. As well as training on the legislative requirements and responsibilities relevant to their role, it is important that staff are trained on ensuring equal access, data handling and good customer care. To embed data protection principles in your work and demonstrate compliance with the legislation, you will need to ensure that all staff, including canvassers, are trained in handling personal data. You should discuss any data protection training with your Data Protection Officer. Appropriate training will also need to be provided for all front-line staff to reflect the fact that 14 and 15 year olds can be included on the local government register as attainers. For example, staff will need to be given training and guidance relating to handling and storing the personal data of 14 and 15 year olds. Your systems should be set up in such a way as to ensure that the data of 14 and 15 year olds is only used for the limited purposes set out in law. 2 Where you identify that training is required, you will need to make arrangements for this to be provided and reflect this in your canvass plans. You may already have existing structures for training sessions and materials for their delivery which you can review and refine to ensure they are relevant and appropriate. If you have training personnel within your council, they may be able to assist you with this process. What training is required for staff dealing with enquiries about the canvass? You will need to identify how you will support staff dealing directly with the public by phone or face-to-face, whether in the office, undertaking personal visits or working at any contact centres or call management centres. Staff will need to understand the differences between the different canvass communications and be able to: offer advice about whether or not a response is required encourage a successful response to the canvass communication as required when speaking to someone on the telephone give advice on registering to vote, the options available to make an application to register and, where appropriate, assist with the registration process apply knowledge to deal with a person's individual circumstances be able to identify non-standard questions and refer these to staff with more detailed knowledge of registration as necessary To support front-line staff we have produced a frequently-asked questions (FAQs) document covering a range of queries that may arise about electoral registration. FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) You can adapt this document to reflect your local approach to the canvass. Planning training for canvassers You need to ensure that your canvassers are trained to carry out the job they have been appointed to undertake. You may need to deliver different types of training sessions depending on how you intend to deploy them. For example, those making house to house visits may require different training to canvassers who are making telephone contact. All canvassers must receive appropriate data protection training and be trained as to how to keep any personal information they collect from electors safe. Further information on the recruitment and training of canvassers can be found in our Canvasser recruitment and training checklist. Canvasser recruitment and training checklist (DOC) Resources to support the management and briefing of canvassers can also be found on our website . 1. Section 9A of the RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 24 Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? When planning your canvass timetable you will need to take into account the requirement to publish your revised register by 1 December,

unless there has been an election during the canvass in which case you can delay publication up until 1 February. 1 Publication of the register on 1 December maximises the length of time available for applications to register to be received and determined in time to be included on the revised register. If 1 December falls on a weekend rather than a working day, there may be specific practicalities you will need to address to ensure you're still able to publish. For example, you would need to factor into your planning the possible resource requirements related to working on a weekend, such as the opening of office buildings, staffing arrangements and the availability of IT support if required. You should bear in mind that not all of your canvass activity needs to be completed by 1 December, regardless of when you publish your revised register; any outstanding steps can be picked up as part of your year-round electoral registration activity. If, for whatever reason, you decide to publish on a date in November instead of on 1 December, you will need to consider the impact on your canvass plans of the earlier deadlines for receipt of applications in time for them to be determined and included on the revised register. Publication of the revised register in November means that some individuals who make a successful registration application from late October onwards, would not be added to the register until the January notice of alteration, unless they are added by any election notice of alteration. 1. Section 13(1) and (1A) of RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? Data matching for the annual canvass Data matching for the annual canvass This section of the guidance covers what you need to know about the national data match step including what it is, what data you need to include and exclude, how and when to send your data and how to process the results and allocate properties to canvass routes. DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - WAL (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Data matching for the annual canvass What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What is the national data match step? What is the national data match step What is the national data match step? Each year, before conducting the annual canvass, you must disclose data to the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of a national data matching exercise known as the national data match step. 1 The national data match step involves the checking of information about existing electors on your register - their name, address including the UPRN where held and, where known, date of birth, against data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The purpose of the exercise is to help you identify properties where residents may have changed. This information should then be used to determine the route you will use to canvass each property. 1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is the national data match step? Data matching for the annual canvass What data do I need to send? What data do I need to send? What data do I need to send? The data you send for the national data match step in relation to all persons aged 16 or over who appear on the parliamentary and local government registers must include: 1 the full name, including any middle name(s) or initials you may hold the date of birth (where held) the full address, including postcode Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) (where held) any other information that you hold relating to a person's entry on the register, if the Cabinet Office specifies such information in writing (for example, a previous surname). This additional information may improve the likelihood of a data

match as the information you hold may show a link exists between the data held nationally and your data. 14 and 15 year olds are excluded from the national data match as their details are not held by DWP. 1. Regulation 32ZBB(9), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What data do I need to send? What is the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Certain types of electors must be excluded from the national data match step. These are: 1 14 and 15 year olds all special category electors You should also exclude the following electors and properties from the national data match: Determined electors – individuals who have had their application determined and will be added to the register by the next notice of alteration. These electors will have only just been added to the register so will be considered matched by default. Determined deletions – individuals who you have determined are no longer entitled to be registered and will be deleted from the register by the next notice of alteration. Empty or void properties – as no electors are registered at these properties, there are no individuals to be matched against DWP data as part of the national data match step. Special category electors The following special category electors must be excluded from the national data match step, as they are not included within the annual canvass process: 2 overseas electors, i.e. British citizens living outside the UK HM Forces service voters (and those under 18 years old, living with their parent or guardian and their parent or guardian is a member of the HM forces) Crown servants and British Council employees (and their spouses or civil partners and those under 18 years old, living with their parent or guardian and their parent or guardian is a Crown servant or British Council employee and they would be living in Wales if their parent or guardian were not living overseas) electors who have made a declaration of local connection, including people living in the UK who have no permanent or fixed address anonymously registered electors, i.e. those who have registered anonymously because their safety would be at risk if they appeared on the register using their name patients in mental health hospitals whose stay at the hospital is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there remand prisoners whose stay at a penal institution is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there DLUHC Worksheet 2 - Data matching empty properties and exclusions - WAL (PDF) 1. Regulation 32ZBB(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBB(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Who will be excluded from the national data match step? What data do I need to send? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? You have the discretion to decide whether to exclude some or all of your recent additions from the national data match step. 1 Recent additions are electors who have made a successful application to be registered and have been added to the register of electors within the last 90 days. Deciding what your recent additions threshold should be Prior to the start of the national data match step, you should decide where to set the cut-off point for recent additions to the register to be included in the national data match. 2 This period must be between 0 and 90 days. When the data is uploaded for the national data match, any recent additions to the register prior to the threshold date you have set will be excluded from the data match and automatically marked as matched

within your EMS. If you set a threshold of 0 days, all recent additions will be included within the national data match step. If you set a threshold of 90 days, recent additions made within the last 90 days will be excluded from the national data step and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. If you set a threshold of between 0 and 90 days, recent additions to the register within your chosen time frame will be excluded from the national data match step. For example, if you choose to set the threshold at 45 days, recent additions to the register in the last 45 days will be excluded from the national data step and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. Your decision to include or exclude recent additions from the national data match step could have an impact on the outcome of the data match results. In turn, this may influence the canvass route you allocate for each property. The questions below may help to inform your decision about whether to exclude all or some of your recent additions from the national data match step.

Questions Impact on your decision

How stable is your electorate? Do you have a high level of churn within your electoral area? If you have a high level of churn in your area, there is a increased risk that someone may successfully register to vote at an address but then move again in a short space of time. Where this is the case you could consider setting a lower threshold which may help to better capture changes in areas where electors move more frequently. Have you checked against locally held data sets that the information you hold for properties identified as having recent additions have no other changes? If you have carried out checks as part of your activity to maintain the register throughout the year, you could consider setting a higher threshold. You may be more likely to have already captured and managed recent changes and so your local data may be more up to date than DWP records. Do you have processes in place to regularly identify and subsequently take steps to remove existing registered electors from a property if they have moved out? In this case, you could consider setting a higher threshold, as you are more likely to have actioned recent changes and so your local data may be more up to date than DWP records. Have you had to process a high proportion of changes during previous canvasses? If this is the case, you could consider setting a lower threshold as your recent experience suggests that you are less likely to have captured all required changes outside of the canvass period.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities help sheet below provides further information and guidance to help you set your threshold. [DLUHC helpsheet - Recent additions and determined electors](#) You should review the impact of the threshold you set after each canvass to determine its effectiveness, and ensure any lessons learnt are fed into your planning for subsequent canvasses.

1. Regulation 32ZBB(7)(a), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulation 32ZBB(7)(a), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 21 March 2022

Book traversal links for Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step?

Who will be excluded from the national data match step? When do I need to send my data? When do I need to send my data? When do I need to send my data? As part of your planning for the canvass you should already have considered when you want to conduct the national data match step. The data matching process will be managed in practice by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and will be phased due to the volume of records to be processed. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have advised there will be a tool available that you will need to use to schedule the date for your data upload. Please note that there is a limit on the volume of records that can be processed per day and so if a certain date has reached its capacity, it will no

longer be available for you to book on the tool. Once you have booked through the tool, you will receive an email from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities confirming that you have successfully booked your date. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will provide you with instructions on when to electronically upload your register to DWP via your electoral management software (EMS) system. Your EMS supplier will provide you with instructions on how to upload your data. Once you have confirmed the date for your data upload, you will be able to confirm the rest of your plans for the delivery of the canvass, including liaising with and updating your print suppliers as needed. Last updated: 16 March 2022

[Book traversal links for When do I need to send my data?](#) Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Using the results of national and local data matching Using the results of national and local data matching Using the results of national and local data matching You have the option to use local data matching before the national data match step, after you have received the results from the national data match step, or both. Planning for data matching includes guidance on how to identify and use local data. Last updated: 16 March 2021

[Book traversal links for Using the results of national and local data matching](#) When do I need to send my data? What will be included in the national data match results? What will be included in the national data match results? What will be included in the national data match results? You should receive your results within 5 working days of the data being submitted. You will receive your results through your EMS. Your EMS supplier will provide you with instructions on how this will work in practice. Each elector whose data is sent for the national data match will return with either a match or no match result. The results will not include any details of why an elector's details failed to match. Your EMS will then aggregate these into a result for each property. Last updated: 16 March 2021

[Book traversal links for What will be included in the national data match results?](#) Using the results of national and local data matching What do I do with the results of data matching? What do I do with the results of data matching? What do I do with the results of data matching? The data matching results will help you determine whether the property as a whole is matched or unmatched and you must use this information to help you to allocate that property to the appropriate canvass route.

1 Matched properties - A property is determined to be a matched property where there is a match result for every elector within a property, through national and/or local data. A property can also be determined to be a matched property where you have carried out local data matching and have confirmed the status of the property as empty. Unmatched properties - A property is determined to be an unmatched property where you are unable to match some or all of the electors within a household through national and/or local data matching. Both national and local data matching results may be relevant in determining the appropriate canvass route. For example, you may:

- Accept a match from either local or national data matching
- Override a match result from national data matching where you are satisfied that local data matching information is more accurate - this may be because you believe your local data source to contain more up-to-date information
- Override a result from local data matching if you believe the national data match has provided a more accurate result

What action can I take where an individual is unmatched? You cannot disregard the results where both national and local data shows at least one elector in the property as not matched. However, you could consider using other local data sources that you trust to be accurate to try to match the unmatched elector before allocating that property. If you are able to match an unmatched individual using other local data sources, you may then be satisfied that the whole property is a match and could be

canvassed via Route 1 - the matched property route. Where you do not have additional local data to use, or are unsuccessful in matching the unmatched elector using additional local data, canvass the property via Route 2 – the unmatched property route - as you cannot be satisfied that there are no changes to be captured for that property.

1. Regulation 32ZBA(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What do I do with the results of data matching? What will be included in the national data match results? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? You should consider whether there is any other information you hold, either in written or electronic data format, 1 that you could check after the data matching results have been received to inform your decision on which route to use for each property.

Potential electors held on your EMS: What is this information and why is it useful? Potential electors are not registered electors but are individuals who are recorded in your EMS, likely as a result of local data mining or a returned canvass form, who may be eligible but have not yet registered to vote at the address. This information is useful because it may indicate that there are changes required to the register for that property, with individuals potentially being resident who have not yet made a successful application to register. Potential electors at an address may also be indicative of the need to capture additional changes for those individuals who are currently registered at the property. What action could I take? Check local data to try to confirm if these individuals appear to be still resident. What impact could this information have on my decision making? Where local data matching shows an individual does still potentially reside at the address but has not yet registered, it may be most appropriate to canvass the property via Route 2 – the unmatched property route. Where local data matching confirms an individual no longer resides at an address, their name can be removed as a potential elector from EMS and the property could be canvassed via Route 1 – the matched property route if all other individuals at a property have been matched.

Information provided from another ERO: What is this information and why is it useful? Other EROs may have information about individuals who have moved into or out of your area. What action could I take? Check any information sent to you by another ERO for any additional potential changes at a property. If you are notified that an elector is no longer resident at an address, you should initiate the deletions process. What impact could this information have on my decision making? If after checking information sent to you by another ERO, you are now aware that there may be changes at a property, you should consider canvassing the property using Route 2 – the unmatched property route.

Other sources of council data: What is this information and why is it useful? Data from other departments in the authority could help you to identify additional potential electors or other changes at a property. What action could I take? Check all council data you have access to for information on any additional potential electors or other changes at a property. What impact could this information have on my decision making? If after checking data from other council departments, you are aware of additional potential electors or other changes at a property, you should consider canvassing the property using Route 2 – the unmatched property route. You will need to consider how you will evidence and document your decision-making if information from a source other than the results of data matching leads to a decision to change a property from one route to another.

1. Regulation 32ZBA(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations

2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 2 August 2021 Book traversal links for What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What do I do with the results of data matching? Processing information in connection with data matching Processing information in connection with data matching This section of the guidance covers data protection considerations in regard to data matching. Information supplied to the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for the purpose of the national data match and the access to the results from the national data match step are subject to certain restrictions. You must not disclose any information from the national data match step about an individual 1 to any person other than where they are responsible for deciding the most appropriate canvass route or for the purposes of any civil or criminal proceedings. However, data protection legislation allows individuals to make requests about the information you hold about them. For more information on subject access requests (SARs), including how they relate to the national data match, see our guidance - What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? If you, or anyone authorised to act on your behalf, discloses data from the national data match step for any other reason you (and they) could be subject to imprisonment, a fine or both. 1. Regulation 32ZBC, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for Processing information in connection with data matching What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? If you receive a request for the data from the national data match for the purpose of any civil or criminal proceedings, you may be able to supply the data in specific circumstances, but you should take your own legal advice before doing so. As part of your ongoing data protection compliance, you should maintain records of every person and organisation supplied with any data to demonstrate that you are complying with the relevant legislation and the principles of processing personal data, and are ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Subject access requests Data protection legislation provides that a person may make a subject access request to see personal information that is held about them and this could include a person asking whether or not they were a match during the annual canvass. If you receive such a request, you must be satisfied of the requester's identity before fulfilling the request. Information requested by data subjects must be provided without delay and in any event within one month (although this can be extended to two months in certain conditions). Further information can be found in our guidance - subject access requests . Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? Processing information in connection with data matching Are there any other data protection considerations? Are there any other data protection considerations? Are there any other data protection considerations? When processing information in connection with the national data match step you must adhere to any requirements that have been imposed by the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. 1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities may provide further guidance on any such requirements. 2 Additionally, any data used or processed in connection with the national data match step must be stored securely and processed in accordance with data protection

legislation. You should also ensure that your privacy notices and data retention schedules reflect the processing of data for the national and local data match step. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to privacy notices, along with advice about your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 32 ZBC(3) and (4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBC(3) and (5), RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Are there any other data protection considerations? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? Allocating properties to canvass routes Allocating properties to canvass routes Allocating properties to canvass routes Once you have received and analysed the results of both your national and local data matching (if undertaken) and taken into account any other relevant information you have access to, you need to allocate properties to specific canvass routes. The following resource provides a description of the three canvass routes and the criteria that determines when a route must be used and when an ERO has the discretion to decide whether to use a particular route or not. Canvass route descriptions and criteria (PDF) Where you decide to allocate a property to a route based on the results provided by one set of data rather than another, you should be able to explain your decision-making process clearly and maintain an audit trail of your decisions. It is important to note that whilst you will have the option to consider individual property level data match results when allocating properties to routes, you won't necessarily need to do this in practice. You should be able to apply the allocation criteria more broadly so that properties with the same data match results can be managed in the same way and allocated to the appropriate routes in bulk. DLUHC Worksheet 9 - Switching Routes (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Allocating properties to canvass routes Are there any other data protection considerations? Route 1 – the matched property route Route 1 – the matched property route Route 1 – the matched property route When you have completed your data matching and allocated properties to canvass routes, you can begin to deliver your canvass plan. This section covers Route 1 and includes guidance on when you can use Route 1, what canvass communications you can use for this route and how to process responses. DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Route 1 – the matched property route Allocating properties to canvass routes What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? Route 1 is the matched property route. It can be used to send canvass communications to properties where you are satisfied that no changes are needed based on the results of national and any local data matching. A link to a visual overview of Route 1 is below: DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) Properties can be canvassed using Route 1 where: 1 You are satisfied that there are no changes needed at that property and you have no reason to believe that there are any additional electors to be added. You have carried out local data matching to confirm the status of the property as empty or void. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(4) and 32ZBE(1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is Route 1 and when can I use it? Route 1 – the matched property route What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? Route 1 communications provide the occupants of each property with an opportunity to inform you of any changes or incorrect information

you hold on the electoral register for that address. You must issue a communication to each Route 1 property. There are two communication options open to you for the initial communication: 1 An e-communication: 2 Can be sent via any electronic channel If used, must be sent to every registered elector aged 16 or over that you hold the relevant electronic contact details for in the household 3 Requires a response, even if no changes are required for the property 4 Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe 5 (i.e. if no response is received to the initial e-communication or any reminder from at least one person within the household, Canvass Communication A must then be sent) Canvass Communication A (CCA): 6 Is a prescribed paper communication Can be hand delivered or sent by post Must be sent if you have been unable, or choose not, to use an e-communication Must be sent if you do not receive a response to an e-communication from an individual within the property within a reasonable timeframe 7 Does not require a response, unless there are changes for the property Does not require any follow up unless you are made aware of or have reason to believe there are changes for that property that require further action It is an offence for an individual to fail to notify you of a change, or to provide false information in response to a Route 1 communication. 8 1. Regulation 32ZBE(3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(a) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Regulations 32ZBG(4) and 32ZBG(4)(e)(i) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? An e-communication could be an email, SMS text message or another type of electronic or digital communication, such as a communication through internal accounts used to communicate with electors about other local authority services. A response is required to an e-communication, even if there are no changes to report. Whilst the e-communication you send must inform the recipient of the requirement to respond, you need only receive a response from one recipient of an e-communication within a household to meet the response requirement for that property. An e-communication provides you with an opportunity to encourage a response from a property to update the information you hold on the register via an alternative channel than by post. This could potentially lead to resource savings. To use an e-communication you must have the relevant contact details for at least one of the electors aged 16 or over registered in the household. 1 You can still use an e-communication if you only hold contact details for some but not all registered electors at a property, although you must send an e-communication to all electors aged 16 or over whose contact details you do have. 2 Using a mixture of e-communication methods You can, if you wish, use different types of e-communications for different properties: for example, you could choose to send a mixture of emails

and text messages or any other type of e-communication to different properties depending on the contact data you hold. You can also send a mixture of e-communications within a household. However, there is no requirement to use more than one type of e-communication to contact a property so, for example, if you hold email addresses for some individuals and mobile numbers for others, you could decide only to use e-mail contact, in which case you would only need to send the e-communication to those individuals with email addresses. Choosing which types of e-communication method(s) to use When deciding which, if any, e-communication method to use, you should consider: whether you hold the information necessary to use the contact method you are considering, or if you are able to obtain and use contact information from any other sources in line with data protection considerations the number of individuals you hold the necessary information for how confident you are that the contact data you hold is accurate and up to date the capacity that your local authority has for sending out bulk emails/SMS messages whether to send out e-communications in batches in order to help manage the workload created by a high number of responses how you will process responses received through different communication channels, including queries from electors what steps you will take to be sure that any communication channels you use and any actions taken comply with data protection legislation how you will ensure that electors will know that e-communications you send are genuine, so they can be confident in responding accordingly You cannot use e-communications for any empty and void properties as these properties do not contain any registered electors for you to contact electronically. 1. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What information should an e-communication contain? What information should an e-communication contain? What information should an e-communication contain? The design of an e-communication is not prescribed. However, we provide a template e-communication, and other information in our forms and letters guidance . Any e-communication must require the recipient to: 1 confirm whether the information for all electors is complete and accurate provide details for any other eligible electors who are not listed on the communication. These details include their name, nationality and an indication of whether someone is aged 76 or over and the date of birth of any person aged 14 or 15. 2 Your e-communication must inform the recipient that they are required to respond and should also: provide the recipient with a deadline for response include information on the response channels available to them and instructions on how to use them include a link to the UK Government's registration website (gov.uk/register-to-vote) inform the recipient how you obtained their contact details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of further e-communications. 1. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(4A)(b)(c) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What information should an e-communication contain? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is a successful response to an e-communication? What is a successful response to an e-communication? What is a successful response to an e-communication? You must receive a response to an e-communication from at least one elector in a household within a reasonable period of time, even where there are no

changes to the information for that property. 1 A successful response to an e-communication can be defined as one which either: 2 confirms that all of the information is complete and accurate provides new information regarding who is resident at the property provides new information regarding changes required to an elector's details provides new information indicating an existing elector is no longer resident at the property or provides any combination of the above. You only need to have received a successful response from one elector contacted via an e-communication to be satisfied that you have received a response for that property.

3 Making additional enquiries You can make additional enquiries if you receive a response that indicates a change may have occurred at the property but does not include enough information to provide a successful response as above. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get information needed to provide a successful response, you can close the route and undertake any additional actions required, for example, beginning the ITR process for new residents at the property. If you are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response, you must transfer the property to Route 2 – the unmatched property route, as you can no longer be satisfied that there are no changes to the property. For example, a response may suggest that there are potential new electors at the property but may not give their names. If you are unable to obtain the names of the potential new electors having made additional enquiries, this would require you to move the property to Route 2. What action to take if no response is received Where no response is received within a reasonable time period, you must send a CCA to the property. 4 However, you may choose to send a reminder e-communication before sending the CCA. While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days and may in some circumstances be shorter (for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place).

1. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What is a successful response to an e-communication? What information should an e-communication contain? Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Route 1 e-communications If you decide to use an e-communication then it is up to you to determine the most suitable response mechanism(s) for your area. For example, you could decide to signpost within your e-communication to an automated online, SMS or telephone response service which collects the required information. You could also allow responses to be provided in person, by email or by telephone, either to a call centre or directly to your team.

Managing changes to a property If you receive information in response to a Route 1 e-communication telling you about changes, you should take action to process the information in the response as necessary. What if more than one response is received? You will need to ensure that you can identify where more than one individual within a property has responded to an e-communication and are clear on what actions you will take if there is any conflicting information in the responses. For example, if you receive a response from one elector confirming that all the information is correct and accurate and you receive a response from another indicating that someone needs to be removed from the register at the property, you will need to make further enquiries

to confirm the details of the property. If you believe that there may be changes needed to the property but are unable to confirm enough information to enable you to carry out review or ITR processes, then you must transfer that property to Route 2.

What should I do with email bounce backs? An email bounce back is where an email is undelivered and returns a notification back to the sender. There are two types of bounce backs: soft bounce – this is where delivery is delayed while the email server re-attempts delivery a number of times over a period of hours or days and is only considered undeliverable if the retry period expires without success hard bounce – this is where the email address is deemed permanently undeliverable Where a hard bounce occurs you should remove the email address from your database and then send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for individuals at the property. In the case of a soft bounce you will usually need to wait to see if a hard bounce occurs as a result of still being unable to deliver the message after further attempts. You should have a process in place to enable you to identify bounce backs and take appropriate action. We have created the table below which identifies some of the common reasons for bounce backs and action you may wish to take

Reason for bounce back	Action to take
Email blocked by the recipient (hard bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. You should remove the email address from your database and send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for any individuals at the property.
Email address is invalid – for example, wrong address provided or transposed incorrectly (hard bounce)	Check your email data source for accuracy. If the address has been transposed incorrectly, correct the error and re-send the e- communication. If the address has not been transposed incorrectly – you should remove the email address from your database and send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for any individuals at the property.
The email is blocked by the server – for example, the email is in wrong format, too big or recognised as spam (hard bounce)	In advance of sending, review your ecommunication carefully, including with your IT team, and identify any potential reasons the email may be blocked - such as large graphics, photos or other corporate branding. Corporate branding that needs to be included as a way to signpost that the e-communication is genuine should be of a size that will be accepted by the receiving mailbox/server.
Receiving server is unavailable (soft bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. This will become a hard bounce if no action is taken by the receiving server.
Receiving mailbox is full (soft bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. This will become a hard bounce if no action is taken by the owner of the mailbox.
Respondent has an autoreply service set up (soft bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. The email may still be delivered but you should check the content of the auto reply and make a decision as to whether further action is required. For example, the individual may have left a place of work. In this case, you could treat the auto response in the same way as a hard bounce.

If you receive bounce backs and have no other electronic method for contacting individuals at a property, you should continue with the Route 1 process by sending a CCA to the property. 1 There is no requirement to re-allocate the properties to Route 2 unless you believe that there may be changes required at the property. You will need to take steps to ensure that any email addresses which resulted in a hard bounce back are removed from your database to ensure the accuracy of the contact information you hold for future canvasses.

1. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Responses to Route 1 e-communications What is a

successful response to an e-communication? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Canvass Communication A is a paper communication used for contacting matched properties as part of the Route 1 canvass. It provides residents with details of the individuals currently registered at the address and encourages a response if there are changes required. The format of the CCA is prescribed 1 and you must also include certain information about each person currently registered at the address. You must pre-print: 2 full name and nationality for all registered electors, including attainers and those individuals who have had their application recently determined and will be added to the register by the next notice of alteration prior to the CCA being sent if practicable, whether each person listed on the form is aged 76 or over The CCA must also include: Any information about how residents can respond if any of the information is inaccurate or incomplete 3 A statement setting out that, where a response is provided because any of the information is incomplete or inaccurate, the responder will be required to declare that the information they provide is true 4 A statement on how the data will be used and processed 5 The CCA must not include: 6 the details of any Special Category electors details of any individual you are aware of but who has not yet successfully registered to vote, even if you think they may be resident and eligible to register We provide more guidance to help you with the production of the CCA in our forms and letters guidance . A CCA must be sent where: 7 you have previously sent an e-communication for a Route 1 property and have not received a successful response from at least one person at the property to whom a e-communication was sent within a reasonable timeframe you have been unable to send an e-communication to at least one individual at a property you have decided not to use e-communications for a Route 1 property There is no requirement to receive a response to a CCA. 1. Regulations 32ZBG(1)(a) and (4)The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(6) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e)(i) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(c) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBE(6)(a)(i) and (ii) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) While households are obliged by law to let you know if any of the information contained on the CCA is inaccurate or incomplete, 1 there is no requirement for you to follow up non-responses to a CCA. You should, however, follow up on any CCAs that are returned by Royal Mail as undeliverable or return to sender. What response mechanisms are available for a CCA? It is up to you to determine which response mechanisms you will make available for individuals to use where they need to notify you of changes in a property after receiving a CCA. You must pre-print details of your chosen response mechanisms on the CCA. 2 The types of response mechanisms you may wish to provide are: Telephone, either to a call centre

or directly to your team Web Text Email In person Post (note - there is no legal requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a CCA, reflecting that the form itself is not intended to be returned) When making a decision as to what response mechanisms to offer you will need to consider: If a response is returned by post that indicates changes to a property, how will you ensure that you are satisfied that the information provided is accurate to enable you to process the changes? The demographics of your canvass area – for example if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet the needs of your electors. Whether the response mechanisms you offer ensure that there is an accessible way for individuals to provide details of any changes to you. Whether the response mechanisms you offer will also signpost to potential new electors to register via the register to vote website How you will manage the processing of responses through different channels – for example, if you are considering using a channel you have not used previously, you will need to ensure you have the right processes in place to manage responses through this channel, including considering how it will interact with your EMS system. You should also consider any additional resource implications from utilising different response mechanisms. How should I process a response to a CCA? Where someone responds to a CCA, whether to correct inaccurate information or to add missing information, you will need to check that their response includes all the information you require to fully process the response . For example, has the response provided enough information to start the ITR or review process? You can make additional enquiries if the response does not include enough information to close Route 1. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get the information needed to provide a successful response, you can close Route 1 and continue with the ITR or review process as appropriate for the property. If you are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response, you must transfer the property to Route 2 – the unmatched property route, as you can no longer be satisfied that there are no changes to the property. For example, a response may suggest that there are potential new electors at the property but may not give their names. If you are unable to obtain the names of the potential new electors having made additional enquiries, this would require you to move the property to Route 2. Further information about Route 2 can be found in our guidance for Route 2 - the unmatched property route .

1. Regulation 32ZBE(3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Route 2 – the unmatched property route Route 2 – the unmatched property route Route 2 – the unmatched property route When you have completed your data matching and allocated properties to canvass routes, you can begin to deliver your canvass plan. This section covers Route 2 and includes guidance on when you can use Route 2, the contact rules for Route 2, what canvass communications you can use and how to process responses. DLUHC Worksheet 4 - Route 2 canvass rules (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions pages 1 & 2 - WAL (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 6 - Route 2 process (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022

Book traversal links for Route 2 – the unmatched property route Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? Route 2 is the unmatched

property route. All properties by default start by being allocated to Route 2, and you can use Route 2 for any property at any time. To be able to canvass a property using Route 1 or Route 3 instead, specific criteria need to be met. What are the definitions of the different contact types for Route 2? The different contact types for Route 2 are defined as follows: Property contact – this is where either the prescribed Canvass Form or Canvass Communication B (CCB) is sent to the property, or a visit to the address is carried out. Your first contact attempt must be a property contact. Individual contact – this is where contact is made using contact details you hold for an individual who has been returned as a match 1 through national and/or any local data matching. You could use telephone, email, SMS or another electronic communication method (such as through internal customer accounts). Personal contact – this is where an attempt is made to make contact with either the household or individuals registered at the address who have been returned as a match, either by a visit to the property or a telephone call. What are the contact rules for Route 2? To meet the requirements of a Route 2 canvass there are a number of contact rules that you will need to follow: You must make a minimum of three contact attempts with the property and/or individuals at that property unless a response has been received 2 At least two contact attempts must be with the property, not with an individual One of the contact attempts must be via the use of the prescribed Canvass Form The first of the contact attempts must be a communication with the property (i.e. a Canvass Form, Canvass Communication B (CCB) or visit to the property), rather than with an individual At least one of the contact attempts must be a type of personal contact (i.e. a visit or a phone call) If any of the criteria above are not met in your first three contact attempts, you must make a further contact attempt to meet any outstanding requirements from the rules and complete the Route 2 process. Using your local knowledge and experience, you may decide to use different communication methods with different properties at the different contact stages of Route 2. You should speak to your EMS provider to confirm how this could be managed in practice. You may also decide to send specific communications at different times, depending on how you wish to manage your resources. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has produced a table which sets out the possible options for how different contact types could be used to ensure the Route 2 requirements are met. [DLUHC Route 2 Permutations Table \(PDF\)](#) 1. Regulations 32ZBD(4)(b) and (c) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulations 32ZBD(1) and (2) and (3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 22 March 2022 [Book traversal links for What is Route 2 and when can I use it?](#) Route 2 – the unmatched property route What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? The first contact attempt must be to a property, not an individual. 1 The communication options open to you for a property contact are: 2 Canvass Communication B (CCB) Canvass Form Visit to the property (i.e. a door knock) What is Canvass Communication B? While legislation does not provide detail about what the CCB 3 must include in the way that it does for the prescribed CCA (used for Route 1 properties) and Canvass Form, it does require you to use the version designed by the Electoral Commission. Canvass Communication B: Is a paper form Can be used as an alternative to the Canvass Form (notwithstanding that one of the three contact attempts required to complete Route 2 where no response is received must be by way of a Canvass Form) Does not require a pre-paid return envelope to be included Encourages a response to be made via

alternative response channels to post – either online or through a telephone response service Requires a response even if no changes are required at the property Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe What is a Canvass Form? The legislation requires you to use the Canvass Form designed by the Electoral Commission. 4 The Canvass Form: Is a paper form Must be accompanied by a pre-paid return envelope 5 Must be delivered to a property at some point in the Route 2 contact process, unless a response has already been received from the property Encourages electors to respond with updated details of the residents at the property Requires a response even if no changes are required at the property Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe We provide more guidance to help you with production of the CCB and Canvass Form in our forms and letters guidance . 1. Regulation 32ZBD(1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBD (1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulations 32ZBD(1)(a) and (10) and 32ZBG(1)(a)(iii) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBG(1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBD(9)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What constitutes a visit to a property? What constitutes a visit to a property? What constitutes a visit to a property? A visit to a property: Involves a canvasser attempting to gather the information required by the Canvass Form or CCB in person from a resident of the property Does not require a response to be received on the doorstep, or the door to be answered Can involve hand delivering either a CCB or Canvass Form when no response is received on the doorstep, which would meet both the personal contact and the property contact requirements of a Route 2 canvass at the same time Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What constitutes a visit to a property? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? You will need to make a decision about how you will carry out the first contact attempt. Some questions for you to consider include: Will you send a paper communication and, if so, which one? A CCB may encourage individuals to use the alternative response channels you have in place. An increase in the use of these channels may result in cost savings and reduce the resources you need to provide for processing responses. The demographic of your electors and how likely they are to have access to the different response channels should also be taken into account. A prescribed Canvass Form may be familiar to electors, which may encourage individuals to respond at the first contact stage. Remember that even if you do not receive a response at the first contact stage, if a Canvass Form has been sent as part of the first contact attempt, you are not required to send a further Canvass Form at any subsequent contact attempt. How will you deliver the paper communication – by hand or by post? You will need to consider the costs and resource requirements associated with production and delivery for each option. If delivering by hand, will you combine it with a personal visit? Where you are delivering canvass communications by hand, you could attempt a personal visit to the property (door knock) first. This attempt to make personal contact with an individual at the property will meet the Route 2 requirement of making at least one personal contact. If there is no answer at the property, you

could then deliver the canvass communication. You will need to ensure you identify, recruit and train sufficient canvassers for the geographical spread and number of properties requiring Route 2 canvass communications. Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the first contact attempt? What constitutes a visit to a property? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Beyond the requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a Canvass Form, it is up to you to determine which response channels you will make available for responding to canvass communications, whether a Canvass Form or CCB. You will need to reflect the available response options in your canvass communications at each stage of the Route 2 process. The type of response mechanisms you may wish to provide include: Telephone (either to a call centre or directly to your team) Online via an automated online response management system SMS Text message Email (either to a managed response service or directly to your team) In person Post (note - there is no legal requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a CCB, reflecting that the letter itself is not intended to be returned by post) When making a decision as to what response channels to offer you will need to consider: If a response is returned by post that indicates changes to a property, how will you ensure that you are satisfied that the information provided is accurate to enable you to process the changes? The demographics of your canvass area – for example if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet these needs. Whether the response mechanisms you offer ensure that there is an accessible way for individuals to provide details of any changes to you Whether the response mechanisms you offer will also signpost potential new electors to register via the register to vote website How you will manage the processing of responses through different channels – for example, if you are considering using a channel you have not used previously, you will need to ensure you have the right processes in place to manage responses through this channel, including considering how each channel will interact with your EMS. You should also consider any additional resource implications from utilising different response mechanisms. If you do not receive a response to a Route 2 communication, even where there are no changes to report, you must make further contact attempts until the minimum contact criteria has been met. 1 1. Regulation 32ZBD(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Which response channels can be used for Route 2? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? If you do not get a successful response within a reasonable period of time following the first contact, a second contact attempt must be made. 1 While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days and may, in some circumstances, be shorter (for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place). You can choose to make either: a property contact (i.e. Canvass Form, CCB, visit to the property), or an individual contact (i.e. email, SMS, telephone or any other electronic communication method), if you hold contact details for any matched individual(s) (aged 16 or over) at the property Electronic communications (e-communications) are designed to encourage a response to be made by channels other than by post. Your e-communication

must inform the recipient that they are required to respond and should also: Provide the recipient with a deadline for response Include information on the response channels available to them and instructions on how to use them Include a link to the UK Government's registration website (gov.uk/register-to-vote) Inform the recipient how you obtained their contact details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of further e-communications Whilst the e-communication you send must inform the recipient of the requirement to respond, you need only receive a response from one recipient of an e-communication within a household to meet the response requirement for that property and prevent the need for follow up. You can find out more information on e-communications in the forms and letters guidance . 1. Regulation 32ZBD (2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? You will need to make a decision about how to carry out the second contact attempt for all properties that have not supplied the information needed to provide a successful response to the first contact attempt. Some questions for you to consider include: Will you try another property contact with a paper canvass communication? If so, which one? If you used a CCB for the first contact attempt, you could decide to use a Canvass Form for the second attempt in order to meet the requirement for the Route 2 process that a Canvass Form be sent as one of the three minimum contact attempts where no response is received. You could also consider combining the delivery of a paper communication with a personal contact to the property. Will you use individual contact methods? Things you should consider when deciding whether to use e-communications . Further advice on using e-communications, including what to do where more than one response is received and what to do with email bounce backs. How you will process responses received from different communication methods, including queries from electors? You will need to take steps to ensure that any communication channels you use are secure and that any actions taken comply with data protection legislation so that electors will know that individual canvass communications you send are genuine, and can be confident in responding accordingly. When using an individual contact method as part of Route 2, you must attempt to make contact with each matched individual at the property that you hold contact information for. 1 Using a mixture of e-communications You can choose to send a mixture of e-communications within a household. However, there is no requirement to use more than one type of e-communication to contact a property so, for example, if you hold email addresses for some individuals and mobile numbers for others, you could decide only to use e-mail contact, in which case you would only need to send the e-communication to those individuals with email addresses. However, if the contact information for one matched elector is the same as that for another individual in the same property and you have already tried to make contact using that information, for example, if more than one occupier has provided the same telephone number or email address, you do not need to make multiple contact attempts using the same details. If you decide to attempt to contact individuals by telephone it is important to ensure that a clear audit trail is kept to record that contact attempt - for example, the date and time the call was made, details of who was spoken to, and what (if any) details they confirm or provide. The response can be provided by anyone at the property: any individual, including those who were unmatched, may answer the call and provide a response. 1. Regulations 32ZBD(4)(b) and (c) and 32ZBD(8)(b) The

Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? You must make a minimum of three contact attempts where you have not obtained a response.

1 In order to be able to close the Route 2 process in three contacts, you will need to ensure that the contact method you select for this stage will enable you to comply with the contact rules for Route 2 . In determining your contact options for the third contact attempt, you should therefore ask the following two questions: Have you already made an attempt to carry out the personal contact requirement of Route 2 – either by telephone call or household visit? Have you already sent the prescribed Canvass Form as part of a previous contact stage? It is important to remember that the sending of a CCB does not meet this requirement. If the answer to both the questions is yes, you can choose from any of the property or individual contact methods available to you (and outlined as part of the first and second contact stages). If the answer to either of these questions is no, and you wish to complete the Route 2 cycle with the minimum required contacts, you should undertake whichever of the outstanding requirements remain as part of this contact attempt. If you choose to use a contact method for your third attempt that would not enable you to meet the minimum contact requirements, you will need to make further attempts until the minimum contact requirements have been met or you have obtained a response. 1.

Regulation 32ZBD (3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? Route 2 responses Route 2 responses Route 2 responses If you do not receive a response to a Route 2 communication, even where there are no changes to report, you must make further contact attempts until the minimum contact criteria has been met. 1 You will need to check that any response you receive includes all the information you require to fully process the response. For example, do you have enough information to start the ITR or review process? You only need to have received a response from one individual to be satisfied that you have received a response for that property. Where you receive a response which confirms that all the information you hold for a property is complete and accurate, once you have processed the response, you can close Route 2 for that property. Managing incomplete or conflicting responses Where you receive a response that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it. You can make additional enquiries if the response does not include enough information to close Route 2. For example, if you have been provided with the full name of a potential new elector, but not their nationality, you could make additional enquiries before sending them an ITR. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get the information needed to provide a successful response, you can close Route 2 and continue with the ITR or review process as appropriate for the property. If you receive conflicting information from a property you will need to decide what action to take. For example, if you receive a response from one elector confirming that all the information is correct and accurate and you receive a response from another indicating that someone needs to be removed from the register at the property, you will need to make further enquiries to confirm the details of the property. However, if you have received information to suggest a change may have occurred at a property, but are unable to

obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response through the minimum Route 2 contact attempts, you should continue to make further contact attempts to obtain the missing information required to provide a successful response.

Managing changes to a property Where you receive a response to a Route 2 communication that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it and you should then take action to process the information in the response as necessary.

1. Regulation 32ZBD(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for Route 2 responses How should I carry out the third contact attempt? Route 3 - the defined property route Route 3 - the defined property route Route 3 - the defined property route As part of your planning for the canvass you should already have undertaken an exercise to identify Route 3 properties for your area and made initial contact with the responsible person for those properties. This section provides guidance on what communications you can use for this route and how to process responses for those properties you have allocated to Route 3.

DLUHC Worksheet 7 - Preparations for Route 3 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 8 - Route 3 process - WAL (PDF) Last updated: 22 March 2022

Book traversal links for Route 3 - the defined property route Route 2 responses What is Route 3 and when can I use it? What is Route 3 and when can I use it? What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Route 3, the defined property route, allows you to obtain the information required by the canvass for certain types of properties from a responsible person, where one can be identified. Route 3 properties must meet certain criteria set out in law. More information on the types of properties that can be considered for canvassing via Route 3, along with an explanation of who can be considered to be a responsible person, can be found in [what are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them?](#) You may decide to use Route 3 for certain property types where you believe you are more likely to get a response via a responsible person 1 than an individual resident within the property. However, if in advance of starting the Route 3 process, the data match result for any property shows all individuals resident at that property as matched and you are satisfied that there are no changes at that property to capture, you could decide that it is more appropriate to canvass the property via Route 1 – the matched property route. Route 3 cannot be used where data match results or other information you hold shows that only individuals under the age of 18 are registered at the property.

2 1. Regulations 32ZBA(3) and (5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulations 32ZBA(6) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 6 August 2021

Book traversal links for What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Route 3 - the defined property route Developing positive relationships with responsible persons Developing positive relationships with responsible persons Developing positive relationships with responsible persons It is important that you develop and maintain positive relationships with responsible persons to ensure that your Route 3 canvass activity is successful. You should consider how best to contact responsible persons in your area to ensure that the information is received, understood and acted upon in a timely way. For example, you may wish to make an informal phone call to your contact at the beginning of your Route 3 canvass to highlight that a formal request for information is forthcoming. You should be prepared to offer personal visits to Route 3 properties early in the canvass process if you consider that face to face communication is most appropriate for dealing with concerns or questions. In some instances, this may be the best way

of engaging with responsible persons and gathering the information required. Setting timescales You should ask for the information to be provided within a reasonable period of time. 1 When setting deadlines for the provision of the required information, you should ensure that they are realistic and achievable, and you should understand the different conditions in which your responsible persons are operating. For example, universities may not be able to provide information about students until the beginning of term. Once you have agreed your deadline for responses, you should communicate how you will issue reminders or follow up with visits as necessary, to help manage expectations. Issues with the supply of information Some responsible persons, for example care home staff, may have concerns about supplying information about residents who may not have the mental capacity to vote. Ensuring that your communications with them are clear and comprehensive will help provide them with the confidence they need to work with you effectively. You should point out that the purpose of the annual canvass is simply to capture information on who lives at the property to establish who should be invited to register, and identifying people who are no longer resident. We have produced guidance on supporting care home residents to register which you can refer to. Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) Occasionally, responsible persons may have concerns about supplying the required information because they have doubts about sharing personal data. In these cases you should remind them of your right to request information and reassure them that providing the required information does not breach data protection legislation.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 26 May 2021 Book traversal links

for Developing positive relationships with responsible persons What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Right to request information Right to request information Right to request information As Electoral Registration Officer, you have a duty to maintain an accurate and complete register . UK law enables you to require anyone to provide information required for the purposes of your registration duties. In particular, Regulation 23 of the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 1 states that: A registration officer may require any person to give information required for the purposes of that officer's duties in maintaining registers of electors. The required information for the Route 3 canvass is set out in what should a Route 3 communication include. Under data protection principles the ERO is entitled to collect the required information as there is a lawful basis for its processing; the performance of a public task in the public interest, as provided for in electoral law. If any additional optional information, for example email addresses and phone numbers, is requested, this may be shared if a data sharing agreement is in place between you and the responsible person or organisation, and they have informed individuals about the potential sharing of such information through their privacy notice. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further guidance on complying with data protection legislation. There is a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum £1,000 for failing to provide the information required. 2 1. Regulation 23 (1)

Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■

Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23 (3) RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Right to request information Developing positive relationships with responsible persons What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Communication with any properties being canvassed via Route 3 must be with the responsible person that you have identified as part of your planning. There

is no single prescribed communication method for Route 3 so you have the flexibility to decide how best to communicate with the responsible person for each of the Route 3 properties in your area. You can contact the responsible person for a Route 3 property by any method you think is appropriate including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1 Sending a paper communication - there is no prescribed form to be used for Route 3, but the prescribed canvass communications could be useful as templates for the information you need to collect
- Electronic communications – this could be by sending an email where you hold a contact email address for the responsible person
- Visiting the Route 3 property or the office of the responsible person
- By phone – you could decide to contact the responsible person by phone where you hold a contact number for them

Whichever method you choose for communicating with the responsible person at each Route 3 property, you should ensure that you maintain a clear audit trail of contacts you have made. As a minimum you should record the steps that you have taken to gather the information required by the canvass from the responsible person, for example, by recording the date, time and name of person contacted and the details of any response obtained from the responsible person.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(6) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Right to request information

What should a Route 3 communication include? What should a Route 3 communication include? What should a Route 3 communication include? As part of your planning for canvassing Route 3 properties you should have already considered when and how to make initial contact with a responsible person for Route 3 properties . After this initial contact, you will need to contact them again when you are requesting the information required by the canvass and potentially to follow up with reminder requests. You should ensure that any follow up activity allows time to switch properties to a Route 2 canvass if necessary. As a minimum, any communication must ask the responsible person to provide the following for each person who is aged 14 or over, eligible to register to vote and resident at the property:

- 1 Full name
- Nationality
- Date of birth

An indication of whether that person is aged 76 or over

You should also request the contact details (telephone number and/or email address) for each eligible resident for future contact purposes, but you should make it clear in any communication that the provision of these is optional. You should also consider how to communicate any relevant data protection information, such as a privacy statement setting out how you will process the information and what it will be used for. You can find more information on this in our guidance on Planning for canvass communications .

What else should I consider when making contact with a responsible person? Whether you contact the responsible person by email, phone, letter or by making a personal visit , you should ensure that your communications are clear and complete. There is no prescribed form to be used for Route 3, but the prescribed Canvass Form could be useful as a template for the information you need to collect. Information received this way could be scanned and input into your EMS in a similar way to processing other forms. We have produced a resource to support you with key messaging for Route 3 communications. Key messaging for Route 3 communications You could also consider whether collecting the information in another format, for example a spreadsheet, would allow for the data to be imported directly into your EMS system. This could be particularly useful when asking for information from universities, for example, where there is a high volume of information to collect. As with your initial contact, you should ensure that you record the steps you have taken to make contact and request the information. Further guidance on how to communicate with Route 3 properties is

given in what communications should be used for Route 3 properties . 1. Regulation 32ZBF(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 9 August 2023 Book traversal links for What should a Route 3 communication include? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Route 3 responses Route 3 responses Route 3 responses You will need to check that any response you receive provides the required information for each person aged 16 or over who is residing at the property and is eligible to register. 1 If you are satisfied that a response has been received from the responsible person for a property providing the information you need, the Route 3 process should be closed. Where you receive a response that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it and then you should take action to process the information in the response as necessary. Should I issue reminders for Route 3 properties? Where you have requested the required information from a responsible person for a Route 3 property and have not received a response you can, if you wish, remind them to respond. The reminder could be via a different communication method, or you could use the same communication method as your initial contact. Whatever action you take, you should record the steps that you have taken to remind the responsible person to respond, for example, by recording the date, time and communication method used. You will need to decide on the timing of any reminders. If you choose not to use a reminder or if a reminder has not led to the provision of the information from the responsible person within a reasonable time period, the property must be transferred to Route 2 and a full Route 2 canvass of that property must be conducted. 2 1. Regulation 32ZBF(5) and 32ZBF(5A) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBF(7) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Route 3 responses What should a Route 3 communication include? Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons You should make regular contact with responsible persons both during and outside of the canvass as part of your work to maintain the register. Monitoring the progress of the Route 3 canvass You should remain in regular contact with responsible persons during the canvass to check their progress in providing the required information, assist with any queries they may have, and to avoid delaying you from taking the necessary subsequent actions. You should consider how you will monitor the progress of the Route 3 process as part of your planning for the annual canvass. When making contact with responsible persons, you should set timescales for receiving the required information. You should put a process in place to check that the information has been provided by your deadline. Your EMS system should be able to assist with this, and diaries, electronic calendars or project planning tools may also be useful. You should monitor responses from Route 3 properties during the canvass to identify which properties you: have received the required information from, so the Route 3 process can be closed have received some of the required information from, and need to ask for further information have received no information from within a reasonable period of time, and need to follow up with a reminder or personal visit may need to transfer to a Route 2 canvass Further guidance on dealing with canvass returns is found in Route 3 responses . Maintaining contact with responsible persons outside the canvass It is important to maintain contact with responsible persons throughout the year as part of your activity to maintain the register outside of the canvass period. As well as ensuring that your contact details

for the responsible person at each Route 3 property remain correct in advance of the next canvass you should also ask them to provide updates on residents who have moved in or out during the year. This could be requested on a monthly basis, for example, or in the run up to an electoral event. This would be particularly useful for properties where there are likely to have been a number of changes outside of the canvass period due to the nature of the property, such as care homes or student accommodation. Keeping in touch will also help to build a long-term relationship with responsible persons, and help ensure that the provision of the information you need as part of the canvass takes place as smoothly as possible. Our guidance on public engagement and registration planning includes further advice on planning for registration outside the canvass, including what records you can inspect throughout the year to identify potential new electors. The section on maintaining the register throughout the year contains additional guidance on registration activity outside the canvass, for example through sending household notification letters or discretionary communications . Last updated: 27 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons](#) [Route 3 responses](#) [Processing canvass responses](#) [Processing canvass responses](#) This section of the guidance covers how to process canvass responses. Your registration plans should address how you will deal with each type of canvass response and any follow-up activity that you will need to take. Responses to canvass communications will fall into the following broad categories: all of the information is complete and accurate provides new information regarding who is resident at the property provides new information regarding changes required to an elector's details provides new information indicating an existing elector is no longer resident at the property a combination of the above information that the property has no residents who are eligible to be registered Last updated: 11 June 2020 [Book traversal links for Processing canvass responses](#) [Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons](#) What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Canvass response indicates all of the information is complete and accurate You should record that a response has been received to stop reminders from being sent and close the canvass route for the property. Canvass response indicates an existing elector is no longer resident at the property You must not automatically delete the elector from the register. You must instead either obtain a second source of evidence or conduct a registration review before you can remove the elector. You can find more information on both in our guidance - [deleting an elector from the register](#) Canvass response indicates an existing elector is now deceased You may automatically delete the elector from the register if a response indicates that an elector is deceased, and you are satisfied that the information is correct. Canvass response indicates there are new resident(s) at the property You must invite potential eligible electors to register within 28 calendar days of receipt unless, in the meantime, they have made an application to register. You do not need to know the full or exact name of a potential elector in order to give them an invitation to register. You do, however, need to have enough information about their name to be able to identify them as an individual. You can find more information in our guidance - [inviting individuals to register to vote](#) Canvass response indicates an elector's name has changed You should send a change of name form to the elector. If an elector has changed their name they must complete a change of name form and provide supporting evidence of the change for the electoral register to be updated. You can find more information in our guidance - [processing a change to](#)

an elector's name Canvass response indicates an elector's nationality has changed You should send an invitation to register to an elector whose nationality has changed. An elector who was previously registered only in the register of local government electors must make a new application if they become a British citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of another Commonwealth country, so that they can be added to the register of UK Parliamentary electors. The new application will need to go through the application, verification and determination process again. You can find more information in our guidance - processing a change to an elector's nationality Canvass response indicates a change to the 76 or over indicator You should add a relevant marker on the register to any individual if a response to a canvass communication indicates that they are (or are not) aged 76 or over Canvass response indicates a change to an elector's open (edited) register preference Where the canvass response clearly indicates that a person wishes to opt out of the open register (for example, if only one elector resides at the address and they have indicated they wish to be removed from the open register), you should treat the canvass response as a notice under Article 21 of the GDPR and amend their open register preference in line with their request. If you are in any doubt as to whether the request comes from an individual elector (for example, if there are multiple electors at the address) or as to their intentions, you should contact the elector(s) to explain what the process is for changing their open register preference, and ask for confirmation before processing the request. This includes if you receive a response from one person that seems to make a request on behalf of everyone listed on the form. You can find more information in our guidance – processing a change to an elector's open register preference Last updated: 22 March 2022 Book traversal links for What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Processing canvass responses What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? With the exception of a Canvass Communication A, a person who has received a canvass communication must provide the information that it requires to the ERO, but there is no requirement for the form itself to be returned. 1 There is a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum of £1,000 for failing to provide the information required to the ERO. 2 The penalty for providing false information to an ERO is up to six months imprisonment or an unlimited fine. 3 1. Regulation 23(1) 2001 The Representation of the people regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23(3) 2001 The Representation of the people regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sections 13D(6) The Representation of the people act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 11 June 2020 Book traversal links for What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Elections during the annual canvass Elections during the annual canvass Elections during the annual canvass This section of the guidance covers the areas you will need to consider and decisions you will need to take in relation to both the delivery of the canvass and the management of electoral registration for the poll, if an election is held during the canvass period. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Elections during the annual canvass What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? What do I need to consider if an election

is held during the annual canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? An election during the canvass period may reduce the amount of time you have for follow-up activities for both canvass communications and ITRs. Your canvass plan and risk register should include details of how you will redeploy resources to target registration in any areas in which an election takes place. If any of the elections listed below, including general or by elections, are held between 1 July and 1 December, you will need to make a decision whether to delay publication of the revised register and, if so, by how much. In these circumstances publication of the revised register can be postponed up to 1 February the following year. UK Parliamentary elections Senedd elections Local government – county and county borough elections Local government – community council elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections The impact of any election may depend on which stage of the canvass you are at and how many polling districts are affected by the election. You will need to be satisfied that you will have sufficient time to take all necessary steps to ensure your registers are as accurate and complete as possible by the time of publication. In reaching your decision you should consider the impact that postponing the publication of the revised register may have on canvass processes. For example, where publication of the revised register is postponed, personal canvassing may take place later in the year where reduced daylight hours may impact on the willingness of canvassers to knock on, and non-responders to open, their doors. Inclement weather may also impact a later canvass, and response rates may reduce over the festive period. Where you decide to postpone publication due to an election, you should take steps to make local political parties and elected representatives aware of the changed register publication date at an early stage. As detailed in the guidance for monthly notices of alteration during the canvass period, there is no requirement to publish a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but you may do so if you wish. Therefore if publication of the revised register has been postponed to, for example, 1 February, you will publish a monthly notice of alteration in October and November; you are not required to publish one in December or January, but you may do so if you wish. Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass?](#) [Elections during the annual canvass](#) [How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass?](#) [How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass?](#) [How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass?](#) [If an election is to be held during the canvass, your focus will need to be on any new potential electors identified who have not yet registered. You should consider how best to use your resources to target these individuals and to chase up responses to any Route 2 or 3 canvass communications, so that as many eligible electors as possible are registered in time for the election. Your plan should address such things as: what canvassers will have to do differently how canvass staff will be informed of an election and given their revised instructions what you will do to maximise returns in the affected area\(s\) to reduce potential disenfranchisement how you will identify and prioritise the processing of canvass communications and ITRs for the affected area\(s\) how the canvass will resume after the election when you will publish the revised register and what factors will be considered in making the decision how you will communicate decisions to local political parties, elected representatives and other interested individuals and groups Printing polling districts on canvass communications and ITRs will enable you to quickly identify and prioritise these forms where an election is in only part of](#)

the registration area. You can include other registration-related information in the same envelope as an ITR, such as information about the registration deadline for a forthcoming poll. If the election affects the whole of the registration area, it will be particularly important that your resources are targeted to maximise the number of eligible electors registered in time to participate in the election. Every effort should be made to conclude all visits well in advance of the registration deadline, but, given the time constraints and depending on the timing of the election, this might not always be feasible. You should use local data records and your knowledge about your local area to identify any new electors, and any properties where there are likely to have been changes. These could then be prioritised for personal visits. You could also consider amending your approach to follow up activities for any non-responding Route 2 or Route 3 properties in the area affected by the election. For example, you might choose to send additional e-comms reminders or make personal contact by phone instead of face to face visit where possible. The local authority that appointed you as ERO must, by law, provide you with the resources you need to discharge your statutory functions. Use local media and public awareness exercises to set out to residents how they can register to vote in time to be included on the register for use at the election. In the event of any UK-wide poll during the canvass, it will be important to link your local messaging with any communication activity by the Commission in order to maximise its impact. Where the election crosses local council boundaries, you should liaise with the ERO in the other local council(s) to ensure a consistent approach and messaging across the electoral area. How can I use my canvassers to target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? Your plans should be flexible enough to allow you to re-allocate staff resources to ensure as many responses as possible are collected and returned to the electoral registration office from the relevant area(s) in time to be processed and determined for the final election notice of alteration. As a minimum, canvassers working in the area(s) affected by an election should return any voter registration forms that they have collected as soon as possible, and by the registration application deadline for that election. You should provide details in instructions to canvassers on how often forms should be returned to the registration office if an election occurs. Registration application forms collected by canvassers by the registration deadline, are deemed to have met the registration deadline even if not brought to the office of the Electoral Registration Officer until after the registration deadline. Canvassing only needs to pause in the area(s) affected by the election. Canvassers in the electoral area(s) affected by the election should, if they are not already, encourage occupiers who are not registered to do so online (or by telephone if you offer this service), and highlight the registration application deadline. They could have blank registration forms available for potential electors to complete where they do not have access to the internet. To ensure that only forms received before the registration deadline will be processed canvassers should be instructed to suspend personal visits by the end of the twelfth day before the poll. Last updated: 2 December 2020 Book traversal links for How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? The register to be used for an election taking place during the canvass will be the revised register published on the 1 December the previous year, and amended by subsequent monthly and election notices of alteration. In the area where

any election is taking place, you must publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 1. Section 13AB and 13B RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? Publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register This section of the guidance covers the practical management of the publication of the revised register following the canvass, including timing, content and layout of the register, and guidance on access and supply to the register post publication. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Publication of the revised register Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? Unless there has been an election during the canvass you must publish the revised register by 1 December. 1 Dies non do not apply to the requirement to publish by 1 December which means you can publish the register on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday if you choose to do so. You also have discretion to publish before this date, however doing so will have an impact on the cut off dates for registration applications. Publishing on 1 December will help to ensure that the revised register is as accurate and complete as it can be and will maximise opportunities for potential electors to be included. Publishing in November means the revised register would not reflect any new electors who had applied to register after 23 October, nor would it reflect any amendments or deletions determined after 31 October. While the registration process continues throughout the year, the publication of the revised register is a key milestone. Whenever you decide to publish, you should be able to explain the reasons for your decision. See the table below. Application and determination deadlines that apply to the publication of the revised register

Event	Dates if the revised register is published on 1 December	Dates if the register is published in November
Last day for receipt of new applications to register	22 November 2023	23 October 2023 (6 working days before the determination deadline)
Determination deadline	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Anonymous registration application and determination deadline	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Deadline for amendments to and removal of register entries	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Publication By	1 December 2023	Any date during November

Monthly notices of alteration Updates to the register must be published on the first working day of each month, however you are not required to issue a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but may do so if you wish. If the register is published in November this means you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in September, October and November. If it is published in December, you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in October, November and December. 1. Section 13(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 1 June 2023 Book traversal links for When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass?

Publication of the revised register What does the revised register contain when published? What does the revised register contain when published? What does the revised register contain when published? The full register You must publish a full register of electors combined as far as possible into one register for all election types, and containing the appropriate franchise markers. The format of the register is not prescribed but must contain, with the exception of certain special category electors and the details of any person under 16 years old, the name, address and elector number of every eligible elector whose application to register has been determined by the relevant deadline, including attainers. 1 An attainer is someone who is not yet old enough to vote but will achieve the required voting age for certain types of poll by the end of the twelve months following the 1 December after the relevant date . The local government register for Senedd will include 16 and 17 year olds as full electors. 2 Additionally, 15 year olds and some 14 year olds are entitled to be included on the local government register for Senedd as attainers. The combined register will need to make clear the date on which those included on it will become old enough to vote in different elections to clearly show when they will become eligible to vote. 3 Your revised register must include all additions and amendments to the register which you have determined by the relevant deadline. 4 Only when an application has been made and successfully determined can an individual be added to the register. Information provided in response to a canvass communication and any names identified through checking local records cannot be treated as an application to register or be added to the register. You should also ensure you action any deletions that you have determined since the publication of the last notice of alteration in the revised register. The edited register An elector's name and address will be included in the edited register unless they ask for them to be removed. You must publish a revised edited register which is an exact copy of the full register, but excludes those who have opted out of their details appearing, at the same time as you publish the revised full register. 5 Any person under 16 years old is automatically opted out of the edited register. In addition you must continue to publish the edited register on the first working day of every month. This duty applies all year, including during the canvass period, and any requests from existing electors to change their opt-out status will need to be reflected. However, if you choose not to publish notices of alteration in the 2 months preceding the publication of the full register following the annual canvass, any monthly revised edited register must not include or remove any details of any electors that are not already existing electors previously included on the full register or any alteration notice. 6 You are required to publish a fully integrated updated version of the edited register rather than a notice setting out the changes. 7 However, you do not have to print a full edited register every month, only if you are producing one for somebody who has requested it. For more information see our guidance on processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register preference . No information on those aged under 16 must be included on any version of the register published or otherwise made available, including the edited register, except in very limited circumstances .

Describing the full and edited registers The terms 'full register' and 'edited register' are the technical terms used in the legislation. The terms 'electoral register' and 'open register' have to be used to describe the full and edited register to members of the public, to make it easier to understand the purpose of each register and how it is used. In specific instances where we mention the edited register in the guidance in this context, we refer to the edited register as the 'open register'. Otherwise we use the term 'edited register'. List of overseas

electors You must keep a separate list or lists of overseas electors. 8 You must publish this and make it available for inspection and supply when you publish the revised register. 9 The list must be compiled in alphabetical order by surname within each constituency or part of a constituency within your area. 10 It must specify both the qualifying address and the full address outside the UK of each overseas elector.

1. Section 9(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 10 Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section 9(5A) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 13(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 93(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Regulation 93(2) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) 7. Regulation 93 RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 7](#) 8. Regulation 45(1) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 8](#) 9. Regulation 45(3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 9](#) 10. Regulation 45(2) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 10](#)

Last updated: 23 February 2021

[Book traversal links for What does the revised register contain when published?](#)

[When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass?](#)

[Format of the revised register](#)

[Format of the revised register](#)

[Format of the revised register](#)

When creating the layout of the register you must: divide the register into polling districts give each polling district a unique set of letters 1 give a number to each elector 2 The elector numbers should be allocated sequentially in each part of the register. The polling district letters and the number together are known as the elector number. We have produced separate guidance on undertaking reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. Entries in the register for each ordinary elector must be arranged in street order and may only be arranged in alphabetical order by name or a mix of the two where it is not reasonably practicable to list them in street order. 3 Franchise markers Some electors may only vote in certain types of elections and their names must be prefixed in the register with certain letters: 4 Letter Elector F is an overseas elector who is only entitled to vote at UK Parliamentary elections. G is a citizen of a member state of the European Union (except a Commonwealth country or the Republic of Ireland) who is only entitled to vote at local government elections. L is a peer eligible to vote in the House of Lords who is entitled to vote at local government elections. M is a qualifying foreign citizen (except a Commonwealth, Republic of Ireland or European Union citizen) who is entitled to vote at the Senedd election and local government elections Attainers Some electors added to the register will be known as attainers. These electors are individuals who have not yet reached voting age but will do so before the next expected publication of the full register. 15 year olds and some 14 year olds are entitled to be included on the local government register as attainers. A date will be given after these electors' names to indicate when they will have attained the age where they can vote. Other electors There must be a section after the ordinary electors in any polling district marked 'other electors', containing any special category electors who are not listed in the main body of the register listed by surname in alphabetical order without an address, followed by any anonymously registered electors. 5 Our guidance on special category electors sets out in detail how special category electors should be included on the register. We have produced a resource showing an example of how the register should be formatted. Example of the formatting for a sample electoral register in Wales 1. Regulations 38 and 39 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 9(3) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulations 41(1) and (2) RPR 2001

■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 42 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 41(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 13 July 2023 Book traversal links for Format of the revised register What does the revised register contain when published? Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register could prompt enquiries to you, which you should be prepared to respond to. You should consult with your local authority press or communications teams if you haven't already done so to ensure that you are able to react quickly to any local stories that may emerge, particularly if there has already been local coverage on any electoral registration issues in your area. You should consider issuing a press release announcing the total number of people registered in your area, highlighting the work you have done and any additional work you have planned to get people registered. You should point out that there is still an opportunity to register in time for the next scheduled elections, using it as a call to action for anyone in your area who is not yet registered to do so. Given the continued media focus on the registration rates of students and attainers, you might find it helpful to highlight the work you are doing with schools, colleges, universities or any relevant voluntary groups to encourage registration. Your press team can get further advice by contacting the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, or by emailing press@electoralcommission.org.uk . Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Format of the revised register What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities may request management information each year following the annual canvass; the required information may also change from year to year, however your EMS should be able to produce reports to support these requests. Electoral Commission Canvass Data Collection Each year the Electoral Commission will request data following the publication of the annual register. The data to be provided will be contained in reports which will be generated fully populated in your EMS system. The Research Team at the Commission will work with your EMS provider to specify the reports ahead of the data collection and your EMS supplier should let you know how to generate the correct report from the system. Once you have generated the report in your EMS system and reviewed the data, please submit it to CanvassData@electoralcommission.org.uk as soon as possible after the publication of the annual revised register. Deadlines for submission and further information will be communicated via an EA bulletin. Performance standards While we will still want to collect data from all EROs to help us understand the state of the electoral registers across Great Britain, we are not proposing that EROs would routinely collate and provide us with all the information listed within the standards . You should however use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities to identify what works and what doesn't and where improvements can be made. The framework and supporting tools and templates are designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and what is not working so well. RPF 29 Each year the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will issue an RPF29 form to EROs which you are required to supply to the Secretary of State setting out certain prescribed information relating to the revised register. 1 You are required to submit

this information as soon as possible after publication of the revised register. 2 1. Regulation 44 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 44(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Who can be supplied with the register? Who can be supplied with the register? Who can be supplied with the register? Access to and supply of the full electoral register is limited to those prescribed in legislation. You have a duty to supply free copies of the register of electors to various organisations and individuals, and legislation imposes restrictions on how this is done. In some cases, registers have to be supplied on publication and in others the register is only supplied on request. The timing of receipt of the register is particularly important to some recipients. For example, political parties need the electoral register to fulfil their statutory obligations in relation to the checking of donations, in addition to using it for campaigning purposes. It is important that the register is supplied promptly and you should, therefore, supply the register to anyone who is entitled to receive it on publication as soon as possible and in any case, within 5 working days. You should ensure that every person/organisation that receives the register, whether on publication, by sale, or on request, is aware that: they must only use the register for the permitted purpose(s) specified in the Regulations once the purpose for which the register has been supplied has expired, they must securely destroy the register they understand the penalty for misuse of the register You should not provide any advice in response to questions about whether a recipient's proposed usage of register data is in accordance with the law. It is for the recipient of the register to be satisfied that their use of the register is in accordance with what the law sets out. If they are not certain they should speak to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or seek their own legal advice. We have made cover sheets available, which set out how the register may be used and the penalty for misuse, for the sale and supply on request and inspection of the electoral register. Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection (DOC) We have also produced a list of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register. List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) There are different provisions that apply in respect of the edited register and the marked register. To demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner you should maintain records of every person and organisation you supply with the register. We have produced further detailed guidance on access and supply of the electoral register throughout the year. Last updated: 3 December 2020 Book traversal links for Who can be supplied with the register? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? Data relating to those under 16 years of age Data relating to those under 16 years of age Data relating to those under 16 years of age can only be accessed by, or made use of by, EROs and their staff. No version of the register or any absent voting lists published or otherwise made available should contain that data. However, the data may be disclosed: 1 to the individual themselves (including disclosure of the data to demonstrate that they are a permissible donor) or to a person they have appointed as proxy to vote for them for the purposes of a criminal investigation or criminal proceedings relating to the registration of electors or the conduct of elections in a

communication sent to an individual or household for the annual canvass, although the date of birth must not be pre-printed. to EROs and Returning Officers in connection with the registration of electors or the conduct of elections The only other exception is that before a Senedd election, the information on those under 16 years of age who will be eligible to vote at the election (i.e. will attain the age of 16 on or before polling day), can, for the purposes of or in connection with the election, be disclosed in the electoral register, postal voters list, list of proxies and list of postal proxies, that is supplied to: 2 candidates at Senedd elections for electoral purposes or to comply with the rules on political donations the Returning Officer for the purposes of Senedd elections the Electoral Commission. In this case, the Commission is only allowed to use the information in connection with its functions relating to donation controls and publication of information for certain functions including those relating to donors, but the latter does not enable publication of the names and addresses of those under 16 years old The information supplied before an election must not contain anything that would identify a voter as under 16 years old. No other individuals or bodies may be supplied with any information relating to those aged under 16 years old. 1. Section 25 Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 25(5) Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 23 February 2021 [Book traversal links for Data relating to those under 16 years of age](#) Who can be supplied with the register? Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents The elector number of an anonymous elector may change when you republish the electoral register following the conclusion of the annual canvass. If an anonymous elector's electoral number has changed and they have an Anonymous Elector's Document, you must notify them that their electoral number has changed, that their Anonymous Elector's Document is no longer valid and that you will issue them with a new Anonymous Elector's Document. For more information see our guidance on Replacement of an Anonymous Elector's Document where the elector number has changed . Last updated: 8 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents](#) Data relating to those under 16 years of age Elections immediately following the canvass Elections immediately following the canvass Elections immediately following the canvass This section of the guidance covers considerations for an election held in December following the conclusion of the canvass and the publication of the revised register. It includes guidance on which register you should use for a December election and how this will impact on candidates and political parties and on the production of poll cards. Last updated: 15 June 2020 [Book traversal links for Elections immediately following the canvass](#) Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents What do I need to consider for a December election? What do I need to consider for a December election? What do I need to consider for a December election? For any election held in December, the notice of election will be published before the deadline for publishing the revised register. Impact on candidates and political parties The nomination of candidates for a UK parliamentary election is based on the register in force on the last date for publication of the notice of election. If you have published your revised register by the last date for publication of the notice of election, this will be the register candidates and agents need to use for collecting subscribers. If not, it will be your last published notice of alteration. In the event of a UK parliamentary election you should ensure that candidates and their agents are aware of which register to use when collecting

subscribers for the purpose of completing their nomination papers. For any election, it is particularly important that candidates and parties who have requested a copy of the revised register and election notices of alteration are provided with copies as soon as possible after publication. This will assist candidates and political parties to engage with electors and campaign effectively where the publication of the revised register takes place during an election period. Poll cards Returning Officers (ROs) must send poll cards to electors entitled to vote at the election as soon as practicable after publication of the notice of election. You may wish to take this into consideration when deciding whether or not to publish the monthly notices of alteration during the annual canvass period. If you are the ERO for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, you should liaise with the other ERO(s) and the (A)RO in reaching your decision. Choosing to publish these additional notices may help to mitigate any renumbering issues caused by the publication of revised registers after poll cards and postal votes have been issued. If you choose not to publish the monthly notices of alteration during the canvass period, poll cards sent before the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration will be based on data which would not reflect any additions or deletions determined after the deadline for the September monthly update. In these circumstances there is an argument that the earliest point it would be practicable to issue poll cards would be immediately following the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration so that the data used reflects additions and deletions determined during the canvass period. If you are not also the RO, you should work with them to put mechanisms in place to ensure that poll cards can be sent to electors as soon as possible after the first interim notice has been published. See our guidance on election notices of alteration and the deadlines for applications to be made for inclusion on those notices. ROs need to make clear in polling station staff training that the elector numbers on poll cards may be different to the numbers allocated to electors when the register is revised. They should explain that this does not affect a person's entitlement to vote and that they should not refer to the elector number printed on the poll card when marking the register and completing the corresponding number list. Instead, when the elector provides confirmation of their name and address, use the number as it appears against the elector's details in the polling station register for completing the corresponding number list. Polling station staff should be briefed so they are able to respond to any queries from electors who may question why the number being read out and written on the corresponding number list is different to the one which is printed on their poll card. Last updated: 21 November 2022

Book traversal links for What do I need to consider for a December election? Elections immediately following the canvass Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? There is no provision to postpone publication of the revised register as a result of an election that will take place after the 1 December. The revised register has immediate effect on publication for all elections, this is unlike a notice of alteration which only has effect at an election if published on or before the fifth working day before the poll. Once you have published the revised register it will be used for polling purposes for any election with a polling day on or after the date of publication, although you are also required to publish two interim election notices of alteration and a final notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 1 The nomination of

candidates will be based on the register in force on the last date for publication of the notice of election. 1. Sections 13AB and 13B Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? What do I need to consider for a December election? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? There is no provision to postpone publication of the revised register as a result of an election that will take place after the 1 December. The revised register has immediate effect on publication for all elections, this is unlike a notice of alteration which only has effect at an election if published on or before the fifth working day before the poll. Once you have published the revised register it will be used for polling purposes for any election with a polling day on or after the date of publication, although you are also required to publish two interim election notices of alteration and a final notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 1 The nomination of candidates for a UK parliamentary election will be based on the register in force on the last date for publication of the notice of election. 1.

Sections 13AB and 13B Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 21 November 2022 Book traversal links for Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? As part of your planning for delivery of the canvass , you will have established how you will evaluate the overall success of the canvass to inform your plans for future canvasses. Over time, your evaluation and refinement of your plans should ensure that your canvass processes make the best use of resources, are successful in encouraging households and individuals to take the necessary action, provide the best service for electors and reduce the administrative burden on your service. Your evaluation should utilise the metrics available to you via your EMS system. The performance standards for EROs , and the tools and templates available to support them, will assist you in understanding the impact of your activities, help identify where improvements can be made and support you to report on your own performance locally. You should use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities, both throughout and at the end of the canvass, to identify what works and what doesn't and where you can make improvements. The framework is designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and where improvements could be made. Last updated: 3 December 2020 Book traversal links for How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? Electoral Registration Officers must consider data protection issues in many aspects of their work. Our guidance covers your role as a data controller, how you should protect the personal data you hold, how long you should retain it for, and where you can find more information and guidance on data protection legislation. Last

updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? Who is a data controller? Who is a data controller? Who is a data controller? As ERO, you are a data controller with a statutory duty to process certain personal data to maintain the electoral register. Under data protection legislation you need to be able to demonstrate that you comply with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and transparently. Advice from the ICO is that all data controllers need to ensure that they are registered with the ICO. This means that EROs and ROs must be registered separately to their council. Under the data protection legislation, a public authority must appoint a data protection officer (DPO) to advise on data protection issues. As ERO or RO, you are not included in the definition of a public authority contained in Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and are not required to appoint a DPO for the conduct of your duties. However, your appointing council must have a DPO in place and you should liaise with them over good practice in relation to data protection. A key element of data protection legislation is the increased focus on accountability and transparency when processing personal data. You must be able to demonstrate that you comply with your obligations under data protection legislation. The key to achieving this is to have and maintain written plans and records to provide an audit trail. Our resource on data protection legislation details how you can put measures in place to meet the requirement to demonstrate compliance and to ensure that data protection is integral to all you do. You need to ensure that you are complying with your responsibilities under data protection legislation. In particular, you should ensure that you: are registered with the ICO as a data controller have appropriate privacy notices in place are retaining documents in accordance with your document retention policy ensure that data protection is integral to any contracts where personal data is processed have a policy document in place to process special categories of personal data maintain records and plans to demonstrate that you are processing personal data lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in your plans and risk register, highlight the safeguards you have in place to avoid a personal data breach Guidance on demonstrating compliance with data protection legislation is contained throughout our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs . Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Who is a data controller? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? You will need to check that appropriate security measures are in place to protect personal data. You should review your processes with your data protection officer and information management/IT departments to help identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper or stored electronically. You need to maintain a document retention policy, which will help demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Your document retention policy should set out the following for all documents you receive and hold: whether the document contains personal data the lawful basis on which any personal data was collected your retention period your rationale for the retention period (which might relate to a requirement in electoral law) Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further guidance on the retention and storage of documents, including what information your document retention policy should contain.

You will be collecting personal data from residents such as date of birth, nationality and their National Insurance Number. Your council will have corporate standards and processes for handling data and security. You should seek advice from your Data Protection Officer and IT about maintaining effective data handling. They will be able to help you identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper forms or stored electronically on your systems. You will need to ensure that your procedures and storage arrangements are compliant with data protection legislation. Good data handling practices need to be part of your day-to-day business processes. For example, you will need to keep under review how you are managing the security of personal data. Last updated: 26 June 2023

[Book traversal links for How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for?](#) [Who is a data controller?](#) [What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers?](#) [What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers](#) Where a response to a canvass communication contains individuals' email addresses and/or telephone numbers you should ensure that these are recorded, in accordance with data protection legislation requirements, and that this information is only used for the purpose for which it was collected. If you have existing records of email addresses or phone numbers, at the time that you next use that information, you should ensure the data subject is aware of how you will continue to process this data such by: explaining the data subjects right to object to further processing providing a link to your privacy notice including an unsubscribe option More information on the provision of an unsubscribe option can be found in our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs . Last updated: 26 June 2023

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers?](#) [How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for?](#) [Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation?](#) [Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation?](#) [Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation?](#) You can find guidance on data protection on the Information Commissioner's website , or if you have any specific questions you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office directly. The Information Commissioner's Office - Wales 2nd Floor, Churchill House Churchill Way Cardiff CF10 2HH Tel: 029 2067 8400 Email: wales@ico.org.uk The Local Government Association/ SOCITM have also produced guidance for local authorities on data handling (although it should be noted that the ERO is a separate data controller from the local authority). It recommends that you consider the following factors when developing your approach to data handling:

Policy: comprehensive policies (including business continuity, and home and mobile working) should form the information governance regime. The policies should be monitored and audited to ensure they are being effectively enacted

People: including staff awareness and training, users' access, and mechanisms for managing information risks

Places: including risk assessments, security of buildings and premises, the disposal of information, and use of removable media

Processes: including who can access data, system security, transfer of data, and supplier and contractor data processes

Procedures: including risk reporting, auditing procedures, and documented policies and procedures Last updated: 23 February 2021

[Book traversal links for Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation?](#) [What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers?](#) [Resources for Electoral Registration Officers](#) [Resources for Electoral Registration Officers](#) [Forms and letters guidance](#) [Anonymous registration: Supporting survivors of domestic abuse to register to vote - Wales \(PDF\)](#) [Canvass route descriptions and criteria \(PDF\)](#)

Canvasser recruitment and training checklist (DOC) Canvasser training template (PPT) Canvasser Quiz (DOC) Considerations for the 2020 canvass - WAL (DOC) Doorstep script for canvassers (DOC) FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) Telephone script for canvassers (DOC) Template registration plan (XLS) Template risk and issues register (XLS) Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Access to New British Citizen Data Case Study - Canvass Chronicle 25 June DLUHC - National Data Matching Instructions - May 2020 (PDF) DLUHC - National Data Matching Instructions W - May 2020 (PDF) DLUHC - Data test guidance Part I and annexes (PDF) DLUHC Testing local data guidance Part II and annexes (PDF) DLUHC - Testing national data guidance Part III (PDF) DLUHC Canvass reform worksheets contents page (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - WAL (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - WAL Print version page 1 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - WAL Print version page 2 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 2 - Data matching empty properties and exclusions - WAL (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 4 - Route 2 canvass rules (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions pages 1 & 2 - WAL (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions - WAL Print version page 1 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions - WAL Print version page 2 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Route 2 Permutations Table (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 6 - Route 2 process (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 7 - Preparations for Route 3 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 8 - Route 3 process - WAL (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 9 - Switching Routes (PDF) DLUHC helpsheet - Recent additions and determined electors DLUHC - Key Changes to EMS - Brief Guide (DOC) DLUHC - Notify Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May Edition (DOC) DLUHC - Telephone Canvassing Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May Edition (DOC) Information sheet for elected members and senior leaders: The Annual Canvass and Canvass Reform (DOC) Last updated: 8 April 2022 Book traversal links for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Resources for Electoral Registration Officers

Introduction This guidance is for non-party campaigners who are campaigning at local authority mayoral elections in England. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, non-party campaigners must follow rules about how much they can spend on campaign activities in the run up to certain elections. This guidance explains how the rules apply. [Book traversal links for What are non-party campaigners?](#) **What are non-party campaigners?** Non-party campaigners are individuals or organisations that campaign in elections, but are not standing as political parties or candidates. Non-party campaigners have to follow certain rules in the run-up to elections. **The types of non-party campaigns** There are two types of non-party campaigns. These are: **General campaigns** Local campaigns Campaigns for or against: one or more political parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies **other categories of candidate** Campaigns for or against: one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area You can find more information about the different types of campaigns in our guidance **Non-party campaigners: Where to start** . The general campaign rules do not apply at elections in England in May 2022. You therefore do not have to register with us or report donations to us, and spending on activities directed only at your members will still count towards your spending total. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for What are non-party campaigners?](#) **Local campaigns at local elections** Local campaigns at local elections If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a local authority mayoral election in England, you are covered by the rules for local campaigns. The Electoral Commission does not regulate local campaigning. Complaints about possible breaches should be made to the police. Under the local campaign rules, there are limits on how much you can spend on campaigning for or against particular candidates in a constituency or local electoral area. These limits are different, depending on the size of the electorate in the relevant area. These spending limits cover spending on most campaign activities, including leaflets, meetings and digital campaigning. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Local campaigns at local elections](#) **What are non-party campaigners?** **The regulated period** The regulated period We call the time when the spending limits and rules apply the regulated period. The regulated period starts on the day after the person you are campaigning for or against officially becomes a candidate, and finishes on polling day. You can find more information about polling dates and when people become candidates on our guidance page for candidates and agents . Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for The regulated period](#) **Local campaigns at local elections** **Spending limits** **Spending limits** During a regulated period, non-party campaigners are subject to limits on their spending on campaign activity. If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a local authority mayoral election you have a limit of: £50 plus 0.5p for each elector who is registered to vote on the last day for publication of the notice of election in the local authority area. For example If there are 500,000 registered electors in the local authority area, your spending limit for campaigning for or against a candidate for Mayor would be: $\text{£50} + (500,000 \times 0.5\text{p})$ $\text{£50} + (\text{£}2,500) = \text{£}2550$ Your local elections office will be able to give you the number of electors in the local authority. You can find the contact details for your local elections office on our [Elections in your area](#) page . You should keep a record of your spending, to make sure that you do not exceed the spending limit. Any spending over these limits must be authorised by the agent of the relevant candidate. The authorised spending will count as candidate spending and towards the candidate's spending limit. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Spending limits](#) **The regulated period** **Reporting** **Reporting** If authorisation is given, the agent

will need to include your spending in the candidate spending return. You will need to give the agent the necessary details for that spending to be included. If you spend more than the limit you must also complete a spending return and declaration and deliver these to the relevant Returning Officer within 21 days of the result being declared. You can find contact details for the local elections office using our [postcode lookup](#) . [Non party campaigner s75 spending return \(PDF\)](#) [Non party campaigner s75 declaration \(PDF\)](#) Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Reporting Spending limits Imprints Imprints Whenever printed election material is published, it must contain certain details \(which we refer to as an 'imprint'\) to show who is responsible for the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning. Please see our imprint factsheet for non-party campaigners for guidance on using imprints on election material: Imprints for Non-Party s: UK Parliamentary elections, and elections in England, Wales and Northern Ireland Last updated: 8 December 2021 Book traversal links for Imprints Reporting](#)

Non-party campaigners: Case studies Case study 1: Immigration A group that campaigns on immigration and xenophobia delivered a high profile poster campaign, followed by a digital campaign that went on for a number of months. The campaign aimed to show immigrants as real people. Although the campaign had been originally planned to go live the previous year, it was delayed for various practical reasons, and the poster campaign was launched in the period before the general election. The costs of the poster and digital campaign in the regulated period were above the registration thresholds in each part of the UK. Public test: The activity is aimed at the public since it uses billboards, websites and social media. Purpose test: Call to action to voters There is no call to action of any kind, and in particular nothing related to voting behaviour. Tone The campaign is positive about immigrants. It suggests that we should be welcoming to immigrants as well as hinting at the view that immigrants are an economic and social good, and therefore the campaign can reasonably be regarded as in favour of immigration in general. It does not mention parties or candidates, or any particular policy. Context and timing The organisation has campaigned on the issue for some time. The campaign has been planned for a long time and was intended to be released much earlier, but now it is very close to the election. Immigration is a high profile issue in the election, and is associated in particular with UKIP. However UKIP usually focus explicitly on immigration from the EU, which the campaign does not. Neither of the two largest parties have a distinctive view on the issue, although the Conservative Party have a well-known target to reduce non-EU immigration to the 'tens of thousands'. No particular policy is alluded to by the poster campaign. The broad issue of 'immigration' is not enough to link the campaign to UKIP or any other party or category of candidates. How a reasonable person would see the activity A reasonable person would think that the intention of the activity was to change the general debate around immigrants, primarily in the media but also from politicians. Due to the proximity to the election and the subject matter, a reasonable person might consider the possibility that the posters were aimed at UKIP, and perhaps to a lesser degree the Conservative Party. However, given that the campaign has not been changed since it was originally designed to be launched in a period where there was no election, overall a reasonable person would not see the campaign as intended to influence voters. This activity cannot reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for a political party or category of candidates, so the purpose test is not met. The spending on the activity is not regulated, and the campaign group does not have to register. Last updated: 19 September 2023 Book traversal links for Case study 1: Immigration Non-party campaigners: Case studies Case study 2: Fracking Case studies from recent elections This section contains case studies of some issues-based campaigns that took place in the run up to the UK Parliamentary general elections in 2015 and 2017. The case studies give detailed assessments of the public test and the purpose test for each campaign. These assessments may provide a model for how to assess your own campaign activities against the tests. For more details on the tests, please read our non-party campaigner guidance . Thanks to campaigners and caveat Our thanks to the campaigners whose campaigns we have used for these case studies. The assessments in the case studies are our assessments, as the regulator, of how the law applied to these particular cases, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the campaigners involved. Book traversal links for Non-party campaigners: Case studies Case study 1: Immigration Case study 2: Fracking An environmental campaigner ran a series of campaigns on fracking during the regulated period for the general election. The first campaign was an action day where a number of events took place across an area where

fracking applications were under consideration by the council. The second campaign aimed to get candidates to sign a pledge against fracking. The campaigner's website had an interactive map of the UK, with each constituency showing which of its candidates had signed the pledge. There was also a running total for how many candidates from each party had signed the pledge. Other material promoted the website, asked candidates to sign the pledge, and asked voters to write to their candidates to ask them to sign. Last updated: 19 September 2023 Book traversal links for Case study 2: Fracking Case study 1: Immigration Action days Action days Action days Public test: They are public events so the public test is met. Purpose test Call to action to voters People at the events are encouraged to sign a petition against the planning applications. They are not actively encouraged to vote in a particular way. Tone The tone of the events is very negative towards fracking. The focus is not on candidates or political parties. Context and timing The events are held during the regulated period, about a month before the election. Fracking is a significant issue in these areas, primarily because there are live planning applications on fracking with the council at the time. How a reasonable person would see the activity A reasonable person would think that the events are intended to influence a council decision. They would not think that they are intended to influence voter choice. The action day campaign cannot be reasonably regarded as intended to influence voters, and so it does not meet the purpose test. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Action days Case study 2: Fracking Website pledge campaign Website pledge campaign Local or general campaigning: Although the interactive map names specific candidates in specific constituencies, it is not a series of local campaigns. It is a general campaign. This is because the interactive map covers many constituencies as a single campaign, and is clearly a campaign based on an issue, rather than primarily being about the named candidates. Public test: The website and the associated promotional material are available to the public, so the campaign meets the public test. Purpose test: Call to action to voters The campaign does not have an explicit call to action. However, it is obviously intended to be election-related because it mentions candidates and parties. It can therefore reasonably be regarded as intended to encourage voters to take into account their candidates' position on fracking when casting their vote. Tone Since it is very clear what the campaigner's view on fracking is, the campaign is implicitly positive towards candidates and parties who have signed the pledge and adopted an anti-fracking position in general. Because candidates' names appear on the interactive map in the relevant constituencies, a category of candidates has been clearly identified. The website is also implicitly more positive about parties that have more candidates who have made the pledge. In particular, the Green Party has scored highly. Context and timing The campaign ran during the regulated period, in the six weeks leading up to the election. It was clearly aimed at the election. How a reasonable person would see the activity A reasonable person would think that the primary intention of the campaign is to influence candidates to sign the pledge, so that after the election there will be more MPs who have signed the pledge and will be more receptive to the campaigner's policy aims. However, they could also reasonably think that it was intended to influence people's voting choice in favour of candidates and parties who are anti-fracking. The campaign can reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters, so the purpose test is met. Since it also meets the public test, the costs associated with the interactive map, as well as the related material on the pledge campaign, are regulated and count towards the campaigner's regulated spending total. Last updated: 24 May 2021 Book traversal links for Website pledge campaign Action days

How to maintain your registered political party

How to maintain your registered political party This guidance is for parties who want to know how to maintain and make changes to their registered details. Registered political parties and their officers must comply with the law, in particular as set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Under PERA, once you have registered, you must keep your party's details up to date. This is the responsibility of your party treasurer. As party treasurer, you are responsible for keeping your party's details up to date. It covers: how to submit your annual confirmation registration how to change your registered details how to remove your party from the register Fees Depending on what details you need to change you may have to pay an administration fee. Any fees will be shown on your online application or on the relevant form. Where there is a charge, the non-refundable fee is £25 per application, unless you are changing your minor party status. It is £150 to change your minor party status. You can make more than one amendment per application. You should allow 20 working days for us to process your application. Our online system You can amend your application online. If you don't have a PEF Online account, you will need to set one up to amend your details online. All of your party officers must have separate email accounts. You can pay any fee electronically when you apply online. We have a step by step guide for using PEF Online to update your details . If you cannot amend your details online, you will need to complete a form. To find the form, please go to the page that is about the change you want to make. Book traversal links for How to maintain your registered political party

Your annual confirmation of registered details Your annual confirmation of registered details In order to remain registered, every year you must confirm that your registered details are correct and pay a £25 fee. This is called your annual confirmation of registered details. If any of your registered details are currently not correct, you must change them before confirming. You can do this all as one application. Your annual confirmation is due within six months of the date that your annual accounts are due. We will send you a reminder ahead of this time. It remains your responsibility to deliver your confirmation on time. If you don't deliver your confirmation by the deadline, or you don't notify us properly of any changes to your details when required, your party will be removed from the register. If this happens, then if you want to be on the register, you will need to make a fresh application to re-register your party and pay the full £150 registration fee. Submit online You can submit your annual confirmation using PEF Online . We have a step by step guide on using PEF Online for your annual confirmation . Other ways of submitting your annual registration confirmation If you cannot confirm online, you can complete a form and return it to us. Form RP8: Confirmation of registered details of a political party - integrated notes Form RP8M: Annual confirmation of registered details of a minor party - integrated notes The fee There is an annual fee of £25. If you make changes at the same time as your renewal, then if they come with a fee, that fee is added to the renewal fee. You can pay your fee online during the confirmation process on PEF Online. You can also pay by cheque, money order or by direct bank transfer. Please make any cheques payable to the Electoral Commission. Contact our Registration Team if you have any questions about your party's annual confirmation. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Your annual confirmation of registered details

How to maintain your registered political party Changing your party addresses Changing your party addresses You must tell us within 28 days if you make changes to your party's addresses. You must tell us if there are any changes to: your registered party's headquarters or accounting unit addresses the home address details of a registered party officer Submit online You can do this using PEF Online

. Other ways to submit If you cannot change your details online, complete a form and return it to us. Your party treasurer must sign the form. Form RP3: Notification of change of registered details - integrated notes Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Changing your party addresses Your annual confirmation of registered details Changing your accounting units Changing your accounting units Accounting units Most parties operate as a single unit, which means the treasurer of the party has oversight over the finances of the entire party. However, you may wish to register party branches that have financial autonomy. These are called “accounting units” and each unit is responsible for its own finances. Registering accounting units is optional. Your financial scheme must specify if your party will have accounting units. Please note that our standard template scheme is not suitable for parties with accounting units. If you have branches that are not financially autonomous, you do not need to register them as accounting units and they do not need to appear in your financial scheme. However, you may still want to refer to them in your constitution. If you choose to register accounting units, each unit must have their own treasurer and second officer. You must also register the accounting unit’s headquarters address or a correspondence address if the accounting unit does not have a headquarters. We can provide further advice on what is required, so please contact us in the first instance if you need more advice on accounting units. Changes to your accounting units You must tell us within 28 days if you make changes to your accounting units. You must tell us if there are any changes to: the name of an accounting unit the names of an accounting unit’s registered officers Submit online You can do this using PEF Online . Other ways to submit If you cannot change your details online, complete a form and return it to us. Form RP3: Notification of change of registered details - integrated notes Your party treasurer must sign the form. If you change the name of an accounting unit, including if you are adding, removing or merging accounting units, then this will require you to update your financial scheme. Your registered party treasurer should contact our Party Registration team with your revised list of accounting units as soon as possible. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Changing your accounting units Changing your party addresses Changing your party’s registered officers Changing your party’s registered officers You must tell us within 14 days of any changes if you want to replace a registered officer. A party must do this if an officer’s appointment has ended for any reason, including if an officer has passed away. Changing your officers online You can change your officers online, using PEF Online . We have a step by step guide on using PEF Online to change your party officers . Other ways to submit your changes If you cannot change your details online, please complete a form and return it to us. Form RP4: Registering a replacement party officer Form RP5: Notification of details of deputy treasurer or campaigns officer - integrated notes The form must be signed by: the current registered treasurer the current registered party leader the current registered nominating officer the new officer (if applicable) If one person holds all three positions (treasurer, party leader and nominating officer) the form must be signed by either: your registered additional officer your registered campaigns officer (if you have one) You should check your registered details to make sure the correct people sign the form. What if an officer is unable to sign an application? If a registered party officer is unable to sign, they can authorise another party officer to sign on their behalf. The application must include both: a declaration explaining that the replacement person is authorised to sign in the required officer’s place a statement explaining why the required officer is unable to sign We may ask for further information from you so that we can be satisfied that the

application meets the requirements set out in law. Please note that we are unlikely to consider that an officer is unable to sign a form if they are simply unwilling to do so. If you are unable to contact a required officer, we may request that you provide evidence of attempts you have made to contact that officer.

Treasurers If the treasurer's appointment has ended, or they have passed away, then the responsibility to sign a change of officer falls to the leader. If the treasurer was also the party leader, then the responsibility falls to the nominating officer. If the treasurer took all three roles, then the responsibility falls to the additional officer or campaigns officer. This only applies to changes to the treasurer of the party and not the leader or nominating officer. We will likely request that you demonstrate that the treasurer's appointment has ended so that we can be satisfied that the application meets the requirements set out in law.

Campaigns officers If you are changing your campaigns officer, the process is the same as for changing any other officer. However, if you are changing the structure of your party to add or remove the role of campaigns officer itself, this is a change to the register and requires a £25 fee. You may also need to send us a revised financial scheme.

Revised financial scheme You may need to send us a revised copy of your financial scheme if you are changing registered party officers who are named in the scheme. If you are appointing a campaigns officer, you may need to send us a revised copy of your financial scheme to reflect the changes in responsibility.

Last updated: 24 November 2022

Book traversal links for Changing your party's registered officers

Changing your accounting units

Officer responsibilities

Officer responsibilities

Registered officers of political parties will have a particular role within a party. Their roles will also carry certain statutory responsibilities.

Party leader A party leader must be the overall leader of the party. If your party does not have an overall leader (if you have co-leaders, for example), you must register a person who is the leader for a particular purpose within the party. For example a final decision maker on internal party matters. In the event that the party treasurer is no longer in post, the party leader will become the interim treasurer until the party notifies us of a replacement treasurer.

Party treasurer The registered treasurer of a political party has significant legal responsibilities. They must ensure the party complies with the political finance rules set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). It is therefore important that an appropriate person is registered as the party's treasurer. The treasurer must not have been convicted of any election offences in the 5 years before their appointment.

Nominating officer The nominating officer for the party has overall responsibility for arranging the nomination of candidates and approving the party identity marks used on nomination forms and ballot papers at elections. There is no provision under PERA to register a deputy nominating officer. However, the registered nominating officer can authorise in writing someone to act on their behalf.

Additional officer If you register an additional officer, they will have an official role of some kind in the party. You must register an additional officer with us if the party's leader, treasurer, and nominating officer are the same person, and you do not have a campaigns officer. If this is not the case, then you cannot register an additional officer with us.

Campaigns officer The campaigns officer will have responsibility for compliance with the financial reporting rules for campaign expenditure at particular elections. They will take these responsibilities from the treasurer of the party. The campaigns officer must not have been convicted of any election offences within 5 years of their appointment and cannot be the same person as the treasurer.

Deputy treasurer and deputy campaigns officer The registered treasurer or campaigns officer of the party

can appoint up to 12 deputy officers to assist with authorising campaign expenditure. You may find this useful if your party is contesting a lot of seats. Use Form RP5 to register deputy officers. Form RP5: Notification of details of deputy treasurer or campaigns officer - integrated notes Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Officer responsibilities Changing your party's registered officers Your party's officers Your party's officers Political parties must have people registered in certain official roles. These roles are: party leader party treasurer (not applicable for minor parties) nominating officer You must provide the names and home addresses for your officers. You do not need to have three separate individuals in each role, but you must have at least two people as officers for the party. If one person fills all of the official roles you must register someone as an additional officer. The additional officer must hold a specified office or role within the party. If your party has a campaigns officer then they may be registered as the additional officer. The treasurer and nominating officer cannot be the same person unless they are also the leader. Please be aware that these are statutory roles that carry legal responsibilities. Optional officer roles Campaigns officer – who will be responsible for your party's compliance with the financial laws for campaign expenditure instead of the treasurer. They cannot also be the treasurer Additional officer – you must apply to have an additional officer if the party leader is also the treasurer and nominating officer and your party does not have a campaigns officer. Minor parties If you are a minor party, you must register a party leader and nominating officer. You must have at least two people in officer roles. If one person fills both roles, you must register someone as an additional officer. Minor parties cannot be registered with a treasurer or campaigns officer. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Your party's officers Officer responsibilities Changing which elections you intend to contest Changing which elections you intend to contest Which parts of the UK you can contest elections in If you are registered in Great Britain, you can change the parts of the register you appear in (England, Scotland, Wales). This will allow you to contest elections in those parts of Great Britain. When you submit an application to another part of the register, this requires us to assess your party's existing identity marks on the new part of the register. The Northern Ireland register is separate from the Great Britain register and requires a separate application. Submit online You can do this online, using PEF Online . Other ways to submit If you cannot submit online, complete a form and return it to us. Form RP2: Application to alter an entry on the register of political parties The form must be signed by: the current registered party treasurer the current registered party leader the current registered nominating officer If one person holds all three positions (treasurer, party leader and nominating officer) the form must be signed by either: your registered additional officer your registered campaigns officer (if you have one) If a registered party officer is unable to sign, they can authorise another party officer to sign on their behalf. The application must include both: a declaration explaining that the replacement person is authorised to sign in the required officer's place a statement explaining why the required officer is unable to sign UK Parliamentary general elections If your party decides that it will not be standing candidates in the next UK Parliamentary general election (UKPGE), you should notify us. This means that you will be exempt from sending us weekly donation and loan reports during the election . You should do this as soon as you are sure that you will not be standing candidates at the election. If you change your mind and decide that your party will stand candidates at the next general election, you can withdraw the exemption. Submit online You can do this online, using PEF Online .

Other ways to submit If you cannot submit online, complete a form and return it to us. Form RP6: Declaration of exemption of a registered political party - integrated notes Form RP7: Withdrawal of declaration of exemption made by a registered political party - integrated notes The forms must be signed by: the current registered party leader the current registered nominating officer If the same person fills both these positions, the form must be signed by another registered officer of the party. If either the party leader or nominating officer is unable to sign the form, another officer of the party must sign the form instead, making a declaration that they are authorised to sign in the registered officer's absence, and explaining why the registered officer is unable to sign the form. Annual renewal If you told us when you registered that you would not be standing candidates at UKPGEs, all you need to do is confirm your intention when you submit your annual renewal . If you do this, you will continue to be exempt from sending the weekly reports. Minor parties Minor parties can only contest parish or community council elections. If you are registered as a minor party and want to contest any other elections, you will need to change your minor party status . Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Changing which elections you intend to contest Your party's officers Changing your minor party status How to change your minor party status If you are a minor party and you want to change your status to a registered political party, please contact us. There will be a non-refundable application fee of £150. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Changing your minor party status Changing which elections you intend to contest Changing your party name, descriptions or emblems Changing your party name, descriptions or emblems We refer to your party name, descriptions and emblems collectively as "Identity Marks". These are how a party may be identified on a ballot paper at elections. Some identity marks are mandatory whilst others are optional. You must have a registered party name. This is a mandatory identity mark. You may register up to three emblems and 12 descriptions. These are optional identity marks. You do not need to register any party identity marks that you intend to use on campaign materials, unless you also intend to use them on a ballot paper. You can apply to change your party name, descriptions, and emblems, and you can add joint descriptions. Submit online You can submit your application using PEF Online . Other ways to submit If you cannot submit online, complete a form and return it to us. Form RP2: Application to alter an entry on the register of political parties Form RP2D: Application to register party descriptions Form RP2JD: Application to register a joint description The form must be signed by: the current registered party treasurer the current registered party leader the current registered nominating officer If one person holds all three positions (treasurer, party leader and nominating officer) the form must be signed by either: your registered additional officer your registered campaigns officer (if you have one) If a registered party officer is unable to sign, they can authorise another party officer to sign on their behalf. The application must include both: a declaration explaining that the replacement person is authorised to sign in the required officer's place a statement explaining why the required officer is unable to sign The fee There is a fee of £25. If you submit a number of changes to your identity marks in a single application, then there is only a single fee. You can pay your fee online during the confirmation process on PEF Online . You can also pay by cheque, money order or by direct bank transfer. Please make any cheques payable to the Electoral Commission. Tests for identity marks There are certain statutory tests and requirements which identity marks must meet in order to be registered. We will assess your application to register identify marks against these tests. We explain these tests in the next sections of this document. From time

to time, the Commission will also carry out reviews of identity marks on our registers. This is part of our duty to ensure we are maintaining the register of political parties. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Changing your party name, descriptions or emblems](#) Changing your minor party status Party name

Party name A party must register a party name with us. It can use this name on ballot papers. Parties that are applying to be registered in Great Britain and intend to contest elections in Wales may apply with a name in [English](#) and a name in Welsh to be the party's registered names. Parties that are applying to be registered in Northern Ireland may apply with a name in [English](#) and a name in Irish to be the party's registered names. We do not regulate how a party wishes to brand itself or which campaign phrases it uses with its name when that message does not appear on ballot papers. If a party name is not registered with us, candidates will not be able to contest an election using that party's name on ballot papers. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Party name](#) Changing your party name, descriptions or emblems

Party emblems on ballot papers Party emblems on ballot papers An emblem is an optional visual representation (or logo) of a party. Along with other identity marks, an emblem can help voters identify the party on ballot papers. Parties are able to register up to three emblems. In order for the party or your candidate to use an emblem on a ballot paper, the party must register it with Electoral Commission. You do not need to register an emblem if you only wish to use it on campaign material and not on ballot papers. An emblem is intended to primarily comprise a pictorial or symbolic representation, and so must include this element. It may contain some text. If it comprises mostly of text then it is unlikely that we will register it as an emblem. An emblem that contains text which cannot be read at the size emblems appear on ballot papers (2cm square) is also highly likely to be refused. We suggest that any text in an emblem is at least 1.2mm in height. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Party emblems on ballot papers](#) Party name Party descriptions

Party descriptions on ballot papers Party descriptions on ballot papers A party description is an optional identity mark that you can register in addition to the party name which can appear on a ballot paper. A party is permitted to register up to 12 descriptions at any one time. On most ballot papers, a party description can be used as an alternative to a party name. The description must therefore identify your party to a voter, in case it is used on a ballot paper rather than the party name. For example, a way to do that may be to include the party name in the description. If in the Commission's opinion a voter cannot identify the party from the description, it is not a description under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) and cannot be registered. A description cannot be exactly the same as the party name. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Party descriptions on ballot papers](#) Party emblems on ballot papers

Joint party descriptions Joint party descriptions Two or more registered political parties can choose to share a party description which can then be used on a ballot paper. This is called a 'joint description' and can be used by all the parties that have registered one with other parties. There are certain rules regarding the registration of joint descriptions. These are that: you can only share and jointly register one joint description per group of parties - however, you may register a joint description with more than one group of parties the wording of the joint description must identify all of the applicant parties to be capable of being a joint description joint descriptions do not count towards the maximum of 12 descriptions that you can register with us - this means you can register up to 12 descriptions, in addition to joint descriptions When using a joint description the candidate will need to choose which of the party

emblems that they wish to use on ballot papers. You cannot register a joint emblem and instead can only use an emblem registered to any of the parties who have registered the joint description. If you are thinking of registering a joint description, please contact us for advice in the first instance. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Joint party descriptions](#) [Party descriptions on ballot papers](#) [How we assess your identity marks](#) [How we assess your identity marks](#) The law says that we will register your identity mark unless in our opinion it does not meet certain tests. We therefore have to assess your identity marks against those tests. We look at how the proposed identity marks can be used on ballot papers, including the different ways in which they can be used on the ballot paper at different elections, and the need for every voter to be able to cast their vote with confidence. We will register your identity mark unless in the Commission's opinion it: is the same as another registered or protected identity mark which is on the same register is likely to result in voters confusing it with another party identity mark that is already registered or protected is likely to mislead voters as to the effect of their vote is likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting is obscene or offensive contains certain prohibited words contains more than six words is not in Roman script is likely to amount to an offence if published As a guide, we are unlikely to register your identity mark if it: is, or contains an acronym or abbreviation that is not well known and widely used and not spelt out is a description that does not identify your party links in any way to online material or contains reference to online content, such as a Twitter hashtag or a QR code in most cases, if it contains a reference to a person's name is an emblem that contains text which cannot be read at the size emblems appear on ballot papers (2cm square) – at this size, we suggest that any text in an emblem is at least 1.2mm in height We cannot confirm whether your application will be successful in advance of you submitting it. It is your responsibility to determine the details of your application and to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). If your application is refused, we will notify you of our reasons in writing. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for How we assess your identity your marks](#) [Joint party descriptions](#) [What we mean by “likely to confuse”](#) [What we mean by “likely to confuse”](#) We are required to make sure that a voter can be confident that they do not confuse one party with another on the ballot paper, and so potentially cast a vote incorrectly. This test looks at whether, in our opinion, a voter would confuse the identity mark of a party with another party's identity mark which is already registered. Our assessment of whether an identity mark is confusing will normally take into account whether the identity mark is visually the same (e.g. the words 'stationary' or 'stationery', similar images of boats) or contextually the same (e.g. 'Party of the Oak' and 'The Oak Party'). For emblems, we will consider whether the designed elements and text are different from other emblems. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for What we mean by “likely to confuse”](#) [How we assess your identity marks](#) [What we mean by “likely to mislead a voter”](#) [What we mean by “likely to mislead a voter”](#) This test looks at whether in our opinion a party identity mark would be likely to lead a voter either to vote in a way they did not intend (e.g. for a party other than their preferred party) or to otherwise mark the ballot paper in a way which was not their intention. We cannot register an identity mark if, in the Commission's opinion, it is likely to result in a voter believing they are voting for an organisation that is not the party they intend to vote for. We therefore recommend that prior to your application you undertake a search of the internet to see if there are any existing groups or

organisations which have a name or logo which is the same as, or similar to, the identity marks that you want to apply to register. These groups may be campaigning groups, registered charities or other well-known organisations. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for](#) [What we mean by "likely to mislead a voter"](#) [What we mean by "likely to confuse"](#) [What we mean by 'likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting'](#) [What we mean by 'likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting'](#) We are required to consider whether an identity mark would contradict instructions or guidance for voting (e.g. 'tick here', or an emblem with a cross in it). We will also reject an identity mark if, in our opinion, we believe a voter would likely make a mistake on the ballot which would invalidate their vote, for example by voting for too many candidates. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for](#) [What we mean by 'likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting'](#) [What we mean by "likely to mislead a voter"](#) [What we mean by "offensive"](#) [What we mean by "offensive"](#) We are likely to reject a name, description or emblem on grounds of offensiveness if, in our opinion, it: contains offensive language, phrase or terminology links something generally accepted to be offensive with a particular group of people In assessing your proposed identity marks, we will have regard to the fact that parties must be able to express their political views and a voter must use a ballot paper in order to exercise their right to vote. We also consider the wider external context and circumstances in which a name, description or emblem can or is likely to be used. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for](#) [What we mean by "offensive"](#) [What we mean by 'likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting'](#) [What is a "protected" identity mark?](#) [What is a "protected" identity mark?](#) When a party deregisters, its identity marks remain protected until a certain time. This is usually the end of the financial year in which the party is deregistered. Until that time, other parties may not register identity marks that are the same as or, in our opinion, are likely to be confused with those protected identity marks. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for](#) [What is a 'protected' identity mark?](#) [What we mean by "offensive"](#) [Copyright and trade marks](#) [Copyright and trade marks](#) As it is not covered by electoral law, we do not make any checks for infringement of intellectual property rights when we register a party's identity marks. So, before you apply, you should make sure that your identity marks are not breaching any copyright and trade mark laws. If you register your party's identity marks and then discover that they are infringing copyright or trademark, you could be subject to legal challenge by the registered owner. For more information, please visit the Government's Intellectual Property Office website . Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for](#) [Copyright and trade marks](#) [What is a "protected" identity mark?](#) [Can acronyms or abbreviations be used?](#) [Can acronyms or abbreviations be used?](#) If an acronym or abbreviation is not well-known or widely-used in everyday language, it will not normally be permitted for you to use as your party identity mark. This is because in our opinion, most voters will not know the meaning, and are therefore likely to be misled. Examples of well-known acronyms used in common language include 'UK', 'GB' and 'NHS'. We will consider certain well-known and widely-used acronyms such as these as one word. If in our opinion an acronym is not well-known and widely-used, the words it is intended to represent must be spelled out and written in lower case or in sentence case. The acronym can then be added next to this, and each word, including the acronym will count towards the overall six-word limit. Words within a party identity mark can have initial capital letters. Words that are not acronyms should not be in all capital letters. If you apply to register an identity mark containing fully capitalised words

that are not acronyms, we will consider that identity mark instead as though those words had initial capital letters instead (e.g. 'PARTY OF THE OAK' would be considered as 'Party Of The Oak'). Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Can acronyms or abbreviations be used?](#)

[Copyright and trade marks](#) [What languages can I use in party identity marks?](#) [What languages can I use in party identity marks?](#) You can apply to use a language other than in your identity marks for use on ballot papers. However, the party name and any descriptions must be in Roman script, even if it is registered in a language other than . It is likely to be acceptable if you can use a UK based keyboard to produce the identity mark without using special characters. Parties that are applying to be registered in Great Britain and intend to contest elections in Wales may apply with a name in and a name in Welsh to be the party's registered names. These parties can also apply to register descriptions expressed in or Welsh (or both). You can choose to display both of these on ballot papers. Parties that are applying to be registered in Northern Ireland may apply with a name in and a name in Irish to be the party's registered names. The proposed identity mark in each language cannot be longer than six words. For elections in other parts of the UK the party name or description can only appear in one language on the ballot paper. If a party applies to register a name in a language other than , Welsh (if in Wales), or Irish (if in Northern Ireland), the application must include an accurate translation as part of your application. All translations are verified for accuracy. This means that you will be able to choose the most appropriate language for your party's identity mark to appear on ballot papers. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for What languages can I use in party identity marks?](#)

[Can acronyms or abbreviations be used?](#) [Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales](#) [Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales](#) As a public body operating in Wales, we are required to carry out our functions in line with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards. We treat the Welsh language with equal favour to in performing our functions in Wales, including when taking decisions on party applications. This means that if you are registered to contest elections in Wales and have applied with either -only or Welsh-only identity marks, then we will translate your identity marks (either from to Welsh, or Welsh to) and consider the relevance that those translations have with regards to the statutory tests. It is possible, therefore, that a proposed identity mark in or Welsh may be refused based on how it is expressed in the other language, even if you have not applied to register a translation for that identity mark. It is important for us to undertake these steps to make sure that voters in Wales can mark their ballot paper with confidence. You should take this into account if you are registered in Wales and, where possible, consider how your party's identity marks would be interpreted by a voter in Wales. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales](#)

[What languages can I use in party identity marks?](#) [Can numerals be used?](#) [Can numerals be used?](#) If your party identity mark either starts or ends with a numeral, we are unlikely to approve it for registration in that form. Instead, we will ask you to spell it out as a word rather than use a numeral. This is because at some elections voters are asked to rank candidates by order of preference using digits. Party identity marks that start or end with a numeral are likely to be misleading with the numbers on the ballot paper and the instructions on how to vote. We may register a party identity mark that uses numerals in the middle, depending on how they are used and whether it is likely to mislead voters. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Can numerals be used?](#) [Other things to](#)

consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales Can links to online material be used? Can links to online material be used? Your party may use a website or social media to communicate with voters. However, websites or social media links (e.g., Twitter hashtags or Facebook pages) should not be used as part of your identity marks. In assessing your identity mark, we must determine whether it meets the statutory tests. If your identity mark links to online material we are likely to refuse it as we are unable to assess material that has potential to change over time against the statutory tests. Last updated: 2 June 2023 Book traversal links for Can links to online material be used? Can numerals be used? Can an individual's name be used? Can an individual's name be used? Generally we will not accept the use of an individual's name in an identity mark. This is because instructions on ballot papers often state that the ballot paper is for the election of a candidate to a specific constituency, ward or other area. If a person's name, other than one of the candidates', appears on ballot papers for any given area it is likely to contradict the instructions for voting. We will need to form an opinion as to whether in the particular identity mark we are assessing, the inclusion of the name is likely to contradict or hinder an elector's understanding of directions given for their guidance in voting, on the ballot paper or elsewhere. Last updated: 2 June 2023 Book traversal links for Can an individual's name be used? Can links to online material be used? What are prohibited words? What are prohibited words? Some words cannot be used on ballot papers without being qualified by other words. This applies to the plural or singular of the prohibited words, as well as the prohibited words written in another language. These words are split into four categories (see below). In addition to the rules below, you cannot register 'None of the above' either in isolation or in conjunction with other words or expressions. Category 1 Category 1 prohibited words are: Duke, Duchess, Her Majesty, His Majesty, King, Prince, Princess, Queen, Royal, Royalty These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 1 words in conjunction with the name of a place, institution or local government area. For example you cannot use 'Royal Forever Party' because 'Royal' is not being used with the name of a place, institution or local government area. You could use 'Royal Tunbridge Wells Party' because 'Royal' is being used in conjunction with a place. Category 2 Category 2 prohibited words are: Britain, British, England, , National, Scotland, Scots, Scottish, United Kingdom, Wales, Welsh These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 2 words if you use them with another word or expression other than the name or description of a party already registered in the relevant part of the UK. For example you cannot register ' One Big Party' if there was an already registered 'One Big Party', because " is being used with the name of an existing registered party. Category 3 Category 3 prohibited words are: Independent, Official, Unofficial These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 3 words if the word is used with another word or expression, but not with any of: an existing registered name or description only with the word 'party' another category 3 word For example you cannot use the 'Independent Stop the Bypass Party' if there was an already registered 'Stop the Bypass Party' because 'Independent' is being used with the name of an existing registered party. You cannot register the 'Independent Party'. Category 4 Category 4 prohibited words are: Ratepayers, Residents, Tenants These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 4 words in conjunction with the name of a local government or geographical area. For example you can register 'Residents of York Party' because 'Residents' has been used in conjunction with 'York', a geographical area. You cannot register 'Residents Action Group' or

'Residents Unite' because 'Residents' is not being used in conjunction with the name of a local government or geographical area. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for What are prohibited words? Can an individual's name be used? Changes to your financial scheme](#) Changes to your financial scheme If you are registered as a political party and your financial scheme is updated, you must send the Commission a copy for it to be approved in writing. You may be required to amend your financial scheme in certain circumstances to reflect your parties' structure and practice. This includes: if you intend to add or remove the post of campaigns officer if you register a new person to be the party's treasurer or campaigns officer and they are named in the financial scheme if you register new, remove, or rename any of the party's accounting units if you begin to have, or cease to have, deputy treasurers and/or deputy campaigns officers you register a party on the Great Britain and Northern Ireland register if your processes for managing your financial affairs change since the last financial scheme Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Changes to your financial scheme](#) What are prohibited words? What must your financial scheme include? What must your financial scheme include? Your scheme must include procedures for: recording and reporting your accounts handling donations and loans maintaining your registered details with us authorising and reporting on campaign spending As part of the assessment process, we may ask you to evidence how the party has adopted its financial scheme. For example, you may be asked about what procedures the party has in place to deliver the obligations set out in its financial scheme. A party registered in both the Great Britain and the Northern Ireland registers are two separate registered parties for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). If you register on both the Great Britain and Northern Ireland registers, your financial scheme must show that the financial affairs of the party in Great Britain will be conducted entirely separately from those of the party in Northern Ireland. This is important because the rules about where a party can obtain its funding from differ depending on which register the party is registered. If you are, or are intending to be, registered as a party with accounting units then each unit must be named within the party's financial scheme. Our template scheme is not suitable if this is what you intend. We can provide further advice on what is required, so please contact us in the first instance if you intend to have accounting units. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for What must your financial scheme include?](#) Changes to your financial scheme Changes to your constitution Changes to your constitution Your constitution should be kept up to date. You should provide us with an updated copy whenever you change it, or if you change your party's name. You must notify us of any changes made to your constitution since you last delivered your annual confirmation of registered details or, if you've not delivered one yet, since your party was first registered. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Changes to your constitution](#) What must your financial scheme include? Your party's constitution Your party's constitution Political parties must have a written constitution that sets out the structure and organisation of their party. This should set out the arrangements for your party's governance and the rules for carrying out its business. The constitution must show that the party can comply with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) – i.e., nothing in it can contradict legal requirements. It is possible that your party's constitution will comprise more than one document. For example, your party may have a set of Rules and Standing Orders for meetings. Any document which determines the party's structure and organisation will be part of the party's constitution under PERA and must also, therefore, be provided

to us as part of the application. It is important your financial scheme and constitution correspond and do not conflict with each other. For example, the two documents should agree on how your accounts are signed off, who is responsible for the accounts and who can authorise campaign expenditure at elections. Your constitution must include sufficient information about the structure and organisation of your party for your application to be approved. A party does not need to be registered as a company so that it can register with us. If your party is structured in this way then the constitution should include details of how the company registration impacts on, or interacts with, the party's structure and organisation. Any relevant information should also be reflected in the processes outlined in the party's financial scheme. Minor parties are not required to have a constitution or submit one as part of their application.

Equalities law You must ensure that your constitution and how your party operates complies with equalities law. In particular, you should ensure that your constitution does not unduly discriminate against persons with protected characteristics from becoming party members. Otherwise, your constitution will not be lawful and your application will be refused. You should read the guidance for political parties produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission which is available on their website . As with the other requirements for registration, the fact that your application must be compliant with equalities law does not mean that your party cannot campaign on policies to change the law.

Last updated: 24 November 2022

Book traversal links for Your party's constitution

Changes to your constitution

What should your party's constitution include?

What should your party's constitution include? Your constitution must reflect how your party is run and managed. As a guide your constitution should include: details of the register or registers the party is registered in. A party registered in both the Great Britain and Northern Ireland registers are two separate parties for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Where a party is registered in both the Great Britain and Northern Ireland registers, the party's financial scheme must show that the financial affairs of the party in Great Britain will be conducted separately from those of the party in Northern Ireland. The constitution should also reflect that. the party's aims and objectives a reference to an intention to contest elections and at what type of elections, for example UK Parliamentary general elections the candidate selection process (or at least a statement that the party will have one). the structure of the party and who is responsible for managing the party, including the responsibility of the party officers, the terms of office and procedure for change of those officers how the party will make and record decisions, as well as any other governance arrangements. For example, the frequency, timing and type of meetings and the quorum for meetings how the party will resolve internal disputes and whether the party has any disciplinary procedures. You should be aware that we cannot resolve internal disputes for your party the processes and rules governing membership of the party that the party have adopted its financial scheme how the constitution can be changed and the process for dissolution of the party.

Last updated: 4 January 2023

Book traversal links for

What should your party's constitution include?

Your party's constitution

Removing your party from the register

How to remove your party from the register

You can remove your party from the register. However, you may still have reporting obligations after your party is removed. There is no fee to remove your party from the register. We will write to you to confirm that your party has been deregistered. We will also remove your party from the register if you don't confirm your annual registration .

Submit online

You can deregister your party using PEF Online . Other

ways of deregistering your party If you cannot confirm online, you can complete a form and return it to us. Form RP9: Application to deregister a political party - integrated notes Your reporting obligations If your party was deregistered because you did not complete your annual registration confirmation, then you must continue with your party's reporting obligations until the end of your party's financial year. If you have voluntarily deregistered your party, then it depends on your party's income and expenditure for its previous financial year: if both your income and your expenditure were under £25,000, you must continue with your reporting obligations until the end of your party's financial year if either your income or expenditure was over £25,000, you must continue with your reporting obligations until the end of your party's next financial year Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Removing your party from the register What should your party's constitution include?

Delivering the annual canvass - England Delivering the annual canvass - England The following guidance has been produced to support Electoral Registration Officers (ERO's) in planning for and delivering the annual canvass. It has been developed in close consultation with colleagues across the electoral community including the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Association of s (AEA), the Scottish Assessors Association (SAA), the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG) and the Welsh Electoral Practitioners Working Group (WEPWG). The guidance is directed towards the ERO and the duties they carry out. As these duties may, in practice, be carried out by deputies and/or appointed staff, we use the term 'you' throughout this guidance to mean the ERO and whoever is carrying out the ERO's functions on their behalf. Throughout this guidance we use 'must' to refer to a specific legal requirement and 'may / should' for recommended practice. The guidance has been produced based on, and should be read in accordance with, the requirements set out in section 9D of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and in the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001. The endnotes in this guidance refer to the relevant provisions that have been amended by The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Amendment) Regulations 2019. To help you use this guidance we have produced a Q&A document that should answer any initial queries you may have. Questions and answers document for the new style ERO guidance Updates to our guidance Change log Date of update Description of change February 2023 Updates to the requirement to Notify anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document Book traversal links for Delivering the annual canvass - England Developing plans for the annual canvass Developing plans for the annual canvass Developing plans for the annual canvass This section contains guidance on how to develop your plans for the annual canvass. It covers project planning and risk management as well as some considerations for planning the delivery of specific processes. What is the annual canvass? The annual canvass requires you to contact all residential addresses in your area to help you establish if the information you currently hold on the electoral register is complete and accurate. There is a legal framework that sets out the statutory requirements of the annual canvass. Within this framework you, as Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), will need to make a number of decisions, helping you to determine the most appropriate approach to the canvass within your area each year. Last updated: 25 March 2021 Book traversal links for Developing plans for the annual canvass Delivering the annual canvass - England Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Part of your statutory duties as ERO includes the delivery of an annual canvass. As part of this, you must: disclose data to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of a national data matching exercise known as the national data match step 1 (and, in addition, you also have the discretion to carry out local data matching) take into account the results of national data matching when making a decision on the allocation of properties to canvass routes carry out the required statutory steps for properties allocated to each canvass route provide training, where necessary, to staff who will deliver the canvass on your behalf publish the revised version of the register by 1 December (except for where an election is held between 1 July and 1 December, in which case the publication of the register can be delayed until up to 1 February the following year) 2 provide statistical information about your revised register to the Secretary of State as required, for example the number of parliamentary and local electors you have registered by constituency. 3 As ERO, you are also a data controller and have a

statutory responsibility under data protection legislation to ensure that personal data is kept securely. Any breach could constitute an offence and could result in a loss of confidence in the electoral registration process. 1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 13(1)(a) of RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 44, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Developing plans for the annual canvass What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Project plans and risk registers are vital in helping to support the effective delivery of the annual canvass. We have developed a template registration plan that you might find helpful. Template registration plan (XLS) To inform these, you will need to make some key decisions which will help you map out how you will deliver the whole canvass process. These should include: when your canvass will begin when and how you will identify any properties you want to canvass via Route 3 – the defined property route, including how you will identify the responsible person for those properties and when you will contact them when you plan to undertake the national data match step whether to carry out local data matching and, if so, when you will do so a review of the size of your canvass areas to ensure they are suitable to support your plan for canvass delivery and follow up how and when you will allocate properties to canvass routes what type of communication methods you will use for each route what response mechanisms you will make available for the canvass and how you will ensure they are set-up in advance the timescales for sending your canvass communications for all routes how you will follow up with any non-responders (where required) when, and on what basis, canvassers will be recruited and paid what contingency arrangements you will need should an election take place during your canvass, including how you will redeploy resources to target registration in those areas where the election is taking place when and how you will publish your revised register Once you have established your high level plan you can start to plan the specific detail of the canvass process. You will need to identify the activities you need to carry out to deliver your high level plan, and capture these and the timescales for their delivery. Some of the key activities you will need to ensure are covered in your plan are outlined on the following pages. Last updated: 17 December 2020 Book traversal links for What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Preparing for data matching Preparing for data matching Preparing for data matching preparing your register for data matching, ensuring that it is as up to date as possible to help increase the number of successful matches returned as part of your results booking the date for your national data match and confirming when it will take place and when the results will be received establishing which individuals or groups of data will be excluded from the data match (for example, special category electors) preparing for any local data matching, including identifying what data sets you will use and when you will carry out the matching for each of these sets establishing when and how you will analyse all data matching results and determine which canvass route households will be allocated to ensuring flexibility in your plans, when and how you will revise them if the outcomes of data matching are not as you expected preparing an audit trail of any actions and decisions taken which relate to changing a route allocation from one route to another based on data matching results Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for Preparing for data matching What should be included in my project plan for the annual

canvass? Staffing and resources Staffing and resources Staffing and resources checking your resource assumptions and ensuring that sufficient funding will be available ensuring the availability of support staff from across the organisation, such as IT and frontline/call centre staff reviewing your staffing structure to identify if current staffing levels remain sufficient developing a staff training schedule, to include data protection considerations, for the different types of staff involved in the canvass ensuring any storage requirements are sufficient, both for printed forms and scanned forms, and that you are not retaining personal data for longer than is necessary establishing how and when you will promote and communicate key canvass messages briefing your media and communications teams about the key messages and dates and establishing how you will use your local authority website, press releases and social media platforms to encourage responses Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Staffing and resources Preparing for data matching IT and suppliers IT and suppliers IT and suppliers reviewing any supplier arrangements that are in place and considering what, if anything, may need to be revised; and, if necessary, liaising with your procurement team to ensure that any procurement complies with legislation engaging with your chosen printer to agree written contracts and establish timescales deciding on and making arrangements for any automated response mechanisms you will offer (for example, telephone and online response channels) scheduling the proofing of materials and detailing when any data is due to be sent or received reviewing your IT arrangements, including checking your scanners and other hardware is in good working order Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for IT and suppliers Staffing and resources Data protection considerations Data protection considerations engaging with your Data Protection Officer regarding your plans for delivery of the canvass reviewing your document retention policy and any privacy notices in line with data protection legislation developing any necessary data sharing agreements ensuring written contracts are in place with contractors or suppliers Last updated: 23 May 2023 Book traversal links for Data protection considerations IT and suppliers What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Your project plan should also detail how you will monitor the effectiveness of the decisions you make and the activities you undertake to enable you to evaluate the impact of your actions. This should help you to refine your approach for the current canvass, wherever possible, and should also inform your plans for future canvasses. The performance standards for EROs , and the tools and templates available to support them, will assist you in understanding the impact of your activities, help identify where improvements can be made and support you to report on your own performance locally. You should use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities to identify what works and what doesn't and where improvements can be made. The framework is designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and what is not working so well. The standards, and the supporting tools and templates, should also help you to demonstrate locally – whether within your local authority, to elected members, or more broadly – how the activities you are carrying out contribute to the provision of an efficient and effective electoral registration service and, ultimately, will help to ensure that everyone who is eligible and wants to vote is able to do so. Last updated: 20 April 2020 Book traversal links for What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Data protection considerations How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? How can I manage risks to the annual canvass?

When planning for and delivering your annual canvass you will need to consider the risks to the canvass and how you will mitigate these, ensuring that these are captured in a risk register. This risk register should be kept under regular review and you should use it to: record any risks identified, including the seriousness of any risk by indicating both the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact of the risk if it did occur monitor and document any changes to these risks record actions identified to mitigate the risks monitor and record how mitigating actions are being taken forward We have developed a template risk register that you might find helpful. The template provides some example risks and suggested actions for mitigating those risks. Template risk and issues register (XLS) In addition to the risks identified in the template you should also identify any other risks, including ones specific to your local circumstances, and how you would mitigate those. Last updated: 16 April 2020 [Book traversal links for How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties](#) Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties The identification of potential Route 3 properties should take place at an early stage in your planning. This section contains guidance on how to identify Route 3 properties and how and when to identify and make contact with a responsible person for each property. Last updated: 3 June 2020 [Book traversal links for Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties](#) How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? Route 3 – the defined property route, involves collecting the information required for the canvass for specified types of properties from a responsible person, where one can be identified. Using Route 3 could be more effective and efficient in getting accurate and complete responses for properties with multiple residents than canvassing using an alternative route. The identification of potential Route 3 properties and the responsible person for those properties should take place early in your planning for the annual canvass as this will have an impact on the allocation of properties to different routes. If you are not able to identify and make contact with a responsible person for a property before finalising your allocation of properties to canvass routes, you will be unable to proceed with canvassing that property via Route 3. Last updated: 26 November 2020 [Book traversal links for What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them?](#) Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? The properties that can be canvassed via Route 3 (the defined property route) are defined in legislation as: 1 Registered residential care homes Houses of multiple occupation Student accommodation: for example, student halls of residence Hostels To be canvassed by Route 3, a property must also be either a property at which persons reside who together do not form a single household 2 or a property where you have attempted to deliver a document in the previous 18 months but have been unable to do so. 3 In addition, to be able to allocate a property to Route 3 you must believe you are more likely to get a response using Route 3 than via an alternative canvass route, 4 and you must have been able to identify a responsible person to provide the information required for the canvass. Accessing other local authority records or reviewing information from the previous canvass could help you to identify other properties in your database that may meet the criteria to be canvassed via Route 3. You will need to be satisfied that the criteria specified in the legislation is met for any other property you choose to canvass under Route 3. Which properties cannot be canvassed using Route 3? The legislation specifically provides that Route 3 cannot be used for

ordinary blocks of flats, 5 which should be able to be effectively canvassed via Route 1 or Route 2 as appropriate based on the results of data matching. In addition, where information you hold shows that the property is only occupied by persons under the age of 18 you cannot use Route 3 to canvass the property: in such cases, you must use Route 2 – the unmatched property route. 6 Also, properties where all registered individuals are a category of elector that must be excluded from the national data match step, such as anonymous electors, are not eligible to be canvassed via Route 3. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(2), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBF(3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBA(6), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? A responsible person is defined as being any person who lawfully holds or has access to and may lawfully disclose information to the ERO in respect of each person who is residing at a property and is eligible to be registered. 1 Data provided by the responsible person will help you to establish who is and is not resident at a property, but cannot be used for any form of block registration: you will need to carry out the appropriate registration activity – such as starting the ITR or review process – based on the data provided to you. You will need to ensure that the information you hold on responsible persons for Route 3 properties is reviewed regularly. You should ensure that the information is up to date and that the details of anyone who is no longer associated with a property are removed. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(8) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? You will need to establish contact with those individuals who you think may be suitable to act as the responsible person for a Route 3 property. You should make your initial contact as soon as possible in the planning stage of your canvass; only once you have identified and confirmed a responsible person for a property can you allocate it to Route 3. As there are no prescribed contact methods under Route 3, you will need to consider the most appropriate way to make initial contact with these individuals. The purpose of the contact at this point is: to establish whether the identified individual is able to act as the responsible person 1 to provide an explanation of the role and responsibilities of a responsible person to communicate your statutory right to request information from a responsible person about the residents in a property to communicate the responsible person's requirement to respond to your request to establish the communication methods that will be used going forward to identify an alternative individual as a responsible person for the property if the person you have contacted is not able to comply with your request You should ensure that you

record the steps you have taken to make contact with these individuals and to confirm that they are able to provide you with the information required by the canvass. You will also need to consider the best method of communication for Route 3 properties, based on the property type and the contact information you hold for the responsible person. Whilst you will need to identify and make initial contact with the responsible person at Route 3 properties at an early stage in your planning, you may decide to canvass different Route 3 properties at different times. For example, you may decide to ask the responsible person for student accommodation for the information required for the canvass shortly before term-time begins, rather than at an earlier stage of your canvass.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? You will need to decide if data sharing agreements are necessary with any of the responsible persons for Route 3 properties you have identified in your area. The information you receive from the responsible person will contain personal data, which is being shared between two data controllers. Whilst data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is nevertheless good practice to have a data sharing agreement in place. Having a data sharing agreement in place with the responsible person will demonstrate that you are both acting in accordance with data protection legislation and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. Our guidance on data protection for EROs and ROs provides information in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. Last updated: 17 May 2023 Book traversal links for Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? Planning for data matching Planning for data matching Data matching is an integral part of the new canvass and you will need to plan how and when you will carry this out. This section contains guidance on the things you will need to consider when planning for national and local data matching. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Planning for data matching Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? The national data match step involves the checking of information about existing electors on your register, against data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). By default all properties start allocated to Route 2 – the unmatched property route. The results of the national data match, along with any local data matching you have undertaken, will help you determine whether the property as a whole is matched or unmatched and you must use this information to help you to allocate that property to the appropriate canvass route. 1 Once allocated to the appropriate canvass route, you can determine which type of contact to make in relation to each property during the canvass. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? Planning for data matching What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? Whilst it is important to ensure you have processes in

place to maintain your register throughout the year , carrying out additional register maintenance ahead of the national data match step should help to ensure that the information you provide is as accurate and complete as possible. This should then help to ensure more accurate results, which in turn can help you to maximise the efficiency of your canvass and make best use of your available resources. This preparatory work should include the following steps: Ensure that any outstanding activity is up to date You should, wherever possible, conclude reviews and determine any deletions needed as a result of these prior to the national data match step. You should ensure that any other required deletions are determined prior to the national data match step. You should follow up on any outstanding queries, exceptions and attestations to ensure as many electors can be added to your register as possible. You should check any individuals held in your system as potential electors in properties against other records, or identify any new potential electors that should be added to properties. Potential electors are not registered electors but are individuals who are recorded in your EMS, likely as a result of local data mining or a returned canvass form, who may be eligible but have not yet registered to vote at the address. This information is useful because it may indicate that there are changes required to the register for that property, with individuals potentially being resident who have not yet made a successful application to register. Potential electors at an address may also be indicative of the need to capture additional changes for those individuals who are currently registered at the property. Ensure that your property database is up-to-date You should ensure that each address has a unique property reference number (UPRN). If not, you should liaise with the Local Land and Property Gazetteer team to ensure that UPRNs are attached to each property. You should review any records you hold that will help you to identify certain types of properties and if possible make sure these are reflected in your system – for example, identifying that a property is a care home, house in multiple occupation (HMO) or student accommodation may have an impact on the route you may choose to allocate the property to. You should check whether the information you hold for empty and void properties is up to date. You should identify which local data sources are available to you that will contain the information you need to do this and update your records accordingly. Last updated: 26 November 2020

Book traversal links for
What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step?
What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? The national data match will need to take place before you begin your canvass activity. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities intend that the service will be open from 1 June until end of August, and will provide a booking tool to allow you to choose your preferred date for your data match. If this date is not available, you will need to choose another. To help you decide when you want to conduct the national data match step you should consider guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the timeframes for booking and conducting the national data match step. In order to identify the most appropriate date for your national data match you will need to have considered timings for undertaking your additional preparatory work on the register as this should be carried out before you send your data. As the national data match will need to take place before you begin your canvass you will also need to think about when you want to begin your canvass and ensure that your canvass activities are scheduled for after data match has taken place. Once your national data match date is confirmed and you know which date you are working towards, you will need to revisit

your canvass plans to make sure they are still workable, making any adjustments that you identify as necessary. This may include revising the dates on which you plan to start sending canvass communications for each of the three canvass routes. Last updated: 16 March 2022

[Book traversal links for How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step?](#) What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? As well as carrying out the mandatory national data match step, you have discretion to match all, or part, of your electoral register against locally held data sets (such as council tax or housing benefit data). 1 This can take place before or after the national data match step, or both before and after the national data match. The outcome of the national data match along with any local data matching you have undertaken will influence the allocation of properties to canvass routes and determine which type of contact you are required to make in relation to each property during the canvass as a result. Working with other council departments Working closely with other council departments may help you to work more effectively and efficiently with local data. If a consistent approach to data collection can be agreed with other departments, it will be easier to use multiple data sets for your own purposes. When receiving local data sets from other teams or departments, you should consult with your EMS supplier to check how the data should be formatted. You may find that significant time and resources are required to properly prepare the data before it is suitable to be imported into your EMS system. Other departments within your council may have more experience with manipulating data effectively. You should consider working with these departments, and potentially seconding skilled colleagues if possible, to assist you with ensuring your local data is ready to upload to your EMS in a timely manner. When setting up a new working relationship for the sharing of local data, you may want to have an initial telephone conversation or face to face meeting to discuss your aims and agree working arrangements. Some of the points it may be useful to cover in your initial contact include: outlining the legislative requirements of the canvass, and your rights to access data explaining the benefits that can be gained by the increased use of data matching discussing the level of support that can be offered to you and your team agreeing a shared approach to working with data, potentially through the use of a data sharing agreement establishing a clear timeline for your work together agreeing how you will communicate going forward agreeing an approach to evaluation of your work together at the end of the canvass consideration of whether any council or service privacy notices should be updated You are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. Further information on the collection and sharing of other contact details such as email addresses and telephone numbers can be found in our guidance on planning for canvass communications . Establishing partnerships and setting out plans for both the sharing and processing of local data may initially take some time and effort, but should become less intensive in subsequent years as working practices and relationships are embedded. As people become familiar with their roles in the process, what data they need to provide and what is expected of them, you should see improved results and a more efficient, streamlined process. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(8) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations ■ [Back to content](#)

at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 May 2023

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching?](#) How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? What is local data? What is local data? Local data is

any set of data which is collected by another body, or by any local authority, including your own. Examples of local data open to you include: council tax data adult social care data local authority billing and payments data parking permits data school, college and university admission data blue badge data customer service records payroll data registrars data housing and rent data green/garden waste subscription data council-run facility membership data (for example, libraries or gyms) Other sources of information, such as personally knowing someone or word-of-mouth, are not considered to be sources of local data. Your powers to request local data As ERO, you are legally entitled to access local data sets and to inspect and make copies of records kept in whatever form by: 1 the council which appointed you (and, where you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier area, the county council) any registrar of births, deaths and marriages, including any superintendent any person, including a company or organisation, providing services to, or authorised to exercise any function of, the council; this includes those that are providing 'outsourced' services under any finance agreement There are no statutory or other restrictions, including data protection legislation, that can be used to refuse disclosure of such information to the ERO. 2 You are also legally entitled to require any other person to give you information required for the purposes of maintaining the electoral register. 3 EROs are able to access such data in line with data protection provisions as there is a lawful basis for its processing; the performance of a public task in the public interest. In the event that any person does not co-operate with your request it may be appropriate to point out that there is the potential of a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum £1,000 for failing to provide the information required. You may also wish to discuss with your Data Protection Officer whether a Data Sharing Agreement could facilitate access to local data. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 35 and 35A of The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 2, paragraph 1(5) of the RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 23, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 17 May 2023 Book traversal links for What is local data? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? How should I select my local data sources? How should I select my local data sources? As a minimum, each local data set should include: First name Surname Postal address Data sets which also include the following fields may help to improve the quality of the match results: Middle name(s) UPRN data Date of birth Previous names Age of data, for example when it was created or last updated Local data sets do not have to include data for all properties on your register and could be more focussed on specific property types or groups of individuals. For example, you may have data from social services or education departments which may only cover some of your electorate, but which may still be useful. How do I ensure a data source is of high quality? You should ensure that you only select data sources that are high quality. A high quality data set is one where the information within it is reliable, trusted, current and accurate. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have a resource available on how to assess the quality of local data which can be found below: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Testing local data guidance Part II and annexes (PDF) You should also consider what data standards and good practices exist in relation to the local data sources you wish to use and whether the data holder follows them. For example, the Department for Work and Pensions has set out detailed guidance on good

practice for the processing and use of council tax benefit and housing benefit data, which includes guidance on the checking of evidence provided to local authorities and how to deal with fraud. An ERO for an area that delivers its benefits service to these standards should be able to be confident in using benefits data for local data matching. When determining the quality of a local data source you should take into account when it was last updated and whether the source(s) of the data are reliant on information provided by individuals with no checks by the local authority on the accuracy of the information. For example, applications for library membership may be based entirely on information provided by the service users and so you may conclude that, as a result, library data is not suitable for local data matching. In addition to being able to trust that the local data source is of high quality. You also need to consider any cost implications associated with processing local data and, if there are any costs, whether they make the best use of the resources you have available to you. For example: Will work need to be carried out manually by you and your staff to ensure the data is useable or will you need support for the data matching from another team, such as from IT, to manipulate the files? Can the data file be managed by a partially automated process by loading it into your EMS system or similar? Will you need to purchase any new or additional software or licenses for any existing software? You should test new local data sets before you use them. You should talk to your EMS provider about how your EMS system may help you to do this in practice. You should evaluate the effectiveness of your local data sets each year using the data accuracy scores provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. These scores will provide an indication of how effective the different local data sources have been in matching electors. This will enable you to make more informed decisions about using local data sets in future canvasses. Last updated: 21 March 2022

[Book traversal links for How should I select my local data sources?](#)

What is local data? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? If you have decided to undertake any type of local data matching you will need to decide when it will take place. Local data matching can be helpful when undertaken either before or after the national data match step, or indeed at both stages. Your decision around the timing of any local data matching may depend on: when the data can be provided to you and when you plan to use it, for example the most up to date student data is likely to be available at the beginning of the academic year how recent the data is; local data will be most accurate and useful for data matching if it has been recently updated the size of the data set and whether you are carrying out a partial or full register match; this may have an impact on the amount of time you have to analyse the results before allocation of properties to canvass routes the format in which the data is held and whether it will need to be processed before you can use it Carrying out local data matching before the national data match step may allow you more time to analyse your local data matching results. Alternatively, carrying out checks of data that is regularly updated locally, such as council tax data, after the national data match step and as close as practicable to making your decision on the allocation of properties to canvass routes may improve the quality of your data match results, enabling you to allocate more properties to the most appropriate route. Checking empty and void properties as part of local data matching Local data matching could include a check of the information you hold on empty or void properties. If you are going to compare empty and void properties against local data sources such as council tax records, your plan should reflect this and make provision for when and how you will carry it out. Empty and void properties are not exempt from the annual canvass

but they are automatically excluded from the national data match step. This is because there are no individual elector details to match against DWP records. If your local data matching can't confirm properties as empty or void, they will need to be canvassed via Route 2 – the unmatched property route. If you are able to confirm that properties remain empty or void, they can be allocated to Route 1 – the matched property route. It is important to remember that once a property has been assigned to a route, you must take all the necessary steps before closing the chase cycle. You cannot use local data to close a chase cycle. Last updated: 26 May 2021

[Book traversal links for When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take?](#) [How should I select my local data sources?](#) [Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [Where you request to inspect and/or take copies of data, the holder of the data cannot use a statutory or other restriction, including data protection legislation, to refuse the disclosure of data to you.](#) 1 Whether you carry out local data matching yourself, or outsource local data matching, the information you receive will contain personal data which is being shared between two data controllers. Whilst UK data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is good practice to have a data sharing agreement in place. Such agreements demonstrate that all parties are acting in accordance with data protection legislation and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. Do I need a data sharing agreement when using data held by a local authority? Where you are receiving information from your own council, or if you are the ERO for a district council in England, where you are receiving information from a relevant county council, to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered, or identify those people who are registered but who are not entitled to be registered a written agreement between you and the council regulating the processing of the information should be in place and this agreement should include details about data transfer, storage, destruction and security arrangements. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 23, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 23 June 2023

[Book traversal links for Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take?](#)

[Planning for canvass communications](#) [Planning for canvass communications](#) You will need to carefully plan how you will deliver your canvass communications. This section contains guidance on the things you will need to consider when planning your canvass communications and on the response mechanisms you will make available for electors. Last updated: 3 June 2020

[Book traversal links for Planning for canvass communications](#) [Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#) [What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#) Before planning the canvass communication channels to use, you will need to have read the guidance for each of the canvass routes; Route 1, Route 2 and Route 3 so that you have an understanding of the communication types and contact requirements for each route. As part of your planning you will then need to decide which communication channels you will use for each contact stage in each of the routes. Some of the key considerations for each communication channel are outlined on the following pages. You should also take into account that legislation requires you to undertake follow-up activity within a

reasonable period of time. A reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation. In our view it should be no longer than 28 days and may, in some circumstances, be shorter, for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place. Last updated: 26 November 2020

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#)

[Planning for canvass communications](#)

[How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#)

[How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#)

[How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#)

You can collect email addresses and phone numbers directly from householders and electors, and you may be able to access them through inspecting local records. You should look for opportunities to collect email addresses and phone numbers from canvass communications and other electoral correspondence throughout the year, such as voter registration forms and absent vote applications. You should capture as many email addresses and phone numbers as possible during the canvass alongside your other actions when processing canvass responses . Whenever you collect email addresses and phone numbers from electors, you should ensure that it is clear to them that the provision of these is optional, and you should set out how you will process and use the information in your privacy statement .

[Can I collect email addresses and phone numbers from other local records?](#)

You are legally entitled to inspect and make copies of local records such as Council Tax and customer service records, for the purposes of your registration duties. 1

Relevant councils are expressly permitted to disclose information contained in local records to enable you to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered. 2 2

We have produced further guidance on the records you can inspect to identify new electors, including what you can use the information for, and advice on whether data sharing agreements are needed between the council and the ERO. However, you are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. To access and use additional contact information, such as email addresses and phone numbers from local records you will require: a data sharing agreement to be in place between the council and the ERO, and the council to have informed individuals about the potential sharing of such information through their privacy notice

You will therefore need to engage with relevant council departments, holding constructive conversations with them and your data protection officer, to gain support for your approach to using e-communications. This could be tied in with your wider conversations about accessing local data for the purposes of your registration duties such as local data matching . You should work with council departments and the data protection officer to develop data sharing agreements and to identify privacy notices which will need to be updated, so that when contact details such as email addresses and phone numbers are collected, the necessary consent is given for these details to be disclosed to the ERO. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further information on data protection considerations. What if the council uses a customer records index? Some councils have adopted a customer records or citizen index, to keep customer records in one central database. Such records are collated from a range of customer contact information and are likely to be up to date and accurate. As the data in such databases is collated from sources across the council it is likely that data sharing agreements and privacy notices will already be in place for maintaining their customer records index which may only need minor changes to allow for the disclosure of additional contact details to the ERO. You should contact your DPO to understand what you may need to do locally. Checking the accuracy of the information you collect

In order to reduce the number of emails

or text messages that go undelivered due to errors in phone numbers or email addresses, you should carry out quality checks on the contact information you have collected. You could export the data into a spreadsheet to assist with this, or see if your EMS system can produce reports which could help to highlight inaccuracies in your data. You should check for obvious errors such as domain names in emails being misspelt, incorrect use of punctuation or spaces in email addresses, and phone numbers with missing digits. You could then cross reference scanned images or paper applications to check and correct any contact details that contain errors. Ensuring that the contact details you hold are up to date and accurate will increase the number of messages delivered correctly and will reduce the administrative burden of dealing with email bounce backs when processing. For more information on managing bounce backs, please see responses to Route 1 e-communications . 1. Regulation 35, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 35A RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 a b Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers? What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications? Using electronic communications Using electronic communications Using electronic communications Where you decide to use e-communications, you will need to identify the steps needed to set these up and reflect these in your plans. You will need to decide whether to manage e-communications in house or via an external provider, and you may decide to take different approaches for different types of e-communication. For example, you may choose to send emails yourself and outsource SMS messaging to an external provider. Any person who will be processing personal data for use with any e-communication channels must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. You will need to create template communications in advance where you are using emails, SMS, or other written electronic communications. Our guidance for Route 1 and Route 2 contains detail of what information must be included and captured in e-communications and we have produced template emails that can act as a basis for your e-communications. You will also need to ensure that you have mechanisms in place to track and monitor the dispatch of e-communications to ensure that you have an audit trail of all contact attempts with properties and electors throughout the canvass. Monitoring the success of contact attempts using different contact methods will help you to evaluate their effectiveness and refine your approach as needed for future canvasses. The data set out in the performance standards for EROs will also help you to understand the impact of your activities and where improvements can be made. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Using electronic communications How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers? Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications It is important that recipients of your e-communications trust them and have confidence that they are legitimate, so that they pay attention to the information provided and respond and take necessary action as needed. Some residents may not be used to being contacted by the ERO or the council through e-communications, so you should think about how you can prepare them for being contacted this way, for example through press releases and social media messages. We have produced canvass resources to support you with public engagement, including social media templates which can be used in the run-up and throughout the canvass to raise awareness. You should also work with the communications team in your council to raise awareness about the canvass. As well as using e-communications during the canvass, you could consider the benefits of contacting electors through these methods outside the canvass period, for

example in the run up to an election. To help increase confidence that emails are official you should ensure that recipients can clearly identify that they are from you by including your council name in the subject line and your logo in the body of the text. If you are using a generic outbox to send emails, you could also personalise the message to include the householder's name in the greeting. You should proactively inform recipients that you are contacting them because you hold their information on your electoral register database so that they can be confident that their data has been used legitimately. Even if you are encouraging residents to reply using an automated response method, you should include dedicated contact details for queries, as well as a link to your website with details of your privacy notice and how recipients can opt out of further e-communications, in order to promote confidence in the legitimacy of the communication and meet all data protection requirements. We have produced an email canvass communication template to support you when contacting householders by email. The email template can be used for either Route 1 or Route 2 communications. The email template is not prescribed, however we recommend that you use it because it has been tested with the public. Further guidance on the content of your e-communications is given in what information should an e-communication contain? Last updated: 27 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications](#) Using electronic communications Managing messages and responses Managing messages and responses Managing messages and responses As set out in using electronic communications you will need to ensure that you have resources and systems in place for sending e-communications and for tracking and monitoring responses. If you are managing this in-house, you will need to liaise with your IT department to discuss how they can support you, which could include: setting up a generic mailbox, with sufficient capacity to deal with your estimated volume of likely responses based on previous years and/or the number of emails you plan to send as part of your canvass the proposed timescales for sending your communications, so that any additional help desk support can be factored in any additional opportunities to check your data before sending your communications whether to send messages in batches advice on how to avoid e-communications being treated as 'spam' or 'junk' how to track and monitor responses, including the management of bounce backs (guidance on the processing of bounce backs can be found in responses to Route 1 e-communications .) Using external providers and messaging platforms You could decide to use an external provider or a messaging platform to send e-communications to residents, both during and outside the canvass period. This may involve providing the contact details you hold for residents to a provider who will send the messages on your behalf. You will need to be satisfied that the provider complies with data protection legislation when processing data. Some messaging platforms, such as the UK Government's 'Notify' service, can be integrated with your EMS system, which would enable you to monitor responses through your existing software. The following case study describes how this has been utilised in Tower Hamlets: [DLUHC - Notify Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May edition \(DOC\)](#) Last updated: 21 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Managing messages and responses](#) Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Contacting electors by telephone Contacting electors by telephone Contacting electors by telephone If you are contacting electors via telephone you will need to decide whether to manage these calls in house or via an external provider. You will also need to plan in advance the scripts your staff or external providers will use for their conversations. We have provided a template script for use by staff contacting electors by telephone. Telephone script for canvassers (DOC) It may also be useful to provide a list of

possible FAQs and suggested responses for your call handlers based on your approach to the canvass in your area. You will also need to ensure that you have mechanisms in place to track and monitor the placing of phone calls, to ensure that you have an audit trail of all contact attempts with properties and electors throughout the canvass. Monitoring the success of contact attempts using different contact methods will help you to evaluate their effectiveness and refine your approach as needed for future canvasses. Last updated: 3 June 2020

[Book traversal links for Contacting electors by telephone](#)

[Managing messages and responses](#)

[Using printed communications](#)

[Using printed communications](#)

You will need to decide whether to use an in-house or an external printer to print your canvass communications. Whoever you use, you should be satisfied they will be able to cope with the complexity and volume of printed material to be produced. You should ensure that data protection principles are met in any contract tender exercise, and document your decision-making process. Whenever you use a processor, data protection legislation imposes a legal obligation to formalise the working relationship with them. Whether you are using an in-house or external printer, you must have a written agreement or contract in place. This will help to ensure that the requirements of data protection legislation will be met, including the requirements relating to appointing a processor. Following the national data matching step, and any local data matching, you will have allocated all of your properties to the appropriate canvass routes, made decisions about which communication channels you plan to use for canvass communications at each stage and how you will manage their distribution. You will then be in a position to confirm with your print supplier the number of printed canvass communications that you require. You will need to agree a detailed production schedule with your supplier for your printed canvass communications which should include:

- Timescales for proofing canvass communications
- The volume of printed canvass communications for each route
- Printer deadlines for sending data
- Dates the printer will deliver canvass communications to you (where canvass communications are being delivered back to you ready for onward delivery)
- Scheduling of delivery dates from the printer to Royal Mail, other delivery services or your offices for the purpose of hand-delivery
- Timing of the production and dispatch of any follow-up communications where required

We have designed templates for each of the different printed canvass communications, some of which you are required to use. You can find more information on the template communications and how to use these in our forms and letters guidance . Your printer will need to produce proofs of the templates for printed canvass communications, and you will need to check these. We have produced a proof checking factsheet which you can use to help quality assure your processes. Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) We have also produced a contract development checklist to support you in your work with contractors and suppliers. Contract development and management checklist (PDF) Once you have approved the template proofs you should send test data to ensure that data fields appear correctly. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs highlights the importance of having a robust proof checking process in place when working with a processor in order to detect any errors and avoid data breaches before they occur. If you are planning to use Royal Mail or other delivery services you should consider the delivery options they offer and any discounts based on the types and volumes of printed communications you expect to send out to determine which option will best meet your needs. Last updated: 26 June 2023

[Book traversal links for Using printed communications](#)

[Contacting electors by telephone](#)

How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? You will need to decide which

response mechanisms you will make available for electors. These may vary for the different canvass routes and the different contact stages within routes, and should be considered alongside the outward contact methods you intend to use. Potential response channels include: Website E-mail SMS Post Telephone In person You should ensure that your chosen response mechanisms are designed to meet elector expectations and enable them to respond as easily as possible where needed. For example, if you contact some electors via email, they may well expect to be able to respond online, such as by a return email, rather than a different channel. You could also consider the demographics of your local area to help inform your decisions. For example, if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or areas with high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet the needs of your electors. If you decide to use automated response services – which would typically involve using security codes to log onto a website or respond by an automated telephone or SMS response service – you will need to decide whether to manage this internally or to outsource the work to an external supplier. If you are using an external supplier, you will need ensure that they will be able to meet your requirements before agreeing the process for setting the service up, finalising contracts and reflecting your decisions in your canvass plans. Any person who will be processing personal data for use with response services must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? Using printed communications Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass As part of your planning you will need to think about what staff you require to carry out the canvass. This section contains guidance on how to identify what staff you will need and plan for the delivery of any necessary training. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? The council which has appointed you as ERO is under a legal obligation to provide you with the necessary staff to enable you to fulfil your statutory duties. 1 The decisions you have made on your approach to delivering the canvass will impact on the number of staff you may need. You will need to consider how you will resource the following: Managing the local data matching exercise If you are carrying out local data matching, the volume and the timing of this may have an impact on the amount of staff time you will need. You will also need to consider any additional work needed to get the data into useable format for data matching purposes. Analysis of the data match results If you are carrying out local data matching, you should consider the staff resource required to make decisions where national and local data match results conflict. You will also need to consider the staff-time required for the property allocation stage. Dealing with questions from the public about the canvass process Establish the staffing levels required by thinking about the timings for your canvass activity across the different routes and identifying the likely peak response periods. Your decision on whether these queries will be managed by a contact centre or by the electoral services team will also have an impact on the amount of staff required. Processing responses You will need to consider the staff required to manage multiple response channels, deal with any conflicting responses and undertake any additional registration activity necessary - for example sending ITRs, undertaking reviews and deletions. Hand-delivering communications (where undertaken)

If you are hand delivering canvass communications, you will need to consider the geography and size of the canvass areas. Canvass areas can vary in size to help maximise canvass response rates, allowing you to take into account the varying geography and demographics of different parts of your registration area. For example you may want to allocate fewer properties over larger geographical areas, such as rural locations. The size of canvass areas will also be affected by the staff resource available, the more staff you have, the smaller your canvass areas may be. You may wish to review your canvass areas following the allocation of properties to canvass routes in order to ensure that canvassers have sufficient time to contact all non-responding properties/individuals based on the number of Route 2 properties in that area. You will also need to consider the likely volumes of canvass communications that you intend to deliver by hand. For example, are you hand delivering some or all of the canvass communications and at what stage for each route? You will also need to consider the impact on staff resource requirements where you are combining hand delivery with a property visit. Undertaking personal contact via telephone or property visits The decisions you have made on how you will carry out the personal contact requirements for Route 2 properties will impact on the size of canvass areas and the staff resource you will need to ensure you maximise the effectiveness of personal canvassing. For example: the stage of the canvass that personal contact will take place will have an impact on the volume of properties requiring contact. The more properties that require personal contact, the smaller the canvass area may need to be the size of the canvass area will be impacted by the number of staff undertaking personal contact attempts by either visit or by telephone if by telephone whether it will be done by your electoral services team, or a contact centre the size of the canvass area may depend on how many personal contact attempts you will make, the more attempts you plan to make, the smaller the canvass area may need to be if you are combining any follow up of ITRs for individuals within a property with any personal contact attempts the smaller the canvass area may need to be You will also need to review your existing canvass staff database. You should review the performance of canvassers who have worked on your canvass before and any whose past performance has been unsatisfactory should not be used again. You should then make contact with those you wish to invite to work on the canvass again bearing in mind that existing or experienced canvassers may not be available and you may need to undertake recruitment to identify and select new canvassers. Where you need to undertake recruitment of staff to work on any part of delivering the canvass, you will need to take into account the length of time required for recruitment and plan accordingly. You should liaise with your HR contact to ensure they are aware of your requirements and can provide you with the necessary support. You will also need to ensure that your recruitment plans are fully reflected in your canvass plan. 1.

Section 52(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 2 June 2020 Book traversal links for How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? Your duty to maintain the registers of electors includes the provision of training to all the staff you have appointed to assist with delivery of the canvass. 1 You should review the training needs of both permanent and temporary staff, including canvassers. It is important that all staff understand their particular role and any statutory obligations associated with the work they are undertaking. As well as training on the legislative requirements and responsibilities relevant to their role, it is important that staff are trained on ensuring equal

access, data handling and good customer care. To embed data protection principles in your work and demonstrate compliance with the legislation, you will need to ensure that all staff, including canvassers, are trained in handling personal data. You should discuss any data protection training with your Data Protection Officer. Where you identify that training is required, you will need to make arrangements for this to be provided and reflect this in your canvass plans. You may already have existing structures for training sessions and materials for their delivery which you can review and refine to ensure they are relevant and appropriate. If you have training personnel within your council, they may be able to assist you with this process. What training is required for staff dealing with enquiries about the canvass? You will need to identify how you will support staff dealing directly with the public by phone or face-to-face, whether in the office, undertaking personal visits or working at any contact centres or call management centres. Staff will need to understand the differences between the different canvass communications and be able to: offer advice about whether or not a response is required encourage a successful response to the canvass communication as required when speaking to someone on the telephone give advice on registering to vote, the options available to make an application to register and, where appropriate, assist with the registration process apply knowledge to deal with a person's individual circumstances be able to identify non-standard questions and refer these to staff with more detailed knowledge of registration as necessary To support front-line staff we have produced a frequently-asked questions (FAQs) document covering a range of queries that may arise about electoral registration. FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) You can adapt this document to reflect your local approach to the canvass. Planning training for canvassers You need to ensure that your canvassers are trained to carry out the job they have been appointed to undertake. You may need to deliver different types of training sessions depending on how you intend to deploy them. For example, those making house to house visits may require different training to canvassers who are making telephone contact. All canvassers must receive appropriate data protection training and be trained as to how to keep any personal information they collect from electors safe. Further information on the recruitment and training of canvassers can be found in our Canvasser recruitment and training checklist. Canvasser recruitment and training checklist (DOC) Resources to support the management and briefing of canvassers can also be found on our website . 1. Section 9A of the RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 12 May 2020 Book traversal links for What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? When planning your canvass timetable you will need to take into account the requirement to publish your revised register by 1 December, unless there has been an election during the canvass in which case you can delay publication up until 1 February. 1 Publication of the register on 1 December maximises the length of time available for applications to register to be received and determined in time to be included on the revised register. If 1 December falls on a weekend rather than a working day, there may be specific practicalities you will need to address to ensure you're still able to publish. For example, you would need to factor into your planning the possible resource requirements related to working on a weekend, such as the opening of office buildings, staffing arrangements and the availability of IT support if required. You should bear in mind that not all

of your canvass activity needs to be completed by 1 December, regardless of when you publish your revised register; any outstanding steps can be picked up as part of your year-round electoral registration activity. If, for whatever reason, you decide to publish on a date in November instead of on 1 December, you will need to consider the impact on your canvass plans of the earlier deadlines for receipt of applications in time for them to be determined and included on the revised register. Publication of the revised register in November means that some individuals who make a successful registration application from late October onwards, would not be added to the register until the January notice of alteration, unless they are added by any election notice of alteration.

1. Section 13(1) and (1A) of RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? Data matching for the annual canvass Data matching for the annual canvass This section of the guidance covers what you need to know about the national data match step including what it is, what data you need to include and exclude, how and when to send your data and how to process the results and allocate properties to canvass routes.

DLUHC Worksheet - The data matching process - ENG (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Data matching for the annual canvass What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What is the national data match step? What is the national data match step What is the national data match step? Each year, before conducting the annual canvass, you must disclose data to the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of a national data matching exercise known as the national data match step.

1 The national data match step involves the checking of information about existing electors on your register - their name, address including the UPRN where held and, where known, date of birth, against data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The purpose of the exercise is to help you identify properties where residents may have changed. This information should then be used to determine the route you will use to canvass each property.

1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is the national data match step? Data matching for the annual canvass What data do I need to send? What data do I need to send? What data do I need to send? The data you send for the national data match step in relation to all persons aged 16 or over who appear on the parliamentary and local government registers must include: 1 the full name, including any middle name(s) or initials you may hold the date of birth (where held) the full address, including postcode Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) (where held) any other information that you hold relating to a person's entry on the register, if the Cabinet Office specifies such information in writing (for example, a previous surname). This additional information may improve the likelihood of a data match as the information you hold may show a link exists between the data held nationally and your data.

1. Regulation 32ZBB(9), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What data do I need to send? What is the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Special category electors must be excluded from the national data match step.

1 You should also exclude the following electors and properties from the national data match: Determined electors – individuals who have had their application

determined and will be added to the register by the next notice of alteration. These electors will have only just been added to the register so will be considered matched by default. Determined deletions – individuals who you have determined are no longer entitled to be registered and will be deleted from the register by the next notice of alteration. Empty or void properties – as no electors are registered at these properties, there are no individuals to be matched against DWP data as part of the national data match step. Special category electors The following special category electors must be excluded from the national data match step, as they are not included within the annual canvass process: 1 overseas electors, i.e. British citizens living outside the UK HM Forces service voters (and their spouses or civil partners) Crown servants and British Council employees (and their spouses or civil partners) electors who have made a declaration of local connection, including people living in the UK who have no permanent or fixed address anonymously registered electors, i.e. those who have registered anonymously because their safety would be at risk if they appeared on the register using their name patients in mental health hospitals whose stay at the hospital is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there remand prisoners whose stay at a penal institution is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there

DLUHC Worksheet 2 - Data matching empty properties and exclusions - ENG (PDF) 1. Regulation 32ZBB(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 a b Last updated: 21 March 2022

Book traversal links for Who will be excluded from the national data match step? What data do I need to send? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? You have the discretion to decide whether to exclude some or all of your recent additions from the national data match step. 1 Recent additions are electors who have made a successful application to be registered and have been added to the register of electors within the last 90 days. Deciding what your recent additions threshold should be Prior to the start of the national data match step, you should decide where to set the cut-off point for recent additions to the register to be included in the national data match. 2 This period must be between 0 and 90 days. When the data is uploaded for the national data match, any recent additions to the register prior to the threshold date you have set will be excluded from the data match and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. If you set a threshold of 0 days, all recent additions will be included within the national data match step. If you set a threshold of 90 days, recent additions made within the last 90 days will be excluded from the national data step and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. If you set a threshold of between 0 and 90 days, recent additions to the register within your chosen time frame will be excluded from the national data match step. For example, if you choose to set the threshold at 45 days, recent additions to the register in the last 45 days will be excluded from the national data step and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. Your decision to include or exclude recent additions from the national data match step could have an impact on the outcome of the data match results. In turn, this may influence the canvass route you allocate for each property. The questions below may help to inform your decision about whether to exclude all or some of your recent additions from the national data match step. Questions Impact on your decision How stable is your electorate? Do you have a high level of churn within your electoral area? If you have a high level of churn in your area, there is a increased risk that someone may successfully register to vote at an address but then move again in a short space of time. Where this is the

case you could consider setting a lower threshold which may help to better capture changes in areas where electors move more frequently. Have you checked against locally held data sets that the information you hold for properties identified as having recent additions have no other changes? If you have carried out checks as part of your activity to maintain the register throughout the year, you could consider setting a higher threshold. You may be more likely to have already captured and managed recent changes and so your local data may be more up to date than DWP records. Do you have processes in place to regularly identify and subsequently take steps to remove existing registered electors from a property if they have moved out? In this case, you could consider setting a higher threshold, as you are more likely to have actioned recent changes and so your local data may be more up to date than DWP records. Have you had to process a high proportion of changes during previous canvasses? If this is the case, you could consider setting a lower threshold as your recent experience suggests that you are less likely to have captured all required changes outside of the canvass period. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities help sheet below provides further information and guidance to help you set your threshold. [DLUHC helpsheet - Recent additions and determined electors](#) You should review the impact of the threshold you set after each canvass to determine its effectiveness, and ensure any lessons learnt are fed into your planning for subsequent canvasses.

1. Regulation 32ZBB(7)(a), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulation 32ZBB(7)(a), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 21 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step?](#)

Who will be excluded from the national data match step? When do I need to send my data? When do I need to send my data? When do I need to send my data? As part of your planning for the canvass you should already have considered when you want to conduct the national data match step. The data matching process will be managed in practice by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and will be phased due to the volume of records to be processed. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have advised there will be a tool available that you will need to use to schedule the date for your data upload. Please note that there is a limit on the volume of records that can be processed per day and so if a certain date has reached its capacity, it will no longer be available for you to book on the tool. Once you have booked through the tool, you will receive an email from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities confirming that you have successfully booked your date. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will provide you with instructions on when to electronically upload your register to DWP via your electoral management software (EMS) system. Your EMS supplier will provide you with instructions on how to upload your data. Once you have confirmed the date for your data upload, you will be able to confirm the rest of your plans for the delivery of the canvass, including liaising with and updating your print suppliers as needed.

Last updated: 16 March 2022 [Book traversal links for When do I need to send my data?](#)

Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Using the results of national and local data matching Using the results of national and local data matching You have the option to use local data matching before the national data match step, after you have received the results from the national data match step, or both. Planning for data matching includes guidance on how to identify and use local data. Last updated: 16 March 2021 [Book traversal links for Using the results of national and local data](#)

matching When do I need to send my data? What will be included in the national data match results? What will be included in the national data match results? What will be included in the national data match results? You should receive your results within 5 working days of the data being submitted. You will receive your results through your EMS. Your EMS supplier will provide you with instructions on how this will work in practice. Each elector whose data is sent for the national data match will return with either a match or no match result. The results will not include any details of why an elector's details failed to match. Your EMS will then aggregate these into a result for each property. Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What will be included in the national data match results? Using the results of national and local data matching What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? You should consider whether there is any other information you hold, either in written or electronic data format, 1 that you could check after the data matching results have been received to inform your decision on which route to use for each property.

Potential electors held on your EMS: What is this information and why is it useful? Potential electors are not registered electors but are individuals who are recorded in your EMS, likely as a result of local data mining or a returned canvass form, who may be eligible but have not yet registered to vote at the address. This information is useful because it may indicate that there are changes required to the register for that property, with individuals potentially being resident who have not yet made a successful application to register. Potential electors at an address may also be indicative of the need to capture additional changes for those individuals who are currently registered at the property. What action could I take? Check local data to try to confirm if these individuals appear to be still resident. What impact could this information have on my decision making? Where local data matching shows an individual does still potentially reside at the address but has not yet registered, it may be most appropriate to canvass the property via Route 2 – the unmatched property route. Where local data matching confirms an individual no longer resides at an address, their name can be removed as a potential elector from EMS and the property could be canvassed via Route 1 – the matched property route if all other individuals at a property have been matched. Information provided from another ERO: What is this information and why is it useful? Other EROs may have information about individuals who have moved into or out of your area. What action could I take? Check any information sent to you by another ERO for any additional potential changes at a property. If you are notified that an elector is no longer resident at an address, you should initiate the deletions process. What impact could this information have on my decision making? If after checking information sent to you by another ERO, you are now aware that there may be changes at a property, you should consider canvassing the property using Route 2 – the unmatched property route. Other sources of council data: What is this information and why is it useful? Data from other departments in the authority could help you to identify additional potential electors or other changes at a property. What action could I take? Check all council data you have access to for information on any additional potential electors or other changes at a property. What impact could this information have on my decision making? If after checking data from other council departments, you are aware of additional potential electors or other changes at a property, you should consider canvassing the property using Route 2 – the unmatched property route. You will need to consider how you will evidence and

document your decision-making if information from a source other than the results of data matching leads to a decision to change a property from one route to another. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(8), The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 2 August 2021 Book traversal links for What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What will be included in the national data match results? What do I do with the results of data matching? What do I do with the results of data matching? What do I do with the results of data matching? The data matching results will help you determine whether the property as a whole is matched or unmatched and you must use this information to help you to allocate that property to the appropriate canvass route.

1 Matched properties - A property is determined to be a matched property where there is a match result for every elector within a property, through national and/or local data. A property can also be determined to be a matched property where you have carried out local data matching and have confirmed the status of the property as empty. Unmatched properties - A property is determined to be an unmatched property where you are unable to match some or all of the electors within a household through national and/or local data matching. Both national and local data matching results may be relevant in determining the appropriate canvass route. For example, you may:

- Accept a match from either local or national data matching
- Override a match result from national data matching where you are satisfied that local data matching information is more accurate - this may be because you believe your local data source to contain more up-to-date information
- Override a result from local data matching if you believe the national data match has provided a more accurate result

What action can I take where an individual is unmatched? You cannot disregard the results where both national and local data shows at least one elector in the property as not matched. However, you could consider using other local data sources that you trust to be accurate to try to match the unmatched elector before allocating that property. If you are able to match an unmatched individual using other local data sources, you may then be satisfied that the whole property is a match and could be canvassed via Route 1 - the matched property route. Where you do not have additional local data to use, or are unsuccessful in matching the unmatched elector using additional local data, canvass the property via Route 2 – the unmatched property route - as you cannot be satisfied that there are no changes to be captured for that property.

1. Regulation 32ZBA(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What do I do with the results of data matching? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? Processing information in connection with data matching Processing information in connection with data matching Processing information in connection with data matching This section of the guidance covers data protection considerations in regard to data matching. Information supplied to the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for the purpose of the national data match and the access to the results from the national data match step are subject to certain restrictions. You must not disclose any information from the national data match step about an individual 1 to any person other than where they are responsible for deciding the most appropriate canvass route or for the purposes of any civil or criminal proceedings. However, data protection legislation allows individuals to make requests about the information you hold about them. For more information on subject access requests (SARs), including how they relate to the national data match, see our guidance - What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? If you, or anyone authorised to

act on your behalf, discloses data from the national data match step for any other reason you (and they) could be subject to imprisonment, a fine or both. 1. Regulation 32ZBC, The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for Processing information in connection with data matching What do I do with the results of data matching? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? If you receive a request for the data from the national data match for the purpose of any civil or criminal proceedings, you may be able to supply the data in specific circumstances, but you should take your own legal advice before doing so. As part of your ongoing data protection compliance, you should maintain records of every person and organisation supplied with any data to demonstrate that you are complying with the relevant legislation and the principles of processing personal data, and are ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Subject access requests Data protection legislation provides that a person may make a subject access request to see personal information that is held about them and this could include a person asking whether or not they were a match during the annual canvass. If you receive such a request, you must be satisfied of the requester's identity before fulfilling the request. Information requested by data subjects must be provided without delay and in any event within one month (although this can be extended to two months in certain conditions). Further information can be found in our guidance - subject access requests . Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? Processing information in connection with data matching Are there any other data protection considerations? Are there any other data protection considerations? Are there any other data protection considerations? When processing information in connection with the national data match step you must adhere to any requirements that have been imposed by the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. 1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities may provide further guidance on any such requirements. 2 Additionally, any data used or processed in connection with the national data match step must be stored securely and processed in accordance with data protection legislation. You should also ensure that your privacy notices and data retention schedules reflect the processing of data for the national and local data match step. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to privacy notices, along with advice about your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 32 ZBC(3) and (4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBC(3) and (5), RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Are there any other data protection considerations? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? Allocating properties to canvass routes Allocating properties to canvass routes Allocating properties to canvass routes Once you have received and analysed the results of both your national and local data matching (if undertaken) and taken into account any other relevant information you have access to, you need to allocate properties to specific canvass routes. The following resource provides a description of the three canvass routes and the criteria that determines when a route must be used and when an ERO has the discretion to decide whether to use a particular route or not. Canvass route

descriptions and criteria (PDF) Where you decide to allocate a property to a route based on the results provided by one set of data rather than another, you should be able to explain your decision-making process clearly and maintain an audit trail of your decisions. It is important to note that whilst you will have the option to consider individual property level data match results when allocating properties to routes, you won't necessarily need to do this in practice. You should be able to apply the allocation criteria more broadly so that properties with the same data match results can be managed in the same way and allocated to the appropriate routes in bulk. [DLUHC Worksheet 9 - Switching Routes \(PDF\)](#) Last updated: 21 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Allocating properties to canvass routes](#) Are there any other data protection considerations? Route 1 – the matched property route Route 1 – the matched property route Route 1 – the matched property route When you have completed your data matching and allocated properties to canvass routes, you can begin to deliver your canvass plan. This section covers Route 1 and includes guidance on when you can use Route 1, what canvass communications you can use for this route and how to process responses. [DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process \(PDF\)](#) Last updated: 21 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Route 1 – the matched property route](#) Allocating properties to canvass routes What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? Route 1 is the matched property route. It can be used to send canvass communications to properties where you are satisfied that no changes are needed based on the results of national and any local data matching. A link to a visual overview of Route 1 is below: [DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process \(PDF\)](#) Properties can be canvassed using Route 1 where: 1 You are satisfied that there are no changes needed at that property and you have no reason to believe that there are any additional electors to be added. You have carried out local data matching to confirm the status of the property as empty or void. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(4) and 32ZBE(1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 21 March 2022 [Book traversal links for What is Route 1 and when can I use it?](#) Route 1 – the matched property route What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? Route 1 communications provide the occupants of each property with an opportunity to inform you of any changes or incorrect information you hold on the electoral register for that address. You must issue a communication to each Route 1 property. There are two communication options open to you for the initial communication: 1 An e-communication: 2 Can be sent via any electronic channel If used, must be sent to every registered elector aged 18 or over that you hold the relevant electronic contact details for in the household 2 Requires a response, even if no changes are required for the property 3 Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe 4 (i.e. if no response is received to the initial e-communication or any reminder from at least one person within the household, Canvass Communication A must then be sent) Canvass Communication A (CCA): 5 Is a prescribed paper communication Can be hand delivered or sent by post Must be sent if you have been unable, or choose not, to use an e-communication Must be sent if you do not receive a response to an e-communication from an individual within the property within a reasonable timeframe 4 Does not require a response, unless there are changes for the property Does not require any follow up unless you are made aware of or have reason to believe there are changes for that property that require further action It is an offence for an individual to fail to notify you of a change, or to provide false information in response to a Route 1 communication. 6 1. Regulation

32ZBE(3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 a b 3. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 a b 5. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(a) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulations 32ZBG(4) and 32ZBG(4)(e)(i) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? An e-communication could be an email, SMS text message or another type of electronic or digital communication, such as a communication through internal accounts used to communicate with electors about other local authority services. A response is required to an e-communication, even if there are no changes to report. Whilst the e-communication you send must inform the recipient of the requirement to respond, you need only receive a response from one recipient of an e-communication within a household to meet the response requirement for that property. An e-communication provides you with an opportunity to encourage a response from a property to update the information you hold on the register via an alternative channel than by post. This could potentially lead to resource savings. To use an e-communication you must have the relevant contact details for at least one of the electors aged 18 or over registered in the household. 1 You can still use an e-communication if you only hold contact details for some but not all registered electors at a property, although you must send an e-communication to all electors aged 18 or over whose contact details you do have. 2 Using a mixture of e-communication methods You can, if you wish, use different types of e-communications for different properties: for example, you could choose to send a mixture of emails and text messages or any other type of e-communication to different properties depending on the contact data you hold. You can also send a mixture of e-communications within a household. However, there is no requirement to use more than one type of e-communication to contact a property so, for example, if you hold email addresses for some individuals and mobile numbers for others, you could decide only to use e-mail contact, in which case you would only need to send the e-communication to those individuals with email addresses. Choosing which types of e-communication method(s) to use When deciding which, if any, e-communication method to use, you should consider: whether you hold the information necessary to use the contact method you are considering, or if you are able to obtain and use contact information from any other sources in line with data protection considerations the number of individuals you hold the necessary information for how confident you are that the contact data you hold is accurate and up to date the capacity that your local authority has for sending out bulk emails/SMS messages whether to send out e-communications in batches in order to help manage the workload created by a high number of responses how you will process responses received through different communication channels, including queries from electors what steps you will take to be sure that any communication channels you use and any actions taken comply with data protection legislation how you will ensure that electors will know that e-communications you send are genuine, so they can be confident in responding

accordingly You cannot use e-communications for any empty and void properties as these properties do not contain any registered electors for you to contact electronically. 1. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What information should an e-communication contain? What information should an e-communication contain? The design of an e-communication is not prescribed. However, we provide a template e-communication, and other information in our forms and letters guidance . Any e-communication must require the recipient to: 1 confirm whether the information for all electors is complete and accurate provide details for any other eligible electors who are not listed on the communication. These details include their name, nationality and an indication of whether someone is aged 76 or over Your e-communication must inform the recipient that they are required to respond and should also: provide the recipient with a deadline for response include information on the response channels available to them and instructions on how to use them include a link to the UK Government's registration website (gov.uk/register-to-vote) inform the recipient how you obtained their contact details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of further e-communications 1. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 December 2020 Book traversal links for What information should an e-communication contain? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is a successful response to an e-communication? What is a successful response to an e-communication? You must receive a response to an e-communication from at least one elector in a household within a reasonable period of time, even where there are no changes to the information for that property. 1 A successful response to an e-communication can be defined as one which either: 2 confirms that all of the information is complete and accurate provides new information regarding who is resident at the property provides new information regarding changes required to an elector's details provides new information indicating an existing elector is no longer resident at the property or provides any combination of the above. You only need to have received a successful response from one elector contacted via an e-communication to be satisfied that you have received a response for that property. 3 Making additional enquiries You can make additional enquiries if you receive a response that indicates a change may have occurred at the property but does not include enough information to provide a successful response as above. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get information needed to provide a successful response, you can close the route and undertake any additional actions required, for example, beginning the ITR process for new residents at the property. If you are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response, you must transfer the property to Route 2 – the unmatched property route, as you can no longer be satisfied that there are no changes to the property. For example, a response may suggest that there are potential new electors at the property but may not give their names. If you are unable to obtain the names of the potential new electors having made additional enquiries, this would require you to move the property to Route 2. What action to take if no response is received Where no response is received within a reasonable time period, you must send a CCA to the property. 4

However, you may choose to send a reminder e-communication before sending the CCA. While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days and may in some circumstances be shorter (for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place).

1. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for

What is a successful response to an e-communication? What information should an e-communication contain? Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Route 1 e-communications If you decide to use an e-communication then it is up to you to determine the most suitable response mechanism(s) for your area. For example, you could decide to signpost within your e-communication to an automated online, SMS or telephone response service which collects the required information. You could also allow responses to be provided in person, by email or by telephone, either to a call centre or directly to your team.

Managing changes to a property If you receive information in response to a Route 1 e-communication telling you about changes, you should take action to process the information in the response as necessary. What if more than one response is received? You will need to ensure that you can identify where more than one individual within a property has responded to an e-communication and are clear on what actions you will take if there is any conflicting information in the responses. For example, if you receive a response from one elector confirming that all the information is correct and accurate and you receive a response from another indicating that someone needs to be removed from the register at the property, you will need to make further enquiries to confirm the details of the property. If you believe that there may be changes needed to the property but are unable to confirm enough information to enable you to carry out review or ITR processes, then you must transfer that property to Route 2.

What should I do with email bounce backs? An email bounce back is where an email is undelivered and returns a notification back to the sender. There are two types of bounce backs: soft bounce – this is where delivery is delayed while the email server re-attempts delivery a number of times over a period of hours or days and is only considered undeliverable if the retry period expires without success hard bounce – this is where the email address is deemed permanently undeliverable Where a hard bounce occurs you should remove the email address from your database and then send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for individuals at the property. In the case of a soft bounce you will usually need to wait to see if a hard bounce occurs as a result of still being unable to deliver the message after further attempts. You should have a process in place to enable you to identify bounce backs and take appropriate action. We have created the table below which identifies some of the common reasons for bounce backs and action you may wish to take where this occurs.

Reason for bounce back	Action to take
Email blocked by the recipient (hard bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. You should remove the email address from your database and send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for any individuals at the property.
Email address is invalid – for example, wrong address provided or transposed incorrectly (hard bounce)	Check your email data source for accuracy. If the address has been

transposed incorrectly, correct the error and re-send the e-communication. If the address has not been transposed incorrectly – you should remove the email address from your database and send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for any individuals at the property. The email is blocked by the server – for example, the email is in wrong format, too big or recognised as spam (hard bounce) In advance of sending, review your ecommunication carefully, including with your IT team, and identify any potential reasons the email may be blocked - such as large graphics, photos or other corporate branding. Corporate branding that needs to be included as a way to signpost that the e-communication is genuine should be of a size that will be accepted by the receiving mailbox/server. Receiving server is unavailable (soft bounce) There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. This will become a hard bounce if no action is taken by the receiving server. Receiving mailbox is full (soft bounce) There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. This will become a hard bounce if no action is taken by the owner of the mailbox. Respondent has an autoreply service set up (soft bounce) There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. The email may still be delivered but you should check the content of the auto reply and make a decision as to whether further action is required. For example, the individual may have left a place of work. In this case, you could treat the auto response in the same way as a hard bounce. If you receive bounce backs and have no other electronic method for contacting individuals at a property, you should continue with the Route 1 process by sending a CCA to the property. 1 There is no requirement to re-allocate the properties to Route 2 unless you believe that there may be changes required at the property. You will need to take steps to ensure that any email addresses which resulted in a hard bounce back are removed from your database to ensure the accuracy of the contact information you hold for future canvasses. 1. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Responses to Route 1 e-communications What is a successful response to an e-communication? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Canvass Communication A is a paper communication used for contacting matched properties as part of the Route 1 canvass. It provides residents with details of the individuals currently registered at the address and encourages a response if there are changes required. The format of the CCA is prescribed 1 and you must also include certain information about each person currently registered at the address. You must pre-print: 2 full name and nationality for all registered electors, including attainers and those individuals who have had their application recently determined and will be added to the register by the next notice of alteration prior to the CCA being sent if practicable, whether each person listed on the form is aged 76 or over The CCA must also include: Any information about how residents can respond if any of the information is inaccurate or incomplete 3 A statement setting out that, where a response is provided because any of the information is incomplete or inaccurate, the responder will be required to declare that the information they provide is true 4 A statement on how the data will be used and processed 5 The CCA must not include: 6 the details of any Special Category electors details of any individual you are aware of but who has not yet successfully registered to vote, even if you think they may be resident and eligible to register We provide more guidance to help you with the production of the CCA in our forms and letters guidance . A CCA must be sent where: 7 you have previously sent an

e-communication for a Route 1 property and have not received a successful response from at least one person at the property to whom a e-communication was sent within a reasonable timeframe you have been unable to send an e-communication to at least one individual at a property you have decided not to use e-communications for a Route 1 property There is no requirement to receive a response to a CCA. 1. Regulation 32ZBG(1)(a) and (4)The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (E&W) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(6) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e)The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e)(i) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(c) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBE(6)(a)(i) and (ii) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) While households are obliged by law to let you know if any of the information contained on the CCA is inaccurate or incomplete, 1 there is no requirement for you to follow up non-responses to a CCA. You should, however, follow up on any CCAs that are returned by Royal Mail as undeliverable or return to sender. What response mechanisms are available for a CCA? It is up to you to determine which response mechanisms you will make available for individuals to use where they need to notify you of changes in a property after receiving a CCA. You must pre-print details of your chosen response mechanisms on the CCA. 2 The types of response mechanisms you may wish to provide are: Telephone, either to a call centre or directly to your team Web Text Email In person Post (note - there is no legal requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a CCA, reflecting that the form itself is not intended to be returned) When making a decision as to what response mechanisms to offer you will need to consider: If a response is returned by post that indicates changes to a property, how will you ensure that you are satisfied that the information provided is accurate to enable you to process the changes? The demographics of your canvass area – for example if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet the needs of your electors. Whether the response mechanisms you offer ensure that there is an accessible way for individuals to provide details of any changes to you. Whether the response mechanisms you offer will also signpost to potential new electors to register via the register to vote website How you will manage the processing of responses through different channels – for example, if you are considering using a channel you have not used previously, you will need to ensure you have the right processes in place to manage responses through this channel, including considering how it will interact with your EMS system. You should also consider any additional resource implications from utilising different response mechanisms. How should I process a response to a CCA? Where someone responds to a CCA, whether to correct inaccurate information or to add missing information, you will need to check that their response includes all the information you require to fully process the response . For example, has the response provided enough

information to start the ITR or review process? You can make additional enquiries if the response does not include enough information to close Route 1. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get the information needed to provide a successful response, you can close Route 1 and continue with the ITR or review process as appropriate for the property. If you are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response, you must transfer the property to Route 2 – the unmatched property route, as you can no longer be satisfied that there are no changes to the property. For example, a response may suggest that there are potential new electors at the property but may not give their names. If you are unable to obtain the names of the potential new electors having made additional enquiries, this would require you to move the property to Route 2. Further information about Route 2 can be found in our guidance for Route 2 - the unmatched property route . 1. Regulation 32ZBE(3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Route 2 – the unmatched property route Route 2 – the unmatched property route Route 2 – the unmatched property route When you have completed your data matching and allocated properties to canvass routes, you can begin to deliver your canvass plan. This section covers Route 2 and includes guidance on when you can use Route 2, the contact rules for Route 2, what canvass communications you can use and how to process responses. DLUHC Worksheet 4 - Route 2 canvass rules (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions pages 1 & 2 - ENG (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 6 - Route 2 process (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Route 2 – the unmatched property route Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? Route 2 is the unmatched property route. All properties by default start by being allocated to Route 2, and you can use Route 2 for any property at any time. To be able to canvass a property using Route 1 or Route 3 instead, specific criteria need to be met. What are the definitions of the different contact types for Route 2? The different contact types for Route 2 are defined as follows: Property contact – this is where either the prescribed Canvass Form or Canvass Communication B (CCB) is sent to the property, or a visit to the address is carried out. Your first contact attempt must be a property contact. Individual contact – this is where contact is made using contact details you hold for an individual who has been returned as a match 1 through national and/or any local data matching. You could use telephone, email, SMS or another electronic communication method (such as through internal customer accounts). Personal contact – this is where an attempt is made to make contact with either the household or individuals registered at the address who have been returned as a match, either by a visit to the property or a telephone call. What are the contact rules for Route 2? To meet the requirements of a Route 2 canvass there are a number of contact rules that you will need to follow: You must make a minimum of three contact attempts with the property and/or individuals at that property unless a response has been received 2 At least two contact attempts must be with the property, not with an individual One of the contact attempts must be via the use of the prescribed Canvass Form The first of the contact attempts must be a communication with the property (i.e. a Canvass Form, Canvass Communication B (CCB) or visit to the property), rather than with an individual At least one of the contact attempts must be a type of personal contact

(i.e. a visit or a phone call) If any of the criteria above are not met in your first three contact attempts, you must make a further contact attempt to meet any outstanding requirements from the rules and complete the Route 2 process. Using your local knowledge and experience, you may decide to use different communication methods with different properties at the different contact stages of Route 2. You should speak to your EMS provider to confirm how this could be managed in practice. You may also decide to send specific communications at different times, depending on how you wish to manage your resources. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has produced a table which sets out the possible options for how different contact types could be used to ensure the Route 2 requirements are met.

DLUHC Route 2 Permutations Table (PDF) 1. Regulations 32ZBD(4)(b) and (c) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 32ZBD(1) and (2) and (3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 22 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is Route 2 and when can I use it? Route 2 – the unmatched property route What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? The first contact attempt must be to a property, not an individual. 1 The communication options open to you for a property contact are: 2 Canvass Communication B (CCB) Canvass Form Visit to the property (i.e. a door knock) What is Canvass Communication B? While legislation does not provide detail about what the CCB 3 must include in the way that it does for the prescribed CCA (used for Route 1 properties) and Canvass Form, it does require you to use the version designed by the Electoral Commission. Canvass Communication B: Is a paper form Can be used as an alternative to the Canvass Form (notwithstanding that one of the three contact attempts required to complete Route 2 where no response is received must be by way of a Canvass Form) Does not require a pre-paid return envelope to be included Encourages a response to be made via alternative response channels to post – either online or through a telephone response service Requires a response even if no changes are required at the property Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe What is a Canvass Form? The legislation requires you to use the Canvass Form designed by the Electoral Commission. 4 The Canvass Form: Is a paper form Must be accompanied by a pre-paid return envelope 5 Must be delivered to a property at some point in the Route 2 contact process, unless a response has already been received from the property Encourages electors to respond with updated details of the residents at the property Requires a response even if no changes are required at the property Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe We provide more guidance to help you with production of the CCB and Canvass Form in our forms and letters guidance . 1. Regulation 32ZBD(1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBD (1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulations 32ZBD(1)(a) and (10) and 32ZBG(1)(a)(iii) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBG(1) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBD(9)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What constitutes a visit to a property? What constitutes a visit to a

property? What constitutes a visit to a property? A visit to a property: Involves a canvasser attempting to gather the information required by the Canvass Form or CCB in person from a resident of the property Does not require a response to be received on the doorstep, or the door to be answered Can involve hand delivering either a CCB or Canvass Form when no response is received on the doorstep, which would meet both the personal contact and the property contact requirements of a Route 2 canvass at the same time Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What constitutes a visit to a property? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? You will need to make a decision about how you will carry out the first contact attempt. Some questions for you to consider include: Will you send a paper communication and, if so, which one? A CCB may encourage individuals to use the alternative response channels you have in place. An increase in the use of these channels may result in cost savings and reduce the resources you need to provide for processing responses. The demographic of your electors and how likely they are to have access to the different response channels should also be taken into account. A prescribed Canvass Form may be familiar to electors, which may encourage individuals to respond at the first contact stage. Remember that even if you do not receive a response at the first contact stage, if a Canvass Form has been sent as part of the first contact attempt, you are not required to send a further Canvass Form at any subsequent contact attempt. How will you deliver the paper communication – by hand or by post? You will need to consider the costs and resource requirements associated with production and delivery for each option. If delivering by hand, will you combine it with a personal visit? Where you are delivering canvass communications by hand, you could attempt a personal visit to the property (door knock) first. This attempt to make personal contact with an individual at the property will meet the Route 2 requirement of making at least one personal contact. If there is no answer at the property, you could then deliver the canvass communication. You will need to ensure you identify, recruit and train sufficient canvassers for the geographical spread and number of properties requiring Route 2 canvass communications. Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the first contact attempt? What constitutes a visit to a property? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Beyond the requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a Canvass Form, it is up to you to determine which response channels you will make available for responding to canvass communications, whether a Canvass Form or CCB. You will need to reflect the available response options in your canvass communications at each stage of the Route 2 process. The type of response mechanisms you may wish to provide include: Telephone (either to a call centre or directly to your team) Online via an automated online response management system SMS Text message Email (either to a managed response service or directly to your team) In person Post (note - there is no legal requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a CCB, reflecting that the letter itself is not intended to be returned by post) When making a decision as to what response channels to offer you will need to consider: If a response is returned by post that indicates changes to a property, how will you ensure that you are satisfied that the information provided is accurate to enable you to process the changes? The demographics of your canvass area – for example if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider

which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet these needs. Whether the response mechanisms you offer ensure that there is an accessible way for individuals to provide details of any changes to you Whether the response mechanisms you offer will also signpost potential new electors to register via the register to vote website How you will manage the processing of responses through different channels – for example, if you are considering using a channel you have not used previously, you will need to ensure you have the right processes in place to manage responses through this channel, including considering how each channel will interact with your EMS. You should also consider any additional resource implications from utilising different response mechanisms. If you do not receive a response to a Route 2 communication, even where there are no changes to report, you must make further contact attempts until the minimum contact criteria has been met. 1

1. Regulation 32ZBD(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Which response channels can be used for Route 2? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? If you do not get a successful response within a reasonable period of time following the first contact, a second contact attempt must be made. 1 While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days and may, in some circumstances, be shorter (for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place). You can choose to make either: a property contact (i.e. Canvass Form, CCB, visit to the property), or an individual contact (i.e. email, SMS, telephone or any other electronic communication method), if you hold contact details for any matched individual(s) (aged 18 or over) at the property Electronic communications (e-communications) are designed to encourage a response to be made by channels other than by post. Your e-communication must inform the recipient that they are required to respond and should also: Provide the recipient with a deadline for response Include information on the response channels available to them and instructions on how to use them Include a link to the UK Government's registration website (gov.uk/register-to-vote) Inform the recipient how you obtained their contact details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of further e-communications Whilst the e-communication you send must inform the recipient of the requirement to respond, you need only receive a response from one recipient of an e-communication within a household to meet the response requirement for that property and prevent the need for follow up. You can find out more information on e-communications in the forms and letters guidance . 1. Regulation 32ZBD (2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 30 April 2020 Book traversal links for What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? You will need to make a decision about how to carry out the second contact attempt for all properties that have not supplied the information needed to provide a successful response to the first contact attempt. Some questions for you to consider include: Will you try another property contact with a paper canvass communication? If so, which one? If you used a CCB for the first contact attempt, you could decide to use a Canvass Form for the second attempt in order to meet the requirement for the Route 2 process that a Canvass Form be sent as one of the three

minimum contact attempts where no response is received. You could also consider combining the delivery of a paper communication with a personal contact to the property. Will you use individual contact methods? Things you should consider when deciding whether to use e-communications . Further advice on using e-communications, including what to do where more than one response is received and what to do with email bounce backs. How you will process responses received from different communication methods, including queries from electors? You will need to take steps to ensure that any communication channels you use are secure and that any actions taken comply with data protection legislation so that electors will know that individual canvass communications you send are genuine, and can be confident in responding accordingly. When using an individual contact method as part of Route 2, you must attempt to make contact with each matched individual at the property that you hold contact information for.

1 Using a mixture of e-communications You can choose to send a mixture of e-communications within a household. However, there is no requirement to use more than one type of e-communication to contact a property so, for example, if you hold email addresses for some individuals and mobile numbers for others, you could decide only to use e-mail contact, in which case you would only need to send the e-communication to those individuals with email addresses. However, if the contact information for one matched elector is the same as that for another individual in the same property and you have already tried to make contact using that information, for example, if more than one occupier has provided the same telephone number or email address, you do not need to make multiple contact attempts using the same details. If you decide to attempt to contact individuals by telephone it is important to ensure that a clear audit trail is kept to record that contact attempt - for example, the date and time the call was made, details of who was spoken to, and what (if any) details they confirm or provide. The response can be provided by anyone at the property: any individual, including those who were unmatched, may answer the call and provide a response.

1. Regulations 32ZBD(4)(b) and (c) and 32ZBD(8)(b) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content

at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? You must make a minimum of three contact attempts where you have not obtained a response.

1 In order to be able to close the Route 2 process in three contacts, you will need to ensure that the contact method you select for this stage will enable you to comply with the contact rules for Route 2 . In determining your contact options for the third contact attempt, you should therefore ask the following two questions: Have you already made an attempt to carry out the personal contact requirement of Route 2 – either by telephone call or household visit? Have you already sent the prescribed Canvass Form as part of a previous contact stage? It is important to remember that the sending of a CCB does not meet this requirement. If the answer to both the questions is yes, you can choose from any of the property or individual contact methods available to you (and outlined as part of the first and second contact stages). If the answer to either of these questions is no, and you wish to complete the Route 2 cycle with the minimum required contacts, you should undertake whichever of the outstanding requirements remain as part of this contact attempt. If you choose to use a contact method for your third attempt that would not enable you to meet the minimum contact requirements, you will need to make further attempts until the minimum contact requirements have been met or you have obtained a response.

1.

Regulation 32ZBD (3) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? Route 2 responses Route 2 responses Route 2 responses If you do not receive a response to a Route 2 communication, even where there are no changes to report, you must make further contact attempts until the minimum contact criteria has been met. 1 You will need to check that any response you receive includes all the information you require to fully process the response. For example, do you have enough information to start the ITR or review process? You only need to have received a response from one individual to be satisfied that you have received a response for that property. Where you receive a response which confirms that all the information you hold for a property is complete and accurate, once you have processed the response, you can close Route 2 for that property. Managing incomplete or conflicting responses Where you receive a response that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it. You can make additional enquiries if the response does not include enough information to close Route 2. For example, if you have been provided with the full name of a potential new elector, but not their nationality, you could make additional enquiries before sending them an ITR. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get the information needed to provide a successful response, you can close Route 2 and continue with the ITR or review process as appropriate for the property. If you receive conflicting information from a property you will need to decide what action to take. For example, if you receive a response from one elector confirming that all the information is correct and accurate and you receive a response from another indicating that someone needs to be removed from the register at the property, you will need to make further enquiries to confirm the details of the property. However, if you have received information to suggest a change may have occurred at a property, but are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response through the minimum Route 2 contact attempts, you should continue to make further contact attempts to obtain the missing information required to provide a successful response. Managing changes to a property Where you receive a response to a Route 2 communication that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it and you should then take action to process the information in the response as necessary. 1. Regulation 32ZBD(2) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Route 2 responses How should I carry out the third contact attempt? Route 3 - the defined property route Route 3 - the defined property route Route 3 - the defined property route As part of your planning for the canvass you should already have undertaken an exercise to identify Route 3 properties for your area and made initial contact with the responsible person for those properties. This section provides guidance on what communications you can use for this route and how to process responses for those properties you have allocated to Route 3. DLUHC Worksheet 7 - Preparations for Route 3 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 8 - Route 3 process - ENG (PDF) Last updated: 22 March 2022 Book traversal links for Route 3 - the defined property route Route 2 responses What is Route 3 and when can I use it? What is Route 3 and when can I use it? What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Route 3, the defined property route, allows you to obtain the information required by the canvass for certain types of properties from a responsible person, where one can be

identified. Route 3 properties must meet certain criteria set out in law. More information on the types of properties that can be considered for canvassing via Route 3, along with an explanation of who can be considered to be a responsible person, can be found in what are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? You may decide to use Route 3 for certain property types where you believe you are more likely to get a response via a responsible person 1 than an individual resident within the property. However, if in advance of starting the Route 3 process, the data match result for any property shows all individuals resident at that property as matched and you are satisfied that there are no changes at that property to capture, you could decide that it is more appropriate to canvass the property via Route 1 – the matched property route. Route 3 cannot be used where data match results or other information you hold shows that only individuals under the age of 18 are registered at the property. 2 1. Regulations 32ZBA(3) and (5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 32ZBA(6) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 6 August 2021 Book traversal links for What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Route 3 - the defined property route Developing positive relationships with responsible persons Developing positive relationships with responsible persons Developing positive relationships with responsible persons It is important that you develop and maintain positive relationships with responsible persons to ensure that your Route 3 canvass activity is successful. You should consider how best to contact responsible persons in your area to ensure that the information is received, understood and acted upon in a timely way. For example, you may wish to make an informal phone call to your contact at the beginning of your Route 3 canvass to highlight that a formal request for information is forthcoming. You should be prepared to offer personal visits to Route 3 properties early in the canvass process if you consider that face to face communication is most appropriate for dealing with concerns or questions. In some instances, this may be the best way of engaging with responsible persons and gathering the information required. Setting timescales You should ask for the information to be provided within a reasonable period of time. 1 When setting deadlines for the provision of the required information, you should ensure that they are realistic and achievable, and you should understand the different conditions in which your responsible persons are operating. For example, universities may not be able to provide information about students until the beginning of term. Once you have agreed your deadline for responses, you should communicate how you will issue reminders or follow up with visits as necessary, to help manage expectations. Issues with the supply of information Some responsible persons, for example care home staff, may have concerns about supplying information about residents who may not have the mental capacity to vote. Ensuring that your communications with them are clear and comprehensive will help provide them with the confidence they need to work with you effectively. You should point out that the purpose of the annual canvass is simply to capture information on who lives at the property to establish who should be invited to register, and identifying people who are no longer resident. We have produced guidance on supporting care home residents to register which you can refer to. Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) Occasionally, responsible persons may have concerns about supplying the required information because they have doubts about sharing personal data. In these cases you should remind them of your right to request information and reassure them that providing the required information does not breach data protection legislation.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations

2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 26 May 2021 Book traversal links for Developing positive relationships with responsible persons What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Right to request information Right to request information Right to request information As Electoral Registration Officer, you have a duty to maintain an accurate and complete register . UK law enables you to require anyone to provide information required for the purposes of your registration duties. In particular, Regulation 23 of the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 1 states that: A registration officer may require any person to give information required for the purposes of that officer's duties in maintaining registers of electors. The required information for the Route 3 canvass is set out in what should a Route 3 communication include. Under data protection principles the ERO is entitled to collect the required information as there is a lawful basis for its processing; the performance of a public task in the public interest, as provided for in electoral law. If any additional optional information, for example email addresses and phone numbers, is requested, this may be shared if a data sharing agreement is in place between you and the responsible person or organisation, and they have informed individuals about the potential sharing of such information through their privacy notice. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further guidance on complying with data protection legislation. There is a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum £1,000 for failing to provide the information required. 2 1. Regulation 23 (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23 (3) RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Right to request information Developing positive relationships with responsible persons What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Communication with any properties being canvassed via Route 3 must be with the responsible person that you have identified as part of your planning. There is no single prescribed communication method for Route 3 so you have the flexibility to decide how best to communicate with the responsible person for each of the Route 3 properties in your area. You can contact the responsible person for a Route 3 property by any method you think is appropriate including, but not limited to, the following: 1 Sending a paper communication - there is no prescribed form to be used for Route 3, but the prescribed canvass communications could be useful as templates for the information you need to collect Electronic communications – this could be by sending an email where you hold a contact email address for the responsible person Visiting the Route 3 property or the office of the responsible person By phone – you could decide to contact the responsible person by phone where you hold a contact number for them Whichever method you choose for communicating with the responsible person at each Route 3 property, you should ensure that you maintain a clear audit trail of contacts you have made. As a minimum you should record the steps that you have taken to gather the information required by the canvass from the responsible person, for example, by recording the date, time and name of person contacted and the details of any response obtained from the responsible person. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(6) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Right to request information What should a Route 3 communication include? What should a Route 3 communication include? What should a Route 3 communication include? As part of your planning for canvassing Route 3 properties you should have already considered when and how to make

initial contact with a responsible person for Route 3 properties. After this initial contact, you will need to contact them again when you are requesting the information required by the canvass and potentially to follow up with reminder requests. You should ensure that any follow up activity allows time to switch properties to a Route 2 canvass if necessary. As a minimum, any communication must ask the responsible person to provide the following for each person who is aged 16 or over, eligible to register to vote and resident at the property: 1 Full name Nationality An indication of whether that person is aged 76 or over You should also request the contact details (telephone number and/or email address) for each eligible resident for future contact purposes, but you should make it clear in any communication that the provision of these is optional. You should also consider how to communicate any relevant data protection information, such as a privacy statement setting out how you will process the information and what it will be used for. You can find more information on this in our guidance on Planning for canvass communications. What else should I consider when making contact with a responsible person? Whether you contact the responsible person by email, phone, letter or by making a personal visit, you should ensure that your communications are clear and complete. There is no prescribed form to be used for Route 3, but the prescribed Canvass Form could be useful as a template for the information you need to collect, and could be sent to the responsible person with a covering letter. Information received this way could be scanned and input into your EMS in a similar way to processing other forms. We have produced a resource to support you with key messaging for Route 3 communications. Key messaging for Route 3 communications You could also consider whether collecting the information in another format, for example a spreadsheet, would allow for the data to be imported directly into your EMS system. This could be particularly useful when asking for information from universities, for example, where there is a high volume of information to collect. As with your initial contact, you should ensure that you record the steps you have taken to make contact and request the information. Further guidance on how to communicate with Route 3 properties is given in what communications should be used for Route 3 properties . 1. Regulation 32ZBF(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 9 August 2023 Book traversal links for What should a Route 3 communication include? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Route 3 responses Route 3 responses Route 3 responses You will need to check that any response you receive provides the required information for each person aged 16 or over who is residing at the property and is eligible to register. 1 If you are satisfied that a response has been received from the responsible person for a property providing the information you need, the Route 3 process should be closed. Where you receive a response that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it and then you should take action to process the information in the response as necessary. Should I issue reminders for Route 3 properties? Where you have requested the required information from a responsible person for a Route 3 property and have not received a response you can, if you wish, remind them to respond. The reminder could be via a different communication method, or you could use the same communication method as your initial contact. Whatever action you take, you should record the steps that you have taken to remind the responsible person to respond, for example, by recording the date, time and communication method used. You will need to decide on the timing of any reminders. If you choose not to use a reminder or if a reminder has not led to the provision of the information from the responsible person within a

reasonable time period, the property must be transferred to Route 2 and a full Route 2 canvass of that property must be conducted. 2 1. Regulation 32ZBF(5) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBF(7) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 16 March 2021

[Book traversal links for Route 3 responses](#) What should a Route 3 communication include? Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons You should make regular contact with responsible persons both during and outside of the canvass as part of your work to maintain the register. Monitoring the progress of the Route 3 canvass You should remain in regular contact with responsible persons during the canvass to check their progress in providing the required information, assist with any queries they may have, and to avoid delaying you from taking the necessary subsequent actions. You should consider how you will monitor the progress of the Route 3 process as part of your planning for the annual canvass. When making contact with responsible persons, you should set timescales for receiving the required information. You should put a process in place to check that the information has been provided by your deadline. Your EMS system should be able to assist with this, and diaries, electronic calendars or project planning tools may also be useful. You should monitor responses from Route 3 properties during the canvass to identify which properties you: have received the required information from, so the Route 3 process can be closed have received some of the required information from, and need to ask for further information have received no information from within a reasonable period of time, and need to follow up with a reminder or personal visit may need to transfer to a Route 2 canvass Further guidance on dealing with canvass returns is found in Route 3 responses . Maintaining contact with responsible persons outside the canvass It is important to maintain contact with responsible persons throughout the year as part of your activity to maintain the register outside of the canvass period. As well as ensuring that your contact details for the responsible person at each Route 3 property remain correct in advance of the next canvass you should also ask them to provide updates on residents who have moved in or out during the year. This could be requested on a monthly basis, for example, or in the run up to an electoral event. This would be particularly useful for properties where there are likely to have been a number of changes outside of the canvass period due to the nature of the property, such as care homes or student accommodation. Keeping in touch will also help to build a long-term relationship with responsible persons, and help ensure that the provision of the information you need as part of the canvass takes place as smoothly as possible. Our guidance on public engagement and registration planning includes further advice on planning for registration outside the canvass, including what records you can inspect throughout the year to identify potential new electors. The section on maintaining the register throughout the year contains additional guidance on registration activity outside the canvass, for example through sending household notification letters or discretionary communications . Last updated: 27 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons](#)

[Route 3 responses](#) [Processing canvass responses](#) [Processing canvass responses](#) This section of the guidance covers how to process canvass responses. Your registration plans should address how you will deal with each type of canvass response and any follow-up activity that you will need to take. Responses to canvass communications will fall into the following broad categories: all of the information is complete and accurate provides new information regarding who is resident at the property provides

new information regarding changes required to an elector's details provides new information indicating an existing elector is no longer resident at the property a combination of the above information that the property has no residents who are eligible to be registered Last updated: 11 June 2020 Book traversal links for Processing canvass responses Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Canvass response indicates all of the information is complete and accurate You should record that a response has been received to stop reminders from being sent and close the canvass route for the property. Canvass response indicates an existing elector is no longer resident at the property You must not automatically delete the elector from the register. You must instead either obtain a second source of evidence or conduct a registration review before you can remove the elector. You can find more information on both in our guidance - deleting an elector from the register Canvass response indicates an existing elector is now deceased You may automatically delete the elector from the register if a response indicates that an elector is deceased, and you are satisfied that the information is correct. Canvass response indicates there are new resident(s) at the property You must invite potential eligible electors to register within 28 calendar days of receipt unless, in the meantime, they have made an application to register. You do not need to know the full or exact name of a potential elector in order to give them an invitation to register. You do, however, need to have enough information about their name to be able to identify them as an individual. You can find more information in our guidance - inviting individuals to register to vote Canvass response indicates an elector's name has changed You should send a change of name form to the elector. If an elector has changed their name they must complete a change of name form and provide supporting evidence of the change for the electoral register to be updated. You can find more information in our guidance - processing a change to an elector's name Canvass response indicates an elector's nationality has changed You should send an invitation to register to an elector whose nationality has changed. An elector who was previously registered only in the register of local government electors must make a new application if they become a British citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of another Commonwealth country, so that they can be added to the register of UK Parliamentary electors. The new application will need to go through the application, verification and determination process again. You can find more information in our guidance - processing a change to an elector's nationality Canvass response indicates a change to the 76 or over indicator You should add a relevant marker on the register to any individual if a response to a canvass communication indicates that they are (or are not) aged 76 or over Canvass response indicates a change to an elector's open (edited) register preference Where the canvass response clearly indicates that a person wishes to opt out of the open register (for example, if only one elector resides at the address and they have indicated they wish to be removed from the open register), you should treat the canvass response as a notice under Article 21 of the GDPR and amend their open register preference in line with their request. If you are in any doubt as to whether the request comes from an individual elector (for example, if there are multiple electors at the address) or as to their intentions, you should contact the elector(s) to explain what the process is for changing their open register preference, and ask for confirmation before processing the request. This includes if you receive a response from one person that seems to make a request on

behalf of everyone listed on the form. You can find more information in our guidance – processing a change to an elector’s open register preference Last updated: 22 March 2022 Book traversal links for What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Processing canvass responses What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? With the exception of a Canvass Communication A, a person who has received a canvass communication must provide the information that it requires to the ERO, but there is no requirement for the form itself to be returned. 1 There is a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum of £1,000 for failing to provide the information required to the ERO. 2 The penalty for providing false information to an ERO is up to six months imprisonment or an unlimited fine. 3 1. Regulation 23(1) 2001 The Representation of the people regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23(3) 2001 The Representation of the people regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sections 13D(6) The Representation of the people act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 11 June 2020 Book traversal links for What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Elections during the annual canvass Elections during the annual canvass Elections during the annual canvass This section of the guidance covers the areas you will need to consider and decisions you will need to take in relation to both the delivery of the canvass and the management of electoral registration for the poll, if an election is held during the canvass period. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Elections during the annual canvass What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? An election during the canvass period may reduce the amount of time you have for follow-up activities for both canvass communications and ITRs. Your canvass plan and risk register should include details of how you will redeploy resources to target registration in any areas in which an election takes place. If any of the elections listed below, including general or by elections, are held between 1 July and 1 December, you will need to make a decision whether to delay publication of the revised register and, if so, by how much. In these circumstances publication of the revised register can be postponed up to 1 February the following year. UK Parliamentary elections Local government – unitary, county, county borough, district, metropolitan borough, London borough and directly elected mayoral elections Local government – parish elections Greater London Authority elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections Neighbourhood planning referendums The impact of any election may depend on which stage of the canvass you are at and how many polling districts are affected by the election. You will need to be satisfied that you will have sufficient time to take all necessary steps to ensure your registers are as accurate and complete as possible by the time of publication. In reaching your decision you should consider the impact that postponing the publication of the revised register may have on canvass processes. For example, where publication of the revised register is postponed, personal canvassing may take place later in the year where reduced daylight hours may impact on the willingness of canvassers to knock on, and non-

responders to open, their doors. Inclement weather may also impact a later canvass, and response rates may reduce over the festive period. Where you decide to postpone publication due to an election, you should take steps to make local political parties and elected representatives aware of the changed register publication date at an early stage. As detailed in the guidance for monthly notices of alteration during the canvass period, there is no requirement to publish a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but you may do so if you wish. Therefore if publication of the revised register has been postponed to, for example, 1 February, you will publish a monthly notice of alteration in October and November; you are not required to publish one in December or January, but you may do so if you wish. Last updated: 7 November 2022

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass?](#) Elections during the annual canvass How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? If an election is to be held during the canvass, your focus will need to be on any new potential electors identified who have not yet registered. You should consider how best to use your resources to target these individuals and to chase up responses to any Route 2 or 3 canvass communications, so that as many eligible electors as possible are registered in time for the election. Your plan should address such things as: what canvassers will have to do differently how canvass staff will be informed of an election and given their revised instructions what you will do to maximise returns in the affected area(s) to reduce potential disenfranchisement how you will identify and prioritise the processing of canvass communications and ITRs for the affected area(s) how the canvass will resume after the election when you will publish the revised register and what factors will be considered in making the decision how you will communicate decisions to local political parties, elected representatives and other interested individuals and groups Printing polling districts on canvass communications and ITRs will enable you to quickly identify and prioritise these forms where an election is in only part of the registration area. You can include other registration-related information in the same envelope as an ITR, such as information about the registration deadline for a forthcoming poll. If the election affects the whole of the registration area, it will be particularly important that your resources are targeted to maximise the number of eligible electors registered in time to participate in the election. Every effort should be made to conclude all visits well in advance of the registration deadline, but, given the time constraints and depending on the timing of the election, this might not always be feasible. You should use local data records and your knowledge about your local area to identify any new electors, and any properties where there are likely to have been changes. These could then be prioritised for personal visits. You could also consider amending your approach to follow up activities for any non-responding Route 2 or Route 3 properties in the area affected by the election. For example, you might choose to send additional e-comms reminders or make personal contact by phone instead of face to face visit where possible. The local authority that appointed you as ERO must, by law, provide you with the resources you need to discharge your statutory functions . Use local media and public awareness exercises to set out to residents how they can register to vote in time to be included on the register for use at the election. In the event of any UK-wide poll during the canvass, it will be important to link your local messaging with any communication activity by the Commission in order to maximise its impact. Where the election

crosses local council boundaries, you should liaise with the ERO in the other local council(s) to ensure a consistent approach and messaging across the electoral area. How can I use my canvassers to target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? Your plans should be flexible enough to allow you to re-allocate staff resources to ensure as many responses as possible are collected and returned to the electoral registration office from the relevant area(s) in time to be processed and determined for the final election notice of alteration. As a minimum, canvassers working in the area(s) affected by an election should return any voter registration forms that they have collected as soon as possible, and by the registration application deadline for that election. You should provide details in instructions to canvassers on how often forms should be returned to the registration office if an election occurs. Registration application forms collected by canvassers by the registration deadline, are deemed to have met the registration deadline even if not brought to the office of the Electoral Registration Officer until after the registration deadline. Canvassing only needs to pause in the area(s) affected by the election. Canvassers in the electoral area(s) affected by the election should, if they are not already, encourage occupiers who are not registered to do so online (or by telephone if you offer this service), and highlight the registration application deadline. They could have blank registration forms available for potential electors to complete where they do not have access to the internet. To ensure that only forms received before the registration deadline will be processed canvassers should be instructed to suspend personal visits by the end of the twelfth day before the poll. Last updated: 2 December 2020 Book traversal links for How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? The register to be used for an election taking place during the canvass will be the revised register published on the 1 December the previous year, and amended by subsequent monthly and election notices of alteration. In the area where any election is taking place, you must publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 1 Subscribers to a candidate's nomination must appear as electors on the register which is in force on the last day for publication of the notice of election for the election taking place. 1. Section 13AB and 13B RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? Publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register This section of the guidance covers the practical management of the publication of the revised register following the canvass, including timing, content and layout of the register, and guidance on access and supply to the register post publication. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Publication of the revised register Which register should I use for an election taking place during the canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? Unless there has been an election during the canvass you must publish the revised register by 1 December. 1 Dies non do not apply to the requirement to publish by 1 December which means you can publish the register on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday if you choose to do so.

You also have discretion to publish before this date, however doing so will have an impact on the cut off dates for registration applications. Publishing on 1 December will help to ensure that the revised register is as accurate and complete as it can be and will maximise opportunities for potential electors to be included. Publishing in November means the revised register would not reflect any new electors who had applied to register after 23 October, nor would it reflect any amendments or deletions determined after 31 October. While the registration process continues throughout the year, the publication of the revised register is a key milestone. Whenever you decide to publish, you should be able to explain the reasons for your decision. See the table below.

Application and determination deadlines that apply to the publication of the revised register	Event Dates if the revised register is published on 1 December	Dates if the register is published in November	Last day for receipt of new applications to register
22 November 2023	23 October 2023 (6 working days before the determination deadline)	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Anonymous registration application and determination deadline	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)	Deadline for amendments to and removal of register entries
30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)	Publication By	1 December 2023

Any date during November

Monthly notices of alteration

Updates to the register must be published on the first working day of each month, however you are not required to issue a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but may do so if you wish. If the register is published in November this means you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in September, October and November. If it is published in December, you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in October, November and December.

1. Section 13(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 1 June 2023

Book traversal links for When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass?

Publication of the revised register

What does the revised register contain when published?

What does the revised register contain when published?

What does the revised register contain when published?

The full register

You must publish a full register of electors combined as far as possible into one register for all election types, and containing the appropriate franchise markers. The format of the register is not prescribed but must contain, with the exception of certain special category electors, the name, address and elector number of every eligible elector whose application to register has been determined by the relevant deadline.

1 Where an individual will only attain voting age at some point during the period of 12 months following the 1 December, the elector's entry in the register must give the date on which they will attain the age of 18 and until that date the individual shall not be treated as an elector for any purpose unless an election takes place on or after the date given as being the date the individual turns 18.

2 Your revised register must include all additions and amendments to the register which you have determined by the relevant deadline.

3 Only when an application has been made and successfully determined can an individual be added to the register.

Information provided in response to a canvass communication and any names identified through checking local records cannot be treated as an application to register or be added to the register. You should also ensure you action any deletions that you have determined since the publication of the last notice of alteration in the revised register. The edited

register An elector's name and address will be included in the edited register unless they ask for them to be removed. You must publish a revised edited register which is an exact copy of the full register, but excludes those who have opted out of their details appearing, at the same time as you publish the revised full register. 4 In addition you must continue to publish the edited register on the first working day of every month. This duty applies all year, including during the canvass period, and any requests from existing electors to change their opt-out status will need to be reflected. However, if you choose not to publish notices of alteration in the 2 months preceding the publication of the full register following the annual canvass, any monthly revised edited register must not include or remove any details of any electors that are not already existing electors previously included on the full register or any alteration notice. 5 You are required to publish a fully integrated updated version of the edited register rather than a notice setting out the changes. 6 However, you do not have to print a full edited register every month, only if you are producing one for somebody who has requested it. For more information see our guidance on processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register preference .

Describing the full and edited registers The terms 'full register' and 'edited register' are the technical terms used in the legislation. The terms 'electoral register' and 'open register' have to be used to describe the full and edited register to members of the public, to make it easier to understand the purpose of each register and how it is used. In specific instances where we mention the edited register in the guidance in this context, we refer to the edited register as the 'open register'. Otherwise we use the term 'edited register'.

List of overseas electors You must keep a separate list or lists of overseas electors. 7 You must publish this and make it available for inspection and supply when you publish the revised register. 8 The list must be compiled in alphabetical order by surname within each constituency or part of a constituency within your area. 9 It must specify both the qualifying address and the full address outside the UK of each overseas elector.

1. Section 9(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 4(5) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section 13(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulation 93(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 93(2) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Regulation 93 RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) 7. Regulation 45(1) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 7](#) 8. Regulation 45(3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 8](#) 9. Regulation 45(2) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 9](#)

Last updated: 2 December 2020

Book traversal links for What does the revised register contain when published?

When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass?

Format of the revised register

Format of the revised register

Format of the revised register

When creating the layout of the register you must:

- divide the register into polling districts
- give each polling district a unique set of letters
- 1 give a number to each elector
- 2 The elector numbers should be allocated sequentially in each part of the register. The polling district letters and the number together are known as the elector number. We have produced separate guidance on undertaking reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. Entries in the register for each ordinary elector must be arranged in street order and may only be arranged in alphabetical order by name or a mix of the two where it is not reasonably practicable to list them in street order.

3 **Franchise markers** Some electors may only vote in certain types of elections and their names must be prefixed in the register with certain letters:

- 4 **Letter E** Elector E is an overseas elector who is only entitled to

vote at UK Parliamentary elections. G is a citizen of a member state of the European Union (except a Commonwealth country or the Republic of Ireland) who is only entitled to vote at local government elections. L is a peer eligible to vote in the House of Lords who is entitled to vote at local government elections. Attainers Some electors added to the register will be known as attainers. These electors are individuals who have not yet reached voting age but will do so before the next expected publication of the full register. A date will be given after these electors' names to indicate when they will have attained the age where they can vote. Other electors There must be a section after the ordinary electors in any polling district marked 'other electors', containing any special category electors who are not listed in the main body of the register listed by surname in alphabetical order without an address, followed by any anonymously registered electors. 5 Our guidance on special category electors sets out in detail how special category electors should be included on the register. We have produced a resource showing an example of how the register should be formatted. Example of the formatting for a sample electoral register in England 1. Regulations 38 and 39 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 9(3) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulations 41(1) and (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 42 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 41(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 13 July 2023 Book traversal links for Format of the revised register What does the revised register contain when published? Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register could prompt enquiries to you, which you should be prepared to respond to. You should consult with your local authority press or communications teams if you haven't already done so to ensure that you are able to react quickly to any local stories that may emerge, particularly if there has already been local coverage on any electoral registration issues in your area. You should consider issuing a press release announcing the total number of people registered in your area, highlighting the work you have done and any additional work you have planned to get people registered. You should point out that there is still an opportunity to register in time for the next scheduled elections, using it as a call to action for anyone in your area who is not yet registered to do so. Given the continued media focus on the registration rates of students and attainers, you might find it helpful to highlight the work you are doing with schools, colleges, universities or any relevant voluntary groups to encourage registration. Your press team can get further advice by contacting the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, or by emailing press@electoralcommission.org.uk . Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Format of the revised register What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities may request management information each year following the annual canvass; the required information may also change from year to year, however your EMS should be able to produce reports to support these requests. Electoral Commission Canvass Data Collection Each year the Electoral Commission will request data following the publication of the annual register. The data to be provided will be contained in reports which will be

generated fully populated in your EMS system. The Research Team at the Commission will work with your EMS provider to specify the reports ahead of the data collection and your EMS supplier should let you know how to generate the correct report from the system. Once you have generated the report in your EMS system and reviewed the data, please submit it to CanvassData@electoralcommission.org.uk as soon as possible after the publication of the annual revised register. Deadlines for submission and further information will be communicated via an EA bulletin. Performance standards While we will still want to collect data from all EROs to help us understand the state of the electoral registers across Great Britain, we are not proposing that EROs would routinely collate and provide us with all the information listed within the standards. You should however use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities to identify what works and what doesn't and where improvements can be made. The framework and supporting tools and templates are designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and what is not working so well.

RPF 29 Each year the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will issue an RPF29 form to EROs which you are required to supply to the Secretary of State setting out certain prescribed information relating to the revised register. 1 You are required to submit this information as soon as possible after publication of the revised register. 2 1. Regulation 44 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 44(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 16 March 2022

Book traversal links for What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? Communication activity following the publication of the revised register Who can be supplied with the register? Who can be supplied with the register? Who can be supplied with the register? Access to and supply of the full electoral register is limited to those prescribed in legislation. You have a duty to supply free copies of the register of electors to various organisations and individuals, and legislation imposes restrictions on how this is done. In some cases, registers have to be supplied on publication and in others the register is only supplied on request. The timing of receipt of the register is particularly important to some recipients. For example, political parties need the electoral register to fulfil their statutory obligations in relation to the checking of donations, in addition to using it for campaigning purposes. It is important that the register is supplied promptly and you should, therefore, supply the register to anyone who is entitled to receive it on publication as soon as possible and in any case, within 5 working days. You should ensure that every person/organisation that receives the register, whether on publication, by sale, or on request, is aware that: they must only use the register for the permitted purpose(s) specified in the Regulations once the purpose for which the register has been supplied has expired, they must securely destroy the register they understand the penalty for misuse of the register You should not provide any advice in response to questions about whether a recipient's proposed usage of register data is in accordance with the law. It is for the recipient of the register to be satisfied that their use of the register is in accordance with what the law sets out. If they are not certain they should speak to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or seek their own legal advice. We have made cover sheets available, which set out how the register may be used and the penalty for misuse, for the sale and supply on request and inspection of the electoral register. Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection (DOC) We have also

produced a list of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register. List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) There are different provisions that apply in respect of the edited register and the marked register. To demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner you should maintain records of every person and organisation you supply with the register. We have produced further detailed guidance on access and supply of the electoral register throughout the year. Last updated: 3 December 2020 Book traversal links for Who can be supplied with the register? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents The elector number of an anonymous elector may change when you republish the electoral register following the conclusion of the annual canvass. If an anonymous elector's electoral number has changed and they have an Anonymous Elector's Document, you must notify them that their electoral number has changed, that their Anonymous Elector's Document is no longer valid and that you will issue them with a new Anonymous Elector's Document. For more information see our guidance on Replacement of an Anonymous Elector's Document where the elector number has changed . Last updated: 8 February 2023 Book traversal links for Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Who can be supplied with the register? Elections immediately following the canvass Elections immediately following the canvass Elections immediately following the canvass This section of the guidance covers considerations for an election held in December following the conclusion of the canvass and the publication of the revised register. It includes guidance on which register you should use for a December election and how this will impact on candidates and political parties and on the production of poll cards. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Elections immediately following the canvass Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? There is no provision to postpone publication of the revised register as a result of an election that will take place after the 1 December. The revised register has immediate effect on publication for all elections, this is unlike a notice of alteration which only has effect at an election if published on or before the fifth working day before the poll. Once you have published the revised register it will be used for polling purposes for any election with a polling day on or after the date of publication, although you are also required to publish two interim election notices of alteration and a final notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 1 The nomination of candidates will be based on the register in force on the last date for publication of the notice of election. 1. Sections 13AB and 13B Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Elections immediately following the canvass What do I need to consider for a December election? What do I need to consider for a December election? What do I need to consider for a December election? For any election held in December, the notice of election will be published before the deadline for publishing the revised register. Impact on candidates and political parties The nomination of candidates is based on the register in force on

the last date for publication of the notice of election. If you have published your revised register by the last date for publication of the notice of election, this will be the register candidates and agents need to use for collecting subscribers. If not, it will be your last published notice of alteration. You should ensure that candidates and their agents are aware of which register to use when collecting subscribers for the purpose of completing their nomination papers. It is particularly important that candidates and parties who have requested a copy of the revised register and election notices of alteration are provided with copies as soon as possible after publication. This will assist candidates and political parties to engage with electors and campaign effectively where the publication of the revised register takes place during an election period. Poll cards Returning Officers (ROs) must send poll cards to electors entitled to vote at the election as soon as practicable after publication of the notice of election. You may wish to take this into consideration when deciding whether or not to publish the monthly notices of alteration during the annual canvass period. If you are the ERO for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, you should liaise with the other ERO(s) and the (A)RO in reaching your decision. Choosing to publish these additional notices may help to mitigate any renumbering issues caused by the publication of revised registers after poll cards and postal votes have been issued. If you choose not to publish the monthly notices of alteration during the canvass period, poll cards sent before the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration will be based on data which would not reflect any additions or deletions determined after the deadline for the September monthly update. In these circumstances there is an argument that the earliest point it would be practicable to issue poll cards would be immediately following the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration so that the data used reflects additions and deletions determined during the canvass period. If you are not also the RO, you should work with them to put mechanisms in place to ensure that poll cards can be sent to electors as soon as possible after the first interim notice has been published. See our guidance on election notices of alteration and the deadlines for applications to be made for inclusion on those notices. ROs need to make clear in polling station staff training that the elector numbers on poll cards may be different to the numbers allocated to electors when the register is revised. They should explain that this does not affect a person's entitlement to vote and that they should not refer to the elector number printed on the poll card when marking the register and completing the corresponding number list. Instead, when the elector provides confirmation of their name and address, use the number as it appears against the elector's details in the polling station register for completing the corresponding number list. Polling station staff should be briefed so they are able to respond to any queries from electors who may question why the number being read out and written on the corresponding number list is different to the one which is printed on their poll card. Last updated: 3 December 2020

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider for a December election?](#)
[Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register?](#)
[What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register?](#)
[What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register?](#)
[What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register?](#)
[In some cases an election in early December will require the final election notice of alteration to be published before the revised register. Where this is the case the registration](#)

application deadline will be the deadline for applications for inclusion on the revised register. This is because the revised register has immediate effect and will apply to any poll on or after publication. While the registration application deadline for inclusion on the final election notice of alteration will be twelve working days before the poll, where the revised register is published after the final election notice of alteration potential new electors will be able to submit a registration application until the deadline for inclusion on the revised register (six working days before the determination deadline). Provided their application is determined by the determination deadline for the revised register (which is the working day before publication) they will be entitled to vote in the poll. However, potential new electors wishing to vote by post will need to have applied to be registered by the postal vote application deadline which is 5pm eleven working days before the poll as they must state an address at which they are or have applied to be registered in their postal vote application. Potential new electors who wish to vote by proxy will have the same registration application deadline as those voting in person. This is because the deadline for registration applications to be made in time to be included on the 1 December register will be before the ordinary proxy application deadline (5pm six working days before the poll). These circumstances will present a number of administrative challenges for EROs and ROs. If you are not also the RO, you will need to liaise with them to: discuss any practical implications, including the timely transfer of data supply candidates and agents with copies of relevant electoral registers for nomination and campaigning purposes in a timely way make arrangements to supply the first interim notice of alteration and any subsequent updates to candidates and agents as soon as possible once published produce polling station registers after publication of the revised register make arrangements for registers to be printed and collated in a limited time - ROs will need to consider how to manage the preparation of ballot boxes to facilitate this The specific challenges and solutions will vary depending on local circumstances. If you would like any further guidance or would like to discuss your particular situation, please contact your local Commission team . Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register? What do I need to consider for a December election? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? As part of your planning for delivery of the canvass , you will have established how you will evaluate the overall success of the canvass to inform your plans for future canvasses. Over time, your evaluation and refinement of your plans should ensure that your canvass processes make the best use of resources, are successful in encouraging households and individuals to take the necessary action, provide the best service for electors and reduce the administrative burden on your service. Your evaluation should utilise the metrics available to you via your EMS system. The performance standards for EROs , and the tools and templates available to support them, will assist you in understanding the impact of your activities, help identify where improvements can be made and support you to report on your own performance locally. You should use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities, both throughout and at the end of the canvass, to identify what works and what doesn't and where you can make improvements. The framework is designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and where improvements could be made. Last updated: 3 December 2020 Book traversal

links for How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? Electoral Registration Officers must consider data protection issues in many aspects of their work. Our guidance covers your role as a data controller, how you should protect the personal data you hold, how long you should retain it for, and where you can find more information and guidance on data protection legislation. Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? Who is a data controller? Who is a data controller? Who is a data controller? As ERO, you are a data controller with a statutory duty to process certain personal data to maintain the electoral register. Under data protection legislation you need to be able to demonstrate that you comply with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and transparently. Advice from the ICO is that all data controllers need to ensure that they are registered with the ICO. This means that EROs and ROs must be registered separately to their council. Under the data protection legislation, a public authority must appoint a data protection officer (DPO) to advise on data protection issues. As ERO or RO, you are not included in the definition of a public authority contained in Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and are not required to appoint a DPO for the conduct of your duties. However, your appointing council must have a DPO in place and you should liaise with them over good practice in relation to data protection. A key element of data protection legislation is the increased focus on accountability and transparency when processing personal data. You must be able to demonstrate that you comply with your obligations under data protection legislation. The key to achieving this is to have and maintain written plans and records to provide an audit trail. Our resource on data protection legislation details how you can put measures in place to meet the requirement to demonstrate compliance and to ensure that data protection is integral to all you do. You need to ensure that you are complying with your responsibilities under data protection legislation. In particular, you should ensure that you: are registered with the ICO as a data controller have appropriate privacy notices in place are retaining documents in accordance with your document retention policy ensure that data protection is integral to any contracts where personal data is processed have a policy document in place to process special categories of personal data maintain records and plans to demonstrate that you are processing personal data lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in your plans and risk register, highlight the safeguards you have in place to avoid a personal data breach Guidance on demonstrating compliance with data protection legislation is contained throughout our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs . Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Who is a data controller? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? You will need to check that appropriate security measures are in place to protect personal data. You should review your processes with your data protection officer and information management/IT departments to help identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether

on paper or stored electronically. You need to maintain a document retention policy, which will help demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Your document retention policy should set out the following for all documents you receive and hold: whether the document contains personal data the lawful basis on which any personal data was collected your retention period your rationale for the retention period (which might relate to a requirement in electoral law) Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further guidance on the retention and storage of documents, including what information your document retention policy should contain. You will be collecting personal data from residents such as date of birth, nationality and their National Insurance Number. Your council will have corporate standards and processes for handling data and security. You should seek advice from your Data Protection Officer and IT about maintaining effective data handling. They will be able to help you identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper forms or stored electronically on your systems. You will need to ensure that your procedures and storage arrangements are compliant with data protection legislation. Good data handling practices need to be part of your day-to-day business processes. For example, you will need to keep under review how you are managing the security of personal data. Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? Who is a data controller? What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers? What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers Where a response to a canvass communication contains individuals' email addresses and/or telephone numbers you should ensure that these are recorded, in accordance with data protection legislation requirements, and that this information is only used for the purpose for which it was collected. If you have existing records of email addresses or phone numbers, at the time that you next use that information, you should ensure the data subject is aware of how you will continue to process this data such by: explaining the data subjects right to object to further processing providing a link to your privacy notice including an unsubscribe option More information on the provision of an unsubscribe option can be found in our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs . Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? You can find guidance on data protection on the Information Commissioner's website , or if you have any specific questions you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office directly. The Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF Tel: 0303 123 1113 Fax: 01625 524510 Email: casework@ico.org.uk The Local Government Association/ SOCITM have also produced guidance for local authorities on data handling (although it should be noted that the ERO is a separate data controller from the local authority). It recommends that you consider the following factors when developing your approach to data handling: Policy: comprehensive policies (including business continuity, and home and mobile working) should form the information governance regime. The policies should be monitored and audited to ensure they are being effectively enacted People: including staff awareness and training, users' access, and mechanisms for managing information risks Places: including risk assessments, security of buildings and premises, the

disposal of information, and use of removable media Processes: including who can access data, system security, transfer of data, and supplier and contractor data processes Procedures: including risk reporting, auditing procedures, and documented policies and procedures Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers? Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Forms and letters guidance Anonymous registration: Supporting survivors of domestic abuse to register to vote - England (PDF) Canvass route descriptions and criteria (PDF) Canvasser recruitment and training checklist (DOC) Canvasser training template (PPT) Canvasser Quiz (DOC) Considerations for the 2020 canvass - ENG (DOC) Doorstep script for canvassers (DOC) FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) Telephone script for canvassers (DOC) Template registration plan (XLS) Template risk and issues register (XLS) Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Access to New British Citizen Data Case Study - Canvass Chronicle 25 June DLUHC - National Data Matching Instructions - May 2020 (PDF) DLUHC - Data test guidance Part I and annexes (PDF) DLUHC Testing local data guidance Part II and annexes (PDF) DLUHC - Testing national data guidance Part III (PDF) DLUHC Canvass reform worksheets contents page (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - ENG (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - ENG Print version page 1 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - ENG Print version page 2 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 2 - Data matching empty properties and exclusions - ENG (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 4 - Route 2 canvass rules (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions pages 1 & 2 - ENG (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions - ENG Print version page 1 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions - ENG Print version page 2 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Route 2 Permutations Table (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 6 - Route 2 process (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 7 - Preparations for Route 3 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 8 - Route 3 process - ENG (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 9 - Switching Routes (PDF) DLUHC helpsheet - Recent additions and determined electors DLUHC - Key Changes to EMS - Brief Guide (DOC) DLUHC - Notify Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May Edition (DOC) DLUHC - Telephone Canvassing Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May Edition (DOC) Information sheet for elected members and senior leaders: The Annual Canvass and Canvass Reform (DOC) Last updated: 15 August 2022 Book traversal links for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Resources for Electoral Registration Officers

Guidance for (Acting) Returning Officers administering a UK Parliamentary election in Great Britain

Guidance for (Acting) Returning Officers administering a UK Parliamentary election in Great Britain

The following guidance has been produced to support (Acting) Returning Officers ((A)ROs) in Great Britain in planning for and delivering a UK Parliamentary election. It has been written to cover both general and by-elections. It has been developed in close consultation with colleagues across the electoral community including the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the Association of s (AEA), the UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board (ECAB), the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG), the Electoral Management Board of Scotland (EMB), and the Welsh Electoral Practitioners Working Group (WEPWG). It reflects the (A)RO's legal obligations and what we, and colleagues across the electoral community, believe that (A)ROs should expect of their staff in preparing for and delivering UK Parliamentary elections. At a UK Parliamentary election in England and Wales the administration of the election is the responsibility of the (A)RO, who is normally a senior officer of the local authority.

1 In Scotland, there is no office of (A)RO. Instead, the election is administered by the RO, who is the local government RO or, in the case of a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, the local government RO listed in an Order made by the Secretary of State.

2 Throughout our guidance for elections across Great Britain we use the term (Acting) Returning Officer or (A)RO to refer to the duties normally undertaken by the Acting Returning Officer in England and Wales, and by the Returning Officer in Scotland.

How to use the guidance

The guidance is directed towards the (A)RO and the duties they carry out. As these duties may, in practice, be carried out by deputies and/or appointed staff, we use the term 'you' throughout this guidance to mean the (A)RO and whoever is carrying out the (A)RO's functions on their behalf. Throughout this guidance we use 'must' to refer to a specific legal requirement and 'may / should' for recommended practice. Where the guidance is different for by-elections or where the (A)RO needs to consider cross-boundary scenarios, the information will be contained in an expanding section. This means that next to the relevant heading there is an icon with a + which will expand to show the relevant guidance. Guidance to support ROs with other types of election is also available. You can also access Guidance for Candidates and Agents . To help you use this guidance we have produced a Q&A document that should answer any initial queries you may have.

Questions and answers document for the new style RO guidance

Book traversal links for Guidance for (Acting) Returning Officers administering a UK Parliamentary election in Great Britain

Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer 1. Section 28 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. S. 25 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer

This section of the guidance covers the appointment of the Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning officer as well as the roles and responsibilities for those appointed to this post. It also contains guidance on the consequences of the breach of official duty and the legislative powers available to the (A)RO to use in certain circumstances. Additionally, this section also contains guidance on the skills and knowledge that is expected to be required of an (A)RO. Finally, it provides a detailed list of the relevant legislation that the guidance has been written to reflect, and which an (A)RO should be familiar with.

Last updated: 30 May 2023

Book traversal links for Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer

Guidance for (Acting) Returning Officers administering a UK Parliamentary election in Great Britain

Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer appointment

Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer appointment

England and Wales

At a UK

Parliamentary election in England and Wales, the Returning Officer (RO) is a largely ceremonial position. Most duties of the RO are discharged by the (Acting) Returning Officer ((A)RO) who is normally a senior officer of the local authority. Appointment of the RO In a borough constituency contained in a district, the mayor or chairman of the local authority is the RO. In a county constituency, the RO is the Sheriff of the County. In areas where the constituency overlaps county or district borders, the RO is designated by the Secretary of State. See below for an explanation of the two types of constituencies.

- 1 Duties of the RO It is for the RO to receive the writ directing that a UK Parliamentary election is to be held. However, an RO can appoint a deputy for the purposes of receiving the writ.
- 2 The RO may also reserve for themselves the duties in connection with endorsing and returning the writ, as well as declaring and giving public notice of the result. In that case, they must give written notice to you, as the (A)RO. The notice must be given in writing by the day after the receipt of the writ and needs to specify which duties the RO wishes to reserve for themselves.
- 3 The notice is not prescribed. You should contact the RO at an early stage in your planning to ensure they are aware of their duties in connection with the role and to discuss whether or not these duties will be delegated.

Appointment of (Acting) Returning Officer In a constituency for which the chairman of a district council or the mayor of a London borough is the RO, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) appointed by that council is the (A)RO. In the case of any other constituency in England and Wales, the ERO for one of the local authorities covered by the constituency will be designated as (A)RO by an order made by the Secretary of State.

- 4 Scotland In Scotland, there is no RO with a ceremonial role. The RO is the person responsible for administering the election. The RO for a UK Parliamentary election in Scotland is the same person who has been appointed RO for the election of councillors in the local authority in which the constituency is situated. Where a constituency crosses local authority boundaries, the Secretary of State will direct which local authority RO is the RO for the UK Parliamentary election.
- 5 We use the term (Acting) Returning Officer or (A)RO in relation to the duties undertaken by the Acting Returning Officer in England and Wales and the Returning Officer in Scotland. Any references to deputy throughout this guidance should be read as depute for elections in Scotland.

Boundaries and constituencies There are two types of constituency: county and borough (or burgh in Scotland). In this guidance the term borough will be used and should be read as burgh for constituencies in Scotland. Typically, borough constituencies are mainly urban while county constituencies are mainly rural. Legislation for England, 6 Wales 7 and Scotland 8 sets out whether a constituency is a county or borough constituency. UK Parliamentary elections are run on UK Parliamentary constituency boundaries. Constituencies can be coterminous with the areas of local authorities but many comprise only part of the area, while others cross one or more local authority boundaries. While you are responsible for delivering the election for your constituency as a whole, in practice, if any part of the constituency falls outside your local authority, you will need to consider what impact this will have on your processes and whether you will need to delegate some of your functions to a senior officer at the other local authority. You should liaise closely with the ERO and election staff at the relevant local authority/authorities in order to identify any possible issues and how these will be addressed. You should seek their advice and assistance, where necessary, as they will be more familiar with those areas.

Insurance As you are personally liable for the conduct of the election you should ensure that you have insurance cover and that it is up-to-date. You should be

prepared to demonstrate robust planning and decision-making processes in the event of any challenge to the election and a claim against the insurance policy. The team at your council dealing with insurance may be able to help determine what existing cover is in place and available, and to provide advice as to whether it should be extended.

1. Section 24 and Schedule 1, Rule 3 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983)

■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S. 23 and 28 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at

footnote 2 3. S. 28(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. S. 28 RPA 1983 ■

Back to content at footnote 4 5. S. 25 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6.

Parliamentary Constituencies (England) Order 2007/1681 art.2(1)(b) and the schedule ■

Back to content at footnote 6 7. Parliamentary Constituencies and Assembly Electoral

Regions (Wales) Order 2006/1041 art.2(c) and sch.1 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8.

Parliamentary Constituencies (Scotland) Order 2005/250 art.2(c) and the schedule ■

Back to content at footnote 8 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for

Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer appointment Returning Officer and

(Acting) Returning Officer (Acting) Returning Officer - role and responsibilities

(Acting) Returning Officer - role and responsibilities As (A)RO, you play a central

role in the democratic process. Your role is to ensure that the election is

administered effectively and that, as a result, the experience of voters and those

standing for election is a positive one. You should set out at an early stage what

you want to achieve and what success would look like for you. You must also consider

accessibility for voters at polling stations. Our guidance on assistance with voting

for disabled people provides further information. As (A)RO you are personally

responsible for the conduct of the UK Parliamentary election, including: receiving

the writ (where the RO has not reserved this duty) publishing the notice of election

administering the nomination process printing the ballot papers publishing the notice

of poll, statement of persons nominated and notice of situation of polling stations

the provision of polling stations appointing Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks

managing the postal voting process verifying and counting the votes declaring the

result (where the RO has not reserved this duty) Your duties as (A)RO are separate

from your duties as a local government officer. As (A)RO you are not responsible to

the local authority but are directly accountable to the courts as an independent

statutory office holder. While you can appoint one or more persons to discharge any

or all of your functions as (A)RO, you cannot delegate your personal responsibility

for delivering the election. 1 You can find further information in our guidance on

the appointment of deputies . Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary

constituencies Where the constituency crosses local authority boundaries, to deliver

your functions effectively, there will need to be a close working relationship

between you and the respective ROs and their staff. While the responsibility for the

provision of polling stations and polling station staff for the polls rests with you,

as (A)RO, you should seek advice and assistance, as necessary, from the local

government RO and their staff for the other local authority area who will be more

familiar with that particular area. 1. Sections 35(4), 63(1) and (3)(b)

Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated:

30 May 2023 Book traversal links for (Acting) Returning Officer - role and

responsibilities Returning Officer and (Acting) Returning Officer appointment Breach

of official duty and power to correct procedural errors Breach of official duty and

power to correct procedural errors As (A)RO you are subject to breach of official

duty provisions. This means that if you or your appointed deputies are, without

reasonable cause, guilty of any act or omission in breach of official duty you

(and/or they) are liable on summary conviction to an unlimited fine in England and

Wales or, in Scotland, a fine not exceeding £5,000. 1 You have the power to take such steps as you think appropriate to remedy acts or omissions that arise in connection with any function of the elections and that are not in accordance with the rules. 2 This power allows you to correct procedural errors that are made by you, as (A)RO, an ERO, a Presiding Officer (or any deputies of any of these), or a person providing goods or services to you/them. 3 A procedural error refers to an error someone has made during the process of planning or delivering the election, which may affect the election process or result. For example, incorrect information being produced on poll cards or ballot papers, or postal or polling station ballot papers being issued in error or not issued when they should have been. The above examples are not exhaustive and you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice if you have think you may have made a mistake that could be corrected using this power. Where you remedy an act or omission in full by using your power to correct a procedural error, you will not be guilty of an offence of breach of official duty. 4 You should remember that the power to correct procedural errors does not enable you to recount the votes once the result has been declared. 5 1. Section 63 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 63(4) RPA 1983 and Section 46 Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA 2006) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. S.46 EAA 2006 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. S. 63(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. S. 46 EAA 2006 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Breach of official duty and power to correct procedural errors (Acting) Returning Officer - role and responsibilities (Acting) Returning Officer - skills and knowledge (Acting) Returning Officer - skills and knowledge You should have a working knowledge of the relevant legislation governing the conduct of the election. This means that, in addition to having a clear understanding of your statutory functions, you should have an overview of what the legislation contains and an understanding of how it affects the administration of the election, so that you can review, question where necessary, and quality-assure the whole process. There are management responsibilities attached to your role. For example: commanding the required staff and resources to deliver a well-run election drawing in the necessary support, skills and expertise from across your own local authority overseeing the planning, project management and risk management of the election and incorporating any lessons learnt from previous polls identifying and overseeing any actions necessary to mitigate any issues arising ensuring that staff are appropriately trained to deliver the roles required of them supporting the staff administering the election and providing appropriate oversight of their work providing direction to staff, monitoring progress and receiving regular feedback on activities in the case of cross-boundary constituencies, seeking advice and assistance from the RO and staff at the other local authorities if you are not also the ERO, maintaining an effective working relationship with them maintaining an effective working relationship with your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) ensuring that election accounts are completed in a timely manner Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for (Acting) Returning Officer - skills and knowledge Breach of official duty and power to correct procedural errors Relevant legislation Relevant legislation Relevant legislation This guidance is based on, and should be read in accordance with, the requirements set out in the following legislation (as amended): Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000 Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 Parliamentary Constituencies (Scotland) Order 2005 Electoral Administration Act 2006

Parliamentary Constituencies and Assembly Electoral Regions (Wales) Order 2006
Parliamentary Constituencies (England) Order 2007 Political Parties and Elections Act
2009 Fixed Term Parliament Act 2011 Electoral Registration and Administration Act
2013 Elections Act 2022 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 The ■Assistance
with Voting for Persons with Disabilities (Amendments) Regulations 2022 The list
above includes only the legislation that makes provision in areas that this guidance
relates to and that is currently in force. Data protection legislation applies to the
processing of all personal data. (A)ROs are personally responsible for ensuring that
they comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. We have published
guidance to support you in meeting your obligations under data protection legislation
as it relates to your electoral administration responsibilities. You are also
required to have regard to the public sector equality duty contained in Section 149
of the Equality Act 2010 when carrying out your duties. (A)ROs in Wales should also
have regard to the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure
2011, which require services in Wales to be delivered in the Welsh language. Last
updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Relevant legislation (Acting) Returning
Officer - skills and knowledge Planning for the election Planning for the election
Planning for the election A UK Parliamentary election is a significant event which
brings with it its own particular challenges. Having robust plans in place are
crucial to ensure you are able to deliver a well-run election. This section of the
guidance covers the planning you will need to do to support the delivery of the
election, including what your project plan should contain and how you should go about
implementing it. It also contains guidance on staffing and staff training required,
the specific venues needed for key processes, and support on the use of suppliers and
contractors. Additionally, this section also contains guidance on identifying,
monitoring and mitigating risk, and developing plans with the police to ensure the
integrity of the election is maintained. Finally, it provides guidance on how you
will need to plan for your public awareness activity to promote both voter
registration and provide information to support electors voting, and engagement with
candidates and agents. Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Planning
for the election Relevant legislation Planning for a UK Parliamentary election
Planning for a UK Parliamentary election Planning for a UK Parliamentary election A
UK Parliamentary election is a significant event which brings with it its own
particular challenges. Your work to deliver a well-run poll will come under
considerable scrutiny – from voters, candidates and political parties, and the media
including through social media. This section seeks to highlight some of the
particular aspects of context relevant to UK Parliamentary elections which you should
ensure underpin all aspects of your planning. Nature of a UK Parliamentary election
The election will likely be hard-fought, with many close contests in constituencies
across Great Britain. The evolving political landscape could mean that even in places
where there have traditionally been large majorities this may no longer be the case.
The focus and circumstances could be different from anything experienced in your area
before. There may be a significant number of new or less experienced political
parties, candidates and agents who are unfamiliar with the practices and processes of
an election and who will need your support to be able to participate effectively.
Particularly given the possibility of close and hard-fought contests, you should be
prepared for the integrity of this election to be scrutinised. Allegations and cases
of electoral fraud will not only have a negative impact on the confidence of electors
and campaigners, but they may also have a significant impact on your capacity to
manage the election process effectively. It is therefore crucial that you put in

place detailed and robust plans for monitoring and maintaining the integrity of the election in your area. You should work closely with the local police, ensuring you have in place good lines of communication for referring any allegations. For more information see our guidance on [Maintaining the integrity of the election](#) .

Scale and turnout The level of preparatory work you will be able to undertake ahead of an election will vary depending on various factors, including whether it is a scheduled election or a by-election, the number of constituencies you are responsible for, and the level of combination of polls, if any. Many aspects of planning for the election will need to reflect assumptions as to the likely turnout for the poll. Establishing such assumptions at an early stage in the planning is of key importance as the scope for adjusting plans is limited at a later stage in the process. The level of interest in a UK Parliamentary election is likely to be significant. You should plan for the possibility of a high turnout and, as a minimum, you should assume that the turnout will be not less than the turnout at the last equivalent polls. As the poll becomes closer, the context will continue to evolve as the campaigns pick up pace. You will need to be prepared to react to events both within your constituency and more broadly which could have an impact on the effective delivery of the poll. This will include having robust contingency plans in place that you can turn to where required. If, for example, there are televised Leaders' debates, these could conceivably result in a late surge of registration and absent voting applications, as well as having an impact on turnout and are likely to alter the traditional pattern of when completed postal votes are returned. It is vital that appropriate provision of polling stations is made, with the numbers of stations and the numbers of staff within them sufficient to deal with the number of electors allocated to them. Although the legislation allows any voters in a queue at their polling station at 10pm to vote, ¹ the need to ensure that voters do not face undue delays in voting and can receive a high-quality service remains. There is likely to be a media focus on the count and declaration of results and it will be important to manage expectations, not only of the media but of all with an interest in the results, by consulting on your proposed approach and subsequently communicating clearly what you expect to deliver and by when.

1. Rule 37(7) Schedule 1, Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

Last updated: 30 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Planning for a UK Parliamentary election](#) [Planning for the election](#) [Learning from previous polls](#) [Learning from previous polls](#) [Learning from previous polls](#) [Before you start planning for the election](#), you should ensure that you have carried out a review of the last equivalent polls. You should have carried out a thorough evaluation of all processes outlined in your project plan for the previous election, sought feedback from appropriate stakeholders, and produced a lessons learnt document to inform the project plan and risk register for future electoral events. You can find further information in our guidance on [Reviewing the election](#) . The Commission has provided, as part of the template project plan, some sample objectives and suggested tools that will allow you to measure the extent to which the conduct of the election has been successful. The Commission has also provided an evaluation plan as part of the template project plan to assist you with the review process. [Project plan UKPGE EA \(docx\)](#) Last updated: 30 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Learning from previous polls](#) [Planning for a UK Parliamentary election](#) [Developing plans for the election](#) [Developing plans for the election](#) [Project plan](#) You should prepare a project plan for the management of the election, treat it as a living document, keep it under regular review, and use it to monitor progress throughout. You should record all steps taken to prepare your plan in order to be able to provide an audit trail

demonstrating your decision making process. You should be able to explain your decisions, and you should be prepared to do so in response to enquiries. Your planning should ensure that: voters are able to vote easily and know that their vote will be counted in the way they intended it is easy for people who want to stand for election to find out how to get involved, what the rules are, and what they have to do to comply with these rules everyone can have confidence in the management of the process and the result. We have produced a template project plan that you may wish to use and adapt to fit your local circumstances. The template includes a number of example deliverables and tasks and you should also add in any others you identify as necessary, including ones specific to your local circumstances. Project plan UKPGE EA (docx) Before starting your detailed planning, you should set out what you want to achieve and what success would look like. Your project plan should include clearly defined objectives and success measures to help you to measure the extent to which the conduct of the election has been successful as part of the template project plan. You should ensure that your planning reflects the particular context and the nature of the election, including any changes to either legislation or the political landscape since the last general election. Your project plan should also identify the resources required. Once the fees and charges for the election have been set, you should reconcile projected costs for activities against the available budget. You should take all necessary steps to ensure that the local authority makes the necessary resources available to you to enable you to discharge your functions. You also need to plan for the implementation of accessibility requirements in the polling stations. Your plans should include: where accessibility needs to be considered which barriers prevent equal access to voting for all persons when you need to action any identified requirements; for example if you need to buy additional equipment - will it be received in time? written notes of all considerations and actions taken in respect of any requested reasonable adjustments You should also establish working relationships with experts at the local authority who should be able to offer support and advice on any reasonable adjustments needed. A reasonable adjustment is a change that is made to reduce or remove a disadvantage in relation to someone's disability compared to non-disabled people. For example the removal of physical barriers or providing extra support for disabled persons. You will need to review your plans to ensure they outline your processes and the data protection safeguards that you have in place, as they will provide a sound basis for you to meet your data protection obligations. Your council's data protection officer will be able to help you meet your requirements and ascertain best practice. In particular, you will need to ensure that you are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a data controller. Further detailed guidance on data protection legislation, including registering as a data controller , is contained in our data protection guidance . Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, this will have practical implications for the management of key processes and you should reflect this in your planning. For example, you will be responsible for verifying signatures and dates of birth on postal voting statements returned by electors from one or more other local authority areas as well as from your own local authority area. You will also be responsible for the provision and equipment of polling stations for the entire constituency and will need to decide how to manage this, including how you will ensure you have up-to-date information about the polling places that have been designated for use in other local authority areas. You should liaise with the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and other relevant elections

staff from the other local authority area(s) in your planning for the delivery of the poll. **Risk register** Risk register You should also prepare a risk register which should also be a living document and kept under regular review. You should use your risk register to monitor the known risks and document any changes in risk, as well as ensuring that mitigating actions are identified and are being taken forward as appropriate. Your risk register should identify: any difficulties and problems that may occur, and the actions taken to mitigate them the seriousness of any risk by indicating both the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact of the risk if it did occur We have developed a template risk register that you may wish to use. The template provides some example risks and suggestions for mitigating those risks. In addition to the risks identified in the template you should also identify any other risks, including ones specific to your local circumstances, and how you would mitigate those. **Risk register** Last updated: 27 September 2023 **Book traversal links for Developing plans for the election** **Learning from previous polls** **The election timetable** The election timetable The election timetable We have published a non-date specific timetable for UK Parliamentary general elections and by-elections containing the statutory deadlines as set out in the election rules, which can be used to assist you in your planning. **UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX)** **UKPE By election timetable generic (DOCX)** Date-specific timetables will be available on our website ahead of a general election. You should ensure that you have contingency arrangements in place to enable you to respond and deliver a well-run election should a general election be called at short notice or a by-election arise. Once an election has been called you will need to review your plans and develop arrangements for the specific context and timetable of the poll. Although it is an ERO function, further information on the Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document application deadline can be found here. Last updated: 27 September 2023 **Book traversal links for The election timetable** **Developing plans for the election** **Contingency planning** Contingency planning Your project plan should cover contingency planning and business continuity arrangements to enable all elements of the delivery of the election to continue in the event of any unexpected issues or disruptions. It is important to keep your contingency plans under review and to re-visit and amend them periodically during the run up to the poll. In doing so, you should consider the success and continuing appropriateness of any existing measures, identify any improvements and expose any gaps. You should also develop and maintain separate ongoing contingency plans to support the delivery of any unscheduled polls and by-elections that may occur. Your contingency planning should include arrangements for the key areas of risk to the delivery of the election including: **Contractors** You should ensure that any suppliers you use – such as your EMS provider and any external print providers – have their own detailed business continuity plans in place. You should be satisfied that their contingency arrangements are sufficient to enable you to perform your duties in the case of any interruptions in service whilst fulfilling their own contractual duties. For more information see our guidance on **Managing the procurement process for outsourced work** . **Venues** You should prepare a list of alternative venues that are available at short notice for each stage of the elections process and brief staff on the contingency arrangements for using these venues that may affect their role. For more information, see our guidance **Identify and book suitable venues and Last minute changes to polling stations** . **Staffing** You should identify solutions to enable you to respond to a sudden staffing shortage. You should liaise with your HR department who can use their expertise to assist you with your planning. Other departmental managers within your local authority, or neighbouring

authorities with reciprocal agreements in place may also be able to offer additional support in managing any requirements for temporary staff for specific parts of the electoral process. For more information see our guidance on [Allocating sufficient staff resources](#) and [providing training and Flexible staffing](#) . IT also plays a key role in many of the processes required to run the election. You should liaise with your IT services to ensure that you have adequate resources and contingency measures in place to allow you to perform your functions in the event of IT failure. This could include: improving any measures allowing remote working capabilities having dedicated IT support during the election period storing certain files and documents locally to enable them to be accessed more easily sourcing any spare or alternative equipment that could be used as a backup, e.g. printers, laptops, routers As part of your IT contingency planning, you should consider how you would produce Voter Authority Certificates in the event of IT or contractor failure. Security risks should also be considered as part of your contingency arrangements, setting out how you will continue to deliver the election in the event of theft, fraudulent activity, a cyber-threat or any other security risk as identified in your risk register . You should liaise with the police and business continuity experts from your council to identify risks and put appropriate continuity measures in place. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has produced this guidance to help you assess the risks associated with IT and cyber-threats. Last updated: 30 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Contingency planning](#) [The election timetable](#) [Planning for the delivery of key processes](#) [Planning for the delivery of key processes](#) Your project plan should include details on how you will deliver the key processes, including nominations, postal vote opening, voting in polling stations, and verification and count. It should also include how you will meet your duty to ensure that the polling station is accessible to all voters. Our guidance on [understanding the barriers to voting](#) provides further information to support your planning Establishing realistic and robust assumptions can assist you in planning for delivering these key processes. Sound assumptions can provide useful evidence in explaining your decisions and you should therefore document them. Sharing the assumptions with stakeholders at an early stage will also allow them to be tested by others for robustness before the detailed planning has been completed and will help build confidence in your plans. Your planning should include assumptions covering expected: turnout on polling day turnout of postal voters number of candidates availability of staff speed and capability of staff timings for completing each process All plans and assumptions should be kept under regular review. This will help inform a realistic assessment of whether you will be able to deliver the overall plan, and whether and when it may be necessary to implement contingency plans . In all cases your plan should be flexible enough to allow you to respond if any of your assumptions change, covering what contingency actions you will take in such circumstances, and you should communicate with stakeholders throughout your planning process and be prepared to explain the reasons for the decisions you are taking. For key decisions, you should provide your reasons to stakeholders in writing. Turnout The expected turnout is a crucial factor in determining your planning and understanding what resources will be needed for most processes, in particular for polling stations and the verification and count. You should decide what the expected turnout is likely to be - taking into account the potential for late engagement and interest in the elections by which point scope for adjusting plans will be limited. Your turnout estimate should be based on the assumption that, as a minimum, the turnout of voters will be not less than the turnout at the last equivalent polls. You should also consider the patterns of return

rates at previous polls and anything that might affect this. For example, televised Leaders' debates at a general election could conceivably result in a late surge of registration and absent voting applications, altering the traditional pattern of when completed postal votes are returned, as well as have an impact on turnout. It is always safest to err on the side of caution when it comes to turnout as national and local developments can result in rapid changes to the actual turnout. The resources you have available to conduct these processes, including numbers of staff and size of venue, will also be a relevant consideration to your planning. The number of parties and/or candidates standing at an election will also affect your planning considerations. For example, a large number of parties and/or candidates standing for election could mean that: ballot papers will be large and staff and voters may be slower handling them more space will be required to accommodate the large ballot papers the counting process for separating the votes into bundles for particular parties and/or candidates may be slower and take up more space more space for candidates and agents may be required at the venues In order to establish the likely number of parties and/or candidates you should: make early contact with the political parties monitor expressions of interest monitor requests for nomination packs This information can then be taken into account when taking decisions on venues, count layout, necessary equipment and staffing requirements.

Staffing and timings You should look at the number of staff and the processes used at previous elections and the number of ballot papers that were processed. An evaluation of the processes and staffing ratios, and when the various stages of the election process were completed, can then be used to inform decisions for these elections. You should share these details and timings with stakeholders together with the assumptions that underpin them. Some stakeholders may hold expectations as to how quickly the processes can be completed which cannot be met in practice and this can lead to tension and frustration. To manage expectations, you should explain in some detail the processes involved and how long each stage is likely to take. For more on this, see our guidance on providing information on key election processes . Last updated: 30 May 2023

Book traversal links for Planning for the delivery of key processes

Contingency planning Allocating sufficient staff resources and providing training Allocating sufficient staff resources and providing training Your project plan should include identification of staffing requirements, including any necessary recruitment arrangements. It is essential that you identify the staff you will need and make the necessary appointments at the earliest opportunity. You should seek advice from your council's human resources department as necessary to ensure that the methods used to identify, recruit, employ and pay staff are robust and comply with all legal requirements. Following an assessment of the performance of staff used at previous electoral events, you may wish to contact staff used previously at an early stage in the planning process to check their availability. You will need to ensure that all staff are sufficiently trained to carry out their role(s). You should provide accessibility awareness training for all staff who interact with voters, including staff who support electoral services, to help improve their understanding of the needs of disabled voters and the importance of clear communication. Our guidance on accessibility contains further information on ensuring that those working on the poll are aware of accessibility needs. Last updated: 30 May 2023

Book traversal links for Allocating sufficient staff resources and providing training

Planning for the delivery of key processes

Establishing a project team You should establish a project team to support you in carrying out your functions and in delivering a well-run election. In addition to

yourself, your project team should include any appointed deputies, other elections staff members and the ERO, where this is not yourself. It should also include any other key personnel you consider appropriate such as: your council's communications team HR colleagues finance colleagues IT your contact centre/front of house staff facilities staff your local Police single point of contact (SPOC) Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, your project team should include the ERO and other relevant elections staff members from the other local authority area(s) to enable effective liaison in the planning and delivery of the polls. Establishing a project team The project team should have a clear remit and understanding of the tasks to be carried out. You should prepare a schedule of meetings at the planning stage, and keep a record of each meeting as an audit trail of what was discussed and of any decisions made. Where possible, the (A)RO should chair any project team meetings. Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Establishing a project team Allocating sufficient staff resources and providing training Deputy (Acting) Returning Officer appointments Deputy (Acting) Returning Officer appointments You should put in place deputy arrangements in case you are unable to act personally as (A)RO. You may appoint deputies to discharge all or any of your duties 1 and this can be for a limited time period or until further notice. Any appointed deputies should have the skills and knowledge required to carry out the functions they have been assigned such as assisting with the receipt of nomination papers, managing the postal vote process or adjudication of doubtful ballot papers. You should confirm any appointments in writing and include details of the functions that the deputy is authorised to exercise on your behalf. The acceptance should also be made in writing. A Deputy (A)RO is liable, in the same way as the (A)RO, for a breach of official duty. 2 Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you should consider whether you want to delegate some of your functions in full or in part to a senior officer at the other local authority/authorities. 1. Section 28(5) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 63 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Deputy (Acting) Returning Officer appointments Establishing a project team Working with the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) Working with the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) If you are not also the ERO, you will need to liaise closely with them to obtain the relevant registration and absent voting data. You should ensure that data protection is considered and that any transfer of data is secure. If there is a need for exchanging data electronically, you should agree the timings for the exchange of data and ensure that a test of the process is carried out ahead of the first scheduled transfer. There will be updates to the data at a number of points within the election timetable, as the ERO must publish two interim election notices of alteration as well as the final election notice of alteration. 1 The Commission has published a timetable containing the dates related to the publication of these notices. UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX) Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you should liaise closely with the ERO and elections staff at the other local authority/authorities to put in place arrangements for the transfer and receipt of data, including any updates following the publication of the interim and final election notices of alteration. As part of developing these arrangements, you will need to establish how you will manage the data you receive in

practice, including whether your software system can process data received from the other local authority/authorities, particularly where they use a different electoral management software system. Further information on practical issues relating to absent voting in cross boundary constituencies can be found in Absent Voting . 1. Section 13 (AB) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 27 September 2023 Book traversal links for Working with the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) Deputy (Acting) Returning Officer appointments Appointing staff for specific election processes Appointing staff for specific election processes You will need to appoint staff to help you undertake the various election processes. You should identify staffing requirements and put processes in place for recruiting the necessary staff. You should have access to a database of staff used at previous elections to help with this, and should also get advice from the HR team at your council on any external recruitment needs you may have. Staff can also often be recruited from among council employees. Local authorities can permit their staff to work on the election, but they are not required to do so. When identifying and recruiting staff, you should consider the skills appropriate to each role and use these to create a suitable job description. For example, those with experience working in finance could be recruited for the recording of unused ballot papers at the verification and count, or to work at postal vote opening sessions to record the daily totals. As there is no age restriction for staff working on specific election processes, you could liaise with local further and higher education establishments to identify young people who could be recruited to work at polling stations or at the verification and count, which could also help to boost their engagement with the democratic process. You can find more information on the payment of fees to staff in our section on Accounting for the election . Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Appointing staff for specific election processes Working with the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) Appointing staff for the issuing and opening of postal votes Appointing staff for the issuing and opening of postal votes You should identify staffing requirements for your postal vote issuing and opening sessions. The following staff may be required: specially trained supervisory staff clerical staff IT staff You must not appoint any person who has been employed by or on behalf of a candidate in or about the election. You should be mindful of the demands on time the issue and opening of postal votes can place on core staff when considering your staffing needs. Staffing for issuing of postal votes There will be a number of additional postal vote issues in the immediate run-up to polling day to pick up those who have applied to vote by post and to register in the lead-up to the registration deadline. 1 You will need to consider how to manage this, ensuring postal votes can be issued to electors as early as possible. For further information see our guidance on issuing postal votes . You should also take into account the total number of current postal voters and projected turnout of postal voters when deciding on your staffing arrangements, as well as the potential for late engagement and interest in the election by which point scope for adjusting plans will be limited. You should plan for the possibility of a high turnout but, as a minimum, you should assume that the turnout of postal voters will be not less than the turnout of postal voters at the last equivalent polls. Your review of previous electoral events will give you an indication of how robust your previous staffing assumptions were. You may need to revise this assessment after you have received the final postal voters' lists from the ERO. You should build sufficient flexibility and contingency into your staffing arrangements to deal with a last-minute increase in numbers of postal voters, an unexpected increase in turnout, or varying volumes of postal votes being returned on

different days. For example, if there are televised leaders' debates, this may have an impact on the pattern and volume of returns and this should be part of your considerations when determining your staffing requirements. Your arrangements also need to be such that you can ensure you can effectively manage those delivered to polling stations on polling day. Managing contractors If you decide to outsource all or part of the postal vote issuing process you should designate a member of the project team to monitor outsourced work and specifically to attend those parts of the issuing process that have been contracted out. This person should also monitor the work of the contractor, which should include carrying out tasks such as: spot checking to ensure that the postal voting stationery does not contain any errors checking the postal ballot packs are being correctly collated ensuring that any postal votes that need to go overseas are being prioritised Further guidance on managing contractors and suppliers can be found in our guidance on Managing contractors and Suppliers . Staffing for opening of postal votes How the verification of personal identifiers is to be carried out, including how much of this process is automated and how much of it needs to be done manually, will also impact on the numbers of staff you will require for opening returned postal votes. You must have arrangements in place to enable the checking of 100% of postal vote identifiers. 2 You can find more information in our guidance on the postal vote opening process . 1. Section 13B Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 84 and 85A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Appointing staff for the issuing and opening of postal votes Appointing staff for specific election processes Appointing polling station staff Appointing polling station staff You must appoint and pay a Presiding Officer and such Poll Clerks as may be necessary to staff each polling station. 1 This cannot be any person who has been employed by or on behalf of a candidate in or about the election. 2 There are some responsibilities that cannot be undertaken by a Poll Clerk, such as decisions on whether an elector has produced an acceptable form of ID, or ordering someone to leave the polling station. You have flexibility to use the Poll Clerks you employ to carry out any other functions and responsibilities needed to deliver polling station voting effectively, including: the polling process – checking the register, checking photographic identification, marking the register, filling in the CNL and other statutory paperwork such as the Ballot Paper Refusal List (BPRL), etc. facilitating checks of photographic identification in private, where requested managing the flow of electors and ensuring the secrecy of the ballot providing electors with additional information and support including: answering questions about the process providing information about the instructions for voting and the requirement for photographic identification explaining the types of photographic identification that can be used providing advice and assistance to support the accessibility of the poll When deciding on the allocation of electors and staff to polling stations, having regard to our guidance on the recommended minimum staffing levels for polling stations and on how staff could be deployed in different scenarios , will help ensure that voters can receive a high-quality service. 1. Rule 26 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Rule 26 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Appointing polling station staff Appointing staff for the issuing and opening of postal votes Recommended minimum staffing levels for polling stations Recommended minimum staffing levels for polling stations It is for you to consider each polling station individually and make decisions about allocating staff and electors accordingly. We

recommend the following ratios when allocating electors and staff to polling stations: Electorate (excluding postal voters) ■ Recommended number of polling station staff ■ ■0 - 1,250 ■3 (1 Presiding Officer and 2 Poll Clerks) ■1,250 - 2,250 ■4 (1 Presiding Officer and 3 Poll Clerks) A polling station should not have more than 2,250 electors allocated to it. This is lower than the level set out in previous guidance but has been set to reflect the additional requirements of the polling station voting process, for both polling station staff and electors, as a result of changes made by the Elections Act 2022. The ratios outlined assume the election is not combined. In the event of combined polls, you should think about whether the management of more than one poll may require additional staff. These ratios are guidance only, they are not mandatory. When making decisions on the allocation of electors and staff to polling stations, you should fully consider the particular circumstances of each polling station and the needs of your electorate as a whole, and document the reasoning behind the decisions you make. As a minimum you should consider: any particular local circumstances such as population increases (for example, due to any new housing developments since your last polling place review), demographic trends, and any known needs of your local electorate (for example, any areas where you expect you may need to undertake an ID check in private more often) levels of postal voters the potential for late engagement including any local or national issues which may affect the turnout and interest in the election — as a minimum you should assume that the turnout will be not less than the turnout at the last equivalent election the spread of voters during the day – for example, if recent trends show a large number of voters attending the station in the morning, ensure your staffing ratios allow for this and will prevent large queues from forming additional support electors may need in understanding any recent changes to the electoral process, especially where this may impact differently depending on which polls are taking place how the voter will move through the voting process from entering to exiting the polling station, taking into account the polling station size and layout at combined polls, the impact the combination of polls will have, such as on the time taken to issue ballot papers and for voters to complete more than one ballot paper This list is not exhaustive, and you should also consider any other factors that you consider appropriate. Our accessibility guidance contains additional factors to consider when planning your staffing levels at the polling station. Each decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis and not for the voting area as a whole. In addition to considering the number of staff you will need to manage each polling station, you should think about how you will be able to respond positively to requests from voters to have their ID checked by a female member of staff. Ideally you will have a female member of staff at each polling station, but where this is not possible then you should think about how you can deploy other staff flexibly to meet the request, for example by utilising female polling station inspectors who have been delegated the authority to carry out these checks. More information on polling station inspectors can be found below. As well as keeping a record of decisions made you should maintain a plan which ensures you are able to respond to any issues, for example, dealing with a queue at one or more polling stations in your area at particularly busy times such as traditionally after work rush, or in the run-up to close of poll at 10pm. Voters in a queue at their polling station at 10pm must be issued with their ballot paper. Polling station inspectors As well as making decisions on the number of polling station staff you will need, you should also ensure that you have sufficient numbers of polling station inspectors to support the delivery of the poll in your area. In making your decision, you should consider

factors such as your local geography and the experience of polling station staff in each polling place, as well as any impact of the new processes that need to be delivered as a result of the Elections Act 2022. For example, you could use female polling station inspectors to support electors who request to have their ID checked in private by a female member of staff where no female member of staff is available in a specific polling station at that time. To facilitate this, you would need to appoint the polling station inspector as a Deputy (A)RO for polling day. You should ensure that any such appointment is clearly defined to reflect that it is solely for the purpose of making decisions on the validity of ID as part of any checks they carry out. More information can be found in our guidance Appointment of polling station inspectors. Examples of staff deployment at a polling station

There are different options open to you for deploying staff within polling stations. Your plans should be sufficiently flexible to allow you to deploy staff to respond to specific issues or needs that may arise throughout polling day. Here are some examples: if you have one Presiding Officer with two additional staff allocated to a polling station, all three should be trained in the process of issuing ballot papers, checking photographic identification and filling in the associated paperwork. While two staff members carry out the issuing process, the other could act as an information officer to provide advice and assistance to voters as required if a polling place contains multiple polling stations, a member of staff could be used as an information officer covering all stations to assist with directing voters to the correct polling station and providing advice and assistance to voters as required staff from one polling station in the polling place could also be used to assist staff in another polling station within the same polling place if required, for example as a result of a high number of voters attending one of the stations at a particular time when the other station is quiet You may also consider appointing a team of back-up polling station staff to be deployed flexibly as needed, such as at peak times or in the run-up to close of poll, or to respond to particular issues that may arise throughout polling day. For example, you could base extra staff at the largest/busiest polling place you have in an area and deploy them to other stations in the area when needed. If parts of the electoral area are not easily accessible, you could find it helpful to have teams positioned in different parts of the area. The UK government have confirmed that the funding being provided to support additional staff in polling stations as a result of measures in the Elections Act 2022 is able to be used flexibly. For example, not only to employ additional poll clerks within polling stations but also to support the appointment of additional polling station inspectors or back-up staff as appropriate. You will also need to think about how to will train staff so that you can deploy them flexibly on polling day. Further guidance on training can be found in Providing training to all relevant staff

The Commission's handbook for polling station staff outlines in more detail the procedures staff should follow throughout polling day and at the close of poll. Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Last updated: 30 May 2023

Book traversal links for Recommended minimum staffing levels for polling stations

Appointing polling station staff Appointing polling station inspectors Appointing polling station inspectors Polling station inspectors play an important role in the effective management of the poll. They provide an essential communication link between you and your polling station staff including dealing with queries and

problems arising on polling day. You should appoint polling station inspectors to visit and inspect polling stations on your behalf on polling day. In deciding on the allocation of polling station inspectors to polling places, you should consider: the geography of the area and travelling distance between polling places the number of polling stations in each polling place the experience of polling station staff at each polling station expected turnout levels and any particular local circumstances the number of visits polling station inspectors will be expected to make to each polling station during the day Duties of a polling station inspector Polling station inspectors should ensure that all of their assigned polling stations are: properly set up to take account of voter needs and contribute to the smooth running of the polling station fully equipped and accessible to all voters meeting your expectations of service to voters The polling station inspector should work with the Presiding Officers and polling station staff to identify and deal with any problems arising throughout polling day and at the close of poll, and should escalate any issues to you as appropriate. You should have a process in place for the ERO to communicate any polling day amendments to the register and emergency proxy applications. You should advise polling station inspectors of their role in this, if any. Initially, polling station inspectors should aim to visit all of their allocated polling stations as quickly as possible in order to be able to re-assure you that all stations have opened on time and are operating effectively. These initial visits could be preceded by a separate communication sent by Presiding Officers to their polling station inspectors, prior to the opening of the poll. For example, polling station inspectors could be notified via text message confirming whether the polling station is set up and ready for opening, and whether there are any issues, to help the polling station inspector prioritise their visits. Subsequent visits throughout the day can be used for a variety of purposes including: collecting postal votes answering any questions that polling station staff may have checking that all notices remain properly displayed delivering any missing or additional equipment that is required Female PSIs may also be required to check the photographic ID of electors who request to have their ID checked in private by a female member of staff where no female member of staff is available in the polling station at that time. In such cases, the PSI should be appointed as a Deputy RO for polling day for the purpose of making decisions on the validity of ID as part of any checks they carry out. Our guidance on recommended staffing levels contain further information. Instructions for polling station inspectors You should provide polling station inspectors with clear instructions about their role and a checklist of tasks that they should carry out and complete during their polling station visits. This checklist also contains a list of what each polling station inspector should receive prior to polling day. Completed checklists can also be used to inform an evaluation of the suitability of polling stations as part of the post-election review process. You can find a copy of the checklist to print and use in our planning the election resources section. Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Appointing polling station inspectors Recommended minimum staffing levels for polling stations Flexible staffing at polling stations Flexible staffing at polling stations You should prepare a list of staff you can approach who can step into a role where a person is unavailable – for example, due to sickness. The list should include staff that would be able to work at very short notice. While appointing stand-by staff may not always be practical or feasible within your budget, you should be prepared to deploy staff flexibly on polling day to respond to specific issues that may arise. You may also wish to rotate staff appointed within your polling station to undertake different roles through the course

of the day, such as providing information to those entering the polling station and checking voters have brought the correct photographic ID to be able to vote. You could also consider appointing part-time Poll Clerks to provide assistance at expected peak polling hours or in the run-up to 10pm. In addition, you could appoint a team of back-up polling station staff to be deployed at peak times to specific polling stations or to respond to specific issues that may arise throughout polling day or at the close of poll. If parts of the constituency are not easily accessible, it may be helpful to have teams positioned in different parts of the constituency area. To be able to deploy staff flexibly on polling day, you will need to train staff appropriately. You should train Poll Clerks and Presiding Officers in such a way as to ensure that both have the technical knowledge to carry out each other's roles if required and as far as the law permits. You can find further guidance on training in the section - Staffing and training . Polling station inspectors should receive the same training as polling station staff in order for them to be able to be deployed flexibly and carry out polling station duties if required. You should also provide an additional briefing for polling station inspectors, covering items that are specific to their role. You should give both polling station staff and polling station inspectors a copy of the Commission's handbook for polling station staff and polling station quick guide, and instruct them to read both ahead of polling day and to bring their copies with them on polling day itself. You should give spare copies of the handbook and quick guide to polling station inspectors that they can provide to polling stations in the event of polling station staff forgetting to bring their copies on polling day. Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Polling station quick guide – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Last updated: 30 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Flexible staffing at polling stations](#)
[Appointing polling station inspectors](#)
[Appointing verification and count staff](#)

To ensure that voters can have confidence that their vote will be counted in the way they intended, you will need to put in place appropriate staff resources to ensure the verification and count are timely. It is important that you ensure there are the right number of competent, skilled and knowledgeable staff – and that each member of staff is clear about their role – so that the count is run efficiently and effectively and according to the principles for an effective verification and count . You should also ensure there is an appropriate number of reserve staff in case of staff absence on the day of the count. You should consider appointing: senior staff to assist with the overall operation and co-ordination of processes and the calculation of the result staff and supervisors to deal with the secure transportation of the sealed boxes of postal ballot papers to the verification venue staff and supervisors to deal with the receipt of polling station materials and postal votes staff and supervisors to deal with the final opening of postal votes staff and supervisors to deal with the verification of used and unused ballot papers, spoilt ballot papers and the tendered votes list staff and supervisors to deal with the sorting and counting of votes porters, security staff and door attendants to deal with the security of the site person(s) with knowledge of the site to deal with the management of the facilities within and around the site responsible officer(s) to oversee the security of ballot boxes and relevant

stationery where there is a break in proceedings or where ballot papers need to be packaged up and delivered to another venue at the end of verification experienced media liaison staff any other members of staff you consider necessary While it may not be realistic to expect all verification and count staff to be fully utilised at every stage of the verification and count process, a responsive management plan which monitors activity levels and allows for reallocation of resources could reduce the length of time taken to complete key stages of the process. When developing your plans for staffing the verification and count, you will need to bear in mind that there is a requirement under the legislation to take reasonable steps to begin counting the votes as soon as practicable and within four hours of the close of poll. There will also be an expectation among candidates, parties and the media for results to be declared as soon as possible and this too will need to be kept in mind in determining staffing requirements. For processes commenced immediately following the close of poll, you should wherever possible not use staff who have been on polling station duty all day. You must not appoint any person who has been employed by or on behalf of a candidate in or about the election. 1 1. Rule 25(3) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Appointing verification and count staff Flexible staffing at polling stations Identifying support staff from your council Identifying support staff from your council You should identify support staff and ensure they are available to assist with any public enquiries you may receive in the run-up to the election. There may be opportunities to utilise your council's existing support staff to perform this role. The support staff that you utilise should be trained to understand that there are various barriers that disabled electors may face when accessing information or voting in a polling station. Disabled voters may contact the (A)RO to identify a particular area that they need support with in the polling station. You can find more information on understanding barriers to voting in our guidance. Managing enquiries from the public You should set up a dedicated team to deal with a range of basic enquiries, such as questions about whether or not a person is registered to vote, postal and proxy voting and the location of polling stations. Where you are not also the ERO, you will need to work with the ERO for your local authority as appropriate to facilitate this. Staff dealing with public enquiries should receive training to deal with them and also be provided with: agreed responses to frequently asked questions a list of the locations of polling stations details of key dates in the election timetable details of the process in place to escalate more complex enquiries to the election team We have developed a template of FAQs for front line staff which you can adapt to fit your local circumstances. FAQs for frontline staff at UK Parliamentary election ■- We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Processing applications The ERO should consider whether they will need any additional support staff to assist with the processing of registration and absent vote applications in the lead-up to the election – and in particular in the lead-up to the registration deadline on the 12th working day before the poll. Where you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to understand how they will manage the likely increase in applications close to deadlines, so that all staff involved in the election and the managing of queries have a clear understanding and can inform electors appropriately. Further information on processing registration and absent vote applications in the lead-up to an election can be found in the Running Electoral Registration and Absent

voting sections of the Commission's guidance for EROs in England , Scotland and Wales . Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Identifying support staff from your council Appointing verification and count staff Developing a training plan

Developing a training plan You should establish a training plan at an early stage in your planning for the election which identifies the training needs of both permanent and temporary staff in the delivery of their roles. Each member of the team, whether permanent or temporary, needs to understand their particular role and any statutory obligations associated with the work they are undertaking. All staff should receive training on the legislative requirements and responsibilities relevant to their role, as well as training on understanding accessibility needs , ensuring equal access and good customer care. Your plan should also include how you will evaluate the training sessions and materials used in order to inform future planning. If you have training or learning and development personnel within your council they may be able to assist you with this process. Data protection training Whilst the training you offer each member of the team will be tailored to their specific role, everyone handling personal data should be aware of and trained in the legal requirements for handling personal data in line with data protection legislation. You should discuss your plans for data protection training with your council's Data Protection Officer. Data protection training will help you to embed the data protection principles in your work and demonstrate compliance with data protection legislation. Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Developing a training plan Identifying support staff from your council Training postal vote issue and opening staff Training postal vote issue and opening staff You should make arrangements to train all postal vote issue and opening staff on the processes involved with each stage. This training may be provided immediately prior to commencement of the issuing and opening processes, but you should provide them with guidance notes in advance. However, you should consider training supervisory staff a day or two in advance of the issuing or opening session so that they are fully aware of their duties and what will be expected of them. This training should cover: carrying out the required quality assurance checks, whether you are issuing postal votes in-house or are using an external contractor ensuring that the opening procedures and the verification process are correctly followed and an audit trail is maintained You should provide any person who will be undertaking the verification of postal vote identifiers, and has been delegated the authority by you to make decisions on postal voting statements, a copy of the Commission and Forensic Science Service guidance on signature checking, and instruct them to follow it. Forensic Science Service guidance You should also consider whether any additional training may be appropriate for anyone undertaking this role. You should ensure staff are trained accordingly to ensure that any personal data is handled in accordance with data protection legislation. Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Training postal vote issue and opening staff Developing a training plan Training presiding officers, poll clerks and polling station inspectors Training presiding officers, poll clerks and polling station inspectors Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and other front line staff are frequently the only members of your staff that voters will meet in person. It is essential that such staff are trained to understand their role and to perform their duties professionally and effectively, and are able to provide a high standard of customer care. Such staff need to be able to communicate well with all voters. To ensure that staff understand the barriers that some disabled people face when voting, accessibility issues should be covered in training. You should give polling station staff and polling station inspectors a copy of the Commission's handbook for polling station staff and polling

station quick guide and instruct them to read both ahead of polling day and to bring their copies with them on polling day itself. Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Polling station quick guide – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Polling station inspectors will also need spare copies of the handbook and quick guide to give to polling station staff who have forgotten to bring their copies on polling day. All polling station staff should be required to attend a training session. The training session should address: the tasks to be carried out ahead of polling day the setting up and management of the polling station who can attend a polling station and the procedures to be followed on polling day itself including checking photographic ID, marking the register and filling in the required forms during the poll the need for polling station staff to be customer-focused and to offer assistance to all voters, including being aware of accessibility needs for disabled voters the security of election stationery, including returned postal votes the importance of handling personal data in line with data protection legislation the procedures to be followed at the close of poll health and safety issues You should provide polling station staff and polling station inspectors with contact numbers for use in the event of any problems. As well as numbers for the elections office, this should include a contact number for the police. Training all staff, including polling station inspectors, on the roles and responsibilities associated with working in the polling station can help provide contingency in the event of loss of staff. For more information see our guidance on Flexible staffing at polling stations . We have prepared resources to support your training including: a template PowerPoint briefing for polling station staff which you can update with any additional local information you consider necessary a quiz for polling station staff and role play exercises and scenarios that you can use as a mechanism for testing and embedding learning an exercise on completing the ballot paper accounts, to provide the foundation for an accurate verification a template graphical guide to packaging materials at the close of poll is also available, for you to adapt and provide to polling station staff Training polling station inspectors You should provide an additional briefing for polling station inspectors, covering items that are specific to their role and ensuring they are aware of the checklist for polling station inspectors. We have developed a template checklist for polling station inspectors that you may find helpful. Checklist for polling station inspectors (DOCX) Your training should communicate that polling station inspectors play an important role in the effective management of the poll and should be able to deal with queries and problems arising at the polling station on polling day. Polling station inspectors must ensure that all of their assigned polling stations are properly set up, fully equipped and accessible to all voters and that they can identify and deal with any problems arising. For example, if there are any queues building up the polling station inspector should be able to find a solution to reduce them. In certain circumstances, such as if a private check of a female elector's photographic ID is required for religious reasons, female Polling Station Inspectors may also be required to attend a polling station to check the photographic ID if a polling station only has male staff. Training should also emphasise that the collection of postal votes as directed by the Returning Officer is a task that must be conducted

with care, making sure that all those collected are properly and accurately logged.

At no time should these postal votes be left in a vehicle while the polling station inspector visits the polling stations. You should make the polling station inspector aware that they may be involved in liaising with the elections office regarding clerical errors on the register and emergency proxy applications. You should ensure that each polling station inspector receives the following items: a mobile phone (if required) an ID badge clearly showing their name as a representative of the Returning Officer a label for the car windscreen with appropriate identification a map of the area identifying the location of all of the polling places allocated to the inspector the names of all polling station staff and a contact number for each of the Presiding Officers a contact list of all of the key holders for the polling places in the allocated area (it may also be useful to have the contact number of a locksmith in case a lock is jammed) a contact number for the police a ballot box with spare seals a sundries box with spare stationery and forms polling station handbooks and quick guides a copy of the register for each polling station spare ballot papers (sealed and only to be used in an emergency) a wallet/packet with a sealing mechanism to collect returned postal votes, along with a log for recording number of postal votes removed, the time of collection and details of the person who collected them a spare blank ballot paper account a polling place/station checklist to be completed for each polling place copies of the Code of conduct for tellers and any other local instructions Last updated: 27 September 2023 Book traversal links for Training presiding officers, poll clerks and polling station inspectors Training postal vote issue and opening staff Training and briefing verification and count staff Training and briefing verification and count staff You should ensure that staff receive appropriate training and instructions to allow them to carry out their duties effectively and in accordance with the law. Training should include what staff should look for when examining ballot papers to determine which should be included in the count. You should brief all verification and count staff so that they are fully aware of their duties and what will be expected of them. All briefings should, as a minimum, cover the procedures relevant to the roles. The processes involved at the verification and count can be complicated and you may find that the best way of training senior staff is to prepare a small scale 'mock' verification and count with a few hundred ballot papers. This will give staff the opportunity to physically work through the processes involved, completing the necessary paperwork and adjudicating on the sample ballot papers. This requires some resource to achieve but it can be a valuable tool in ensuring the verification and count runs smoothly and is timely on the night. Prior to the start of the verification and count proceedings, you should undertake a walk-through of the procedures you are expecting everyone to follow so that everyone is aware of what is expected of them at each stage, and how the different roles relate to each other. Further information is available in our guidance on the principles of an effective verification and count . Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Training and briefing verification and count staff Training presiding officers, poll clerks and polling station inspectors Identify and book suitable venues and plan layouts Identify and book suitable venues and plan layouts You should identify appropriate venues for all election activities as early as possible. Your project plan should cover the identification of suitable venues for all processes that you are responsible for. You should contact the managers of these premises at an early stage to inform them of the dates, and make the necessary booking arrangements. This will highlight where any venues are not available and should allow sufficient time to act on the information and identify alternative

premises. Ensuring venues are accessible As part of your review of previous electoral events, you should have undertaken an evaluation of the accessibility of venues used. The results of this should be used to inform your planning and to ensure that any identified barriers to access can be overcome. Under the Equality Act 2010, service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to avoid putting people with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage compared to people who are not disabled. 1 You should work closely with experts on access to premises or facilities for disabled people in order to comply with the duty. The equalities officer at your local authority should be able to provide you with advice and assistance. 1. Sections 20, 29 and 31 Equality Act 2010 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 30 May 2023

Book traversal links for Identify and book suitable venues and plan layouts Training and briefing verification and count staff Postal vote issuing and opening venues and layouts Postal vote issuing and opening venues and layouts When selecting your venue(s) for postal vote issuing and opening sessions you should take into account the: lessons learnt from previous electoral events volume of postal ballot packs to be issued estimated volume of returned postal votes intended workflows IT requirements security and storage requirements presence of disabled access, both to and within the venues Your layout plans should include the: number and positioning of staff equipment needed, including electricity and network points workflows to be followed When mapping out workflows, you should take into account factors including any lessons learnt from previous electoral events and the expected turnout. If your last postal vote opening session is to take place at the verification and count venue, you should ensure that your verification and count layout plan makes provision for this. The process of producing layout plans will help identify any potential issues prior to the setting up of the venues and will allow for any changes to workflow or the positioning of staff or equipment to be made in good time. Layout plans also contribute towards transparency, as these plans can be handed out to anyone entitled to be present in order to help them to follow what is happening, where and when. You should ensure that whatever layout you choose, it is accessible to all those working on the processes and those entitled to observe them.

Considerations for observation of outsourced postal vote issue If you have outsourced the issuing of postal votes, you will still need to be satisfied that your contractors have made adequate arrangements to administer the issue effectively and in a transparent manner. As part of this, you could ask your contractor for copies of their proposed layout plans. These plans would also help to ensure that any observers present understand the processes that are being followed, and will be of particular assistance for your staff appointed to conduct spot-checks during the printing, collation and issuing of postal ballot packs. You should designate a member of the project team to monitor any outsourced work and the work of the contractor, specifically attending those parts of the issuing process that have been contracted out. Further guidance on quality assurance of the production and delivery of election materials can be found in Quality assurance and proof checking of election material . Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Postal vote issuing and opening venues and layouts Identify and book suitable venues and plan layouts Booking suitable polling stations Booking suitable polling stations As part of any Polling Place Review, you should evaluate the suitability of the polling stations that are available for use in the appropriate electoral areas. It is essential that polling stations provide sufficient space for voting to take place. Ideally, you will have the choice of a range of fully accessible buildings, conveniently located for electors in the area, with owners willing to hire them out for polling station use at

low cost. Unfortunately, in practice, this is often not the case and in some areas there may be little choice available. You will need to take access needs into account when planning the layout and set up of polling stations to ensure that all voters receive a high-quality service. This should include disabled voters who may need additional equipment or seating. More guidance is available on the types of equipment you may need to consider in our guidance on providing equipment at the polling station. The size of polling stations should be big enough to enable a clear flow of voters to try to reduce the risk of congestion or queues. You will also need to ensure there is an area identified for checking photographic ID in private, if requested. ■ You should be able to demonstrate that assessments have been conducted of the polling stations to be used at the election. Where access problems exist, you should document the problems, identify potential improvements and record any action taken to try to remedy these problems. You should ensure that any additional equipment required to make the polling station accessible will be delivered and set up before the opening of the poll. The polling station handbook provides further information on how to set up polling stations to ensure they are accessible for all voters. [Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election \(PDF\)](#) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Last updated: 30 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Booking suitable polling stations](#) [Postal vote issuing and opening venues and layouts](#) [Use of schools as polling stations](#) [Use of schools as polling stations](#) [Schools that are publicly-funded, including academies and free schools, may be used as polling stations free of charge, and the legislation allows you to require a room in such schools for use as a polling station.](#) 1 You are also entitled to use, free of charge, any publicly-funded room as a polling station. 2 You will, however, need to pay for any lighting, heating, etc., costs incurred when using such rooms as polling stations. 3 You should liaise with the relevant schools and managers of publicly-funded rooms at the earliest opportunity to confirm that you want to use certain rooms within their premises as polling stations. 1. [Rule 22\(1\)\(a\) Representation of the People Act \(RPA\) 1983](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. [Rule 22\(1\)\(b\) RPA 1983](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. [Rule 22 RPA 1983](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) Last updated: 30 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Use of schools as polling stations](#) [Booking suitable polling stations](#) [Last minute changes to polling stations](#) [Last minute changes to polling stations](#) There may be circumstances (e.g., flooding, fire, vandalism) when a change of polling station is required at short notice. As part of your contingency planning, you should compile a list of stand-by or portable polling stations that could be used in such circumstances. Local authorities are responsible for designating polling places and polling districts and you must designate a new polling station within the same polling place. 1 Usually, if there is a need to change the polling place, council agreement will be required. If delegation procedures are in place, you should follow these and contact the person or persons who are entitled to make changes to the scheme of polling places. However, flood, fire or vandalism occurring in the immediate lead-up to polling day could constitute a ‘special circumstance’, enabling you to designate a polling station outside the polling place without the need to seek council agreement. You should amend and republish the notice of situation of polling stations to reflect any changes to your polling stations. There are a number of mitigating measures you can take to ensure that electors who are affected by a late change to a polling station are able to vote with minimum disruption. You should have

a protocol for what to do in case of a last-minute change. As a minimum, you should: use social media to inform electors that there has been a change to a polling station if time allows, send out a letter to all affected electors informing them of the change to their polling station if time allows, use the local media to disseminate information to the affected electors – for example, through issuing press releases put up signs at the old polling station informing electors about the change, including directions to the new one display clear and visible signage at the new polling station Where any last minute changes to polling stations are required, ROs should ensure equipment to support disabled voters is still provided. 1. Rule 25(3) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Last minute changes to polling stations Use of schools as polling stations Verification and count venues and layouts Verification and count venues and layouts You should ensure that the verification and count processes are designed and managed to secure an accurate result, with a clear audit trail and that they are transparent, with everything carried out in clear view of all those entitled to attend. The verification and count may take place at different venues and in these circumstances you will need to take into consideration travel to the different locations and impact on timings, steps required to package up the ballot papers in accordance with the relevant election rules, and secure transportation to the count venue. Selecting the venue(s) When selecting the venue for your verification and count, you should consider: convenience of the location of the venue lessons learnt from previous electoral events access arrangements for vehicles and parking entrances for those entitled to attend and staff, and for the delivery of the ballot boxes disabled access, both to and within the venue size of the venue taking into account: the space required to conduct the verification and count processes sufficient storage space for parcels, ballot boxes and other equipment adequate space for those entitled to attend and observe proceedings at the count lighting within the venue and externally heating of the venue platform or stage for announcing the results, and for making regular announcements throughout the proceedings acoustics within the venue internal and external IT and communication systems facilities for those attending the verification and count media requirements furniture requirements security and storage requirements contingency arrangements to address the risk of a loss of venue You should ensure that any equipment is tested in advance of the verification and count and that you have contingency arrangements in place in case of equipment or power malfunction. Planning the layout You need to ensure that all your processes are transparent, with everything at the verification and count carried out in clear view of all those entitled to attend enabling them to have confidence that the count process is well-managed and so that they can have confidence in the result. You should prepare layout plans of your verification and count venue(s) at an early stage. A good layout will be informed by the verification and count model you decide to adopt, consideration of the workflows you intend to follow and the space you will have available. To avoid any issues at the verification and count you should put yourself in the position of a candidate or agent when planning the layout to test whether the arrangements deliver the necessary transparency. However, you also need to ensure that the work of your staff is not disrupted by those observing the process. In considering the layout and organisation of the verification and count, you should consider that: appropriate security arrangements are in place to ensure that only those eligible to attend actually do so there are sufficient tables to accommodate the number of verification and counting staff you have appointed and adequate space for the processes to be carried out

efficiently the layout of the tables: takes into account the number of counting agents that are likely to be appointed to oversee the verification and count, as well as others entitled to be present allows easy viewing by all of those entitled to be present takes into account the number and size of the ballot papers the space around the tables and circulation areas has been maximised and any obstructions removed there is sufficient seating for those entitled to attend proceedings the public address system is in working order with sufficient range the requirements of the media have been considered, e.g. by the provision of a separate media area, as they are likely to require space for their specialist (sometimes bulky) equipment the health and safety of all those attending has been assessed, for example: any cabling from equipment or media cameras should not present a trip hazard to anyone at the proceedings free access to emergency exits should not be obstructed in any way maximum venue capacity should not be exceeded Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Verification and count venues and layouts Last minute changes to polling stations Use of designated areas Use of designated areas You should consider designating areas for specific functions and identify what furniture and equipment will be required for each. Arrival at the venue Car parking and vehicle access It is advisable to designate different parking areas for candidates, agents and observers, and for staff. It can be helpful to have a designated entrance and exit to the car park, to avoid congestion, such as when ballot boxes are arriving from the polling stations. It may be useful to have staff supervising the car park at this time. Any staff working in the car parking area should be equipped with appropriate safety wear such as high-visibility jackets, and should be trained to deal with a large volume of traffic including, for example, counting agents arriving at the proceedings and polling station staff arriving with ballot boxes. Entrance Staff should be positioned at the entrance(s) to check whether people seeking to enter the verification and count are entitled to do so. It can be helpful to have different entrances for staff and for other attendees. Additionally you should ensure that your entrance arrangements avoid creating a bottleneck which could delay the start of the verification and count. Receiving area This is where ballot boxes, ballot paper accounts and other polling station stationery and equipment will arrive for checking in and sorting. Ideally, this area should have an entrance separate from that used by other staff, candidates, agents and observers, with direct access from the car park or loading area. Processing Areas Verification, reconciliation and results tables This is where the verification staff will verify the contents of the ballot boxes and reconcile the total number of votes. If laptops are to be used, you should take cabling arrangements into account and consider contingency arrangements in the event of equipment failure. If you need to communicate local count totals to an RO responsible for collating the results you will also require an area for this communication to take place. RO's table This is where you should keep law textbooks, Electoral Commission guidance, procedure notes, spare staff instructions, staff lists, stationery and other guidance materials available for reference. Count tables These should provide proper separation for the staff and counting agents. Where space permits, chairs could be provided close to these tables for counting agents and observers. You may wish to use measures to separate staff working at counting tables and those observing. However, these measures should not negatively impact on the ability of candidates and agents to oversee and scrutinise the verification and count processes, including the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers. Postal voting area Where postal votes are to be opened and the personal identifiers checked at the verification venue, you should allocate a separate area for processing unopened

postal votes received from polling stations. You will need to allocate adequate space to receive, open and verify the identifiers on these postal votes, and to allow observation of these processes. You will need to consider network and cabling arrangements if using verification software for personal identifier verification.

Tables for counted ballot papers Once ballot papers have been sorted and counted into votes for individual parties and/or candidates, as appropriate, they should be placed in bundles (e.g. 100 ballot papers) and put on a separate table, so that all of the votes for each party or candidate are kept together. Candidates and agents are likely to expect all the bundles for all the parties and/or candidates (as appropriate) to be placed in one central location so they can see the comparative numbers of votes for each party and/or candidate. This needs to be considered particularly when the verification and count has been sub-divided into areas smaller than the electoral area.

Other areas

Area for candidates, agents, observers and guests If possible, consider setting aside a separate area for candidates, agents, observers and guests with access to television coverage of the elections.

Area for refreshments Consider providing an area where counting assistants and other staff can have a drink and a snack – they may be advised to bring some drink and food along or this could be provided for them. The verification and count can be a lengthy process and it is important to have adequate refreshments available to help to maintain staff energy and concentration levels. To avoid the possibility of any spillages you should not allow counting assistants to eat or drink at the counting tables. However, you could consider allowing the consumption of bottled water (with non-spill tops) at the count tables. Many ROs also provide facilities for candidates, agents, observers and other attendees to purchase refreshments on site.

Media area The requirements for the media area will depend upon the types of media represented and their respective needs. For example, if television cameras are present, any lighting should not cause undue heat or glare which might impair the efficiency of the count, and cameras must not be allowed to film close-ups of the ballot papers. In addition, it is important that there are no trailing cables for count attendees to trip over, and that any equipment installed is safely positioned. You could consider establishing areas for media representatives that allow the opportunity to oversee the proceedings from a distance and fulfil their role to report on the progress and results throughout the event.

Declaration area A raised platform on which the local totals/results can be declared. If space allows you should gather candidates together for the announcements and allow acceptance and concession speeches. If you decide that these traditional arrangements will not be feasible at your venue, you should ensure that you are nevertheless able to communicate the results of the polls in line with legislative requirements and that all stakeholders, including media representatives, are aware of your planned arrangements in advance.

Last updated: 30 May 2023

Book traversal links for Use of designated areas

Verification and count venues and layouts

Managing contractors and suppliers

Managing contractors and suppliers You can outsource particular work required to deliver the election, but not the responsibility for ensuring compliance with the legislation. Do not automatically assume that outsourcing is your only and best option. You should make an assessment of the need to outsource. Your decision should be taken as part of an assessment of the costs, risks and benefits of outsourcing work, compared to in-house delivery by your staff. Your review of previous electoral events and consideration of the specific requirements for the election will help to inform your decision as to whether or not to outsource a particular function or task. If outsourcing is considered appropriate, your project plan should cover the management of contractors and suppliers and the development and

management of contracts. Finding printers If you decide to outsource production and are having difficulty finding a suitable printer, the British Printing Industries Federation, or in Scotland, Graphic Enterprise Scotland may be contacted for assistance: British Printing Industries Federation Head Office Unit 2 Villiers Court Meriden Business Park Copse Drive Coventry CV5 9RN Tel: 0845 250 7050 www.britishprint.com Graphic Enterprise Scotland C/O Maclay, Murray & Spens 1 George Square Glasgow G2 1AL Tel: 07771 865 947 www.graphicenterprisescotland.org Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Managing contractors and suppliers Use of designated areas Managing the procurement process for outsourced work Managing the procurement process for outsourced work If you decide to outsource work, you should commence the procurement process as soon as possible. Your local authority will have adopted standing orders or regulations relating to procurement and contracts. You should take advice from relevant staff at your local authority on the procedures to be followed and legal requirements for procuring supplies and services. This includes consideration of any equipment that you may need to procure for the training and processes you undertake in-house such as: issuing postal votes opening postal votes polling stations verification and count You will also need to have regard to the requirements of the Fees and Charges Order. You should document all stages of the procurement process. The risks of outsourcing should be clearly acknowledged in your documentation, with contingency arrangements identified and built into the process. Good public procurement practice recommends obtaining at least three written quotations from prospective suppliers. Some local authorities may have a standing list of approved contractors who have already been through a tendering process. It may be more effective and economical to use such existing contractors and systems. A detailed specification of requirements is essential for effective procurement, and should be developed for all outsourced work. Suppliers should be able to provide robust information on how they are going to deliver the work as required by the specification. As a minimum, the specification must: include a detailed description of what you want them to deliver and when provide clear instructions as to the necessary statutory requirements and obligations in relation to the particular work or services to be undertaken, such as directions as to printing and any content and layout requirements statutory deadlines contain relevant information about any data that will be provided, including processes for sending and receipt, and secure management of data be provided to all those invited to tender for the work, and the successful contractor must be able to meet all of the requirements of the specification make it clear that the successful contractor should be producing work or delivering services according to the specification and that no changes should be made during fulfilment of the contract without prior authorisation You should take steps to ensure that your selected contractor understands the requirements and has the experience and suitability to undertake the work being outsourced. The final price in the suppliers' proposals should not be the only consideration in choosing a contractor. Each bid should be carefully considered to assess exactly what it offers. The focus should be on value for money, with the final decision being a judgement based on the contractor's commitment to demonstrate: the best combination of the cost of the goods or service the ability to meet your requirements as laid out in the specification the capability to complete the work on time and to a high standard the provision of sufficient guarantees that the requirements of the data protection legislation will be met that the appropriate checks will be made relating to the suppliers' statements as to security, health and safety, and the secure handling of data Contractors may sub-contract work out and you should give prior written consent

before sub-contractors are to be used. You should ensure that any sub-contractors are aware of the specific requirements as detailed in the specification and seek assurances that the sub-contractor will be capable of delivering the work. Once you have made your final decision, you should take up any formal references of the chosen applicant. You should also notify unsuccessful applicants and be prepared to debrief them should they request it. You should have a formal, written contract in place with every contractor to which you have outsourced a function or task. It is essential that statutory requirements and their implications are fully explained wherever contractors are used, and that these requirements are explicitly stated in the contract for any work. Last updated: 30 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Managing the procurement process for outsourced work](#) [Managing contractors and suppliers](#) [Data Protection considerations for outsourced work](#) [Data Protection considerations for outsourced work](#) [When appointing a contractor or supplier you must ensure that they can provide sufficient guarantees that the requirements of data protection legislation will be met.](#) The requirements state that the supplier and any sub-contractors must ensure: the secure destruction of all electoral registration data and related materials at an agreed point the safe/secure storage of all live ballot papers the secure destruction of all data related to the ballot papers at an agreed point, for example, as soon as possible after polling day You should ensure that data protection is integral in any tender exercise (documenting your decision-making process) and that specific requirements are met in any contract awarded. You should liaise with your council's Data Protection/Information Officer to ensure compliance with data protection legislation. There are specific requirements under data protection legislation where you are using a contractor (i.e. a 'processor') to process personal data on your behalf. This would include, for example, where you are sending data to a contractor to election materials such as postal ballot packs or ballot papers. As RO you are the data controller and you remain ultimately responsible for ensuring that personal data is processed in accordance with data protection legislation. However, if a processor fails to meet any of its obligations, or acts against your instructions, then it may also be liable to pay damages or be subject to fines or other penalties or corrective measures. The ICO has provided guidance on 'Contracts and liabilities between controllers and processors' which you should consider in relation to your contracts with data processors. Please see our data protection guidance on [Using contractors and suppliers](#) for further information. Last updated: 30 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Data Protection considerations for outsourced work](#) [Managing the procurement process for outsourced work](#) [Developing contracts for outsourced work](#) [Developing contracts for outsourced work](#) The key to effective contract management is continuous and open lines of communication between you and your nominated contract manager, underpinned by clear and robust provisions in the contract as to the quality and timescales expected and required. The contract should outline basic details regarding the products and services being delivered, such as specifications, quantities, timeframes and cost. The contract must allow you to terminate the contract in the case of: a negligent act or omission an act resulting in you being unable to perform your statutory duties insolvency or dissolution of the company affecting the contract The supplier should also have adequate insurance in place to cover risks in relation to public liability and professional negligence. It should also support the quality assurance process by containing specific details of the following subject areas: Business continuity plans (BCPs) It is key that your contract arrangements should outline how your supplier will continue operating during an unplanned disruption in service. The detail may be

held outside of your formal contract, but you should ensure that you get assurance that such BCPs exist, and ideally you should be able to view these for your own reference.

Service level agreements (SLAs) Your contract should define exactly what services a supplier will provide and the required level or standard for those services. For example, this may include details of how quickly emails will be replied to, cover your rights and those of Electoral Commission representatives and accredited observers to access supplier premises for the purposes of observation, or to enable you to carry out quality assurance checks, agree the amount of slippage for any deadlines that is permitted by both sides under the contract, and how any failures to meet SLAs will be dealt with, both in terms of delivery and any related compensation. Such SLAs will help define what you can expect as a customer and how you and your supplier will work together. You should establish a procedure to enable you to carry out proof-checking on print-ready proofs and test documents within the agreed timescales. You should also agree a process to rectify any errors. Any variations from the agreed specification could result in a breach of legislation and any such breach is the personal responsibility of the RO, so any variations should be formally documented and signed off by you or by someone authorised to act on your behalf. The contract should be capable of being adapted to take account of unscheduled activities and last minute changes. You should ensure that contractors are aware of how registration deadlines may impact on timescales. For example, EROs have until the determination deadline (i.e. 6 working days before the poll) to receive the required evidence from a prospective elector under the exceptions process and make their determination. 1 If the elector also applied to vote by post, this will impact on the number of postal votes to be included in the last issue. If there is slippage, for example because of the time required to process bulk last minute postal vote applications, you should advise the contractors as soon as possible.

Data protection arrangements Ensure that you cover the specifics of the data to be processed, including the types of data, the duration of the processing and the rights and obligations of both parties. This should also include instructions for deleting data after the processing has been completed. It is a legal requirement under current data protection legislation to formalise the working relationship with suppliers contracted to process data you hold, in a written contract. For further information see our guidance on data protection considerations when using contractors and suppliers . You should also consider confidentiality clauses. While ROs are not subject to freedom of information requests, in the interests of transparency, consideration should be given to agreeing to some disclosure in the event of an FOI request. However, you and the supplier must not divulge any confidential information relating the terms of the contract. You must provide suppliers with a copy of the requirements of secrecy: Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC)

Use of any sub-contractors Your supplier should identify where they will be subcontracting any element of the delivery of their services. For election suppliers this could be in relation to production, fulfilment or delivery of materials. Whilst the use of sub-contractors is commonplace to many industries, and should not in itself be a cause of concern, it is important that you are aware of whether your suppliers utilise the services of sub-contractors and the quality assurance processes they have in place to ensure that any work delivered by third parties maintains the standards as set out in your contract with them, including data protection and secrecy requirements.

Invoicing arrangements You should ensure that all supporting information in relation to the costs charged and will be sent by the supplier in accordance with the tender/quote. You must settle the invoice within the agreed time. 1. Section 13B

Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Developing contracts for outsourced work Data Protection considerations for outsourced work Preparing for managing the delivery of outsourced work Preparing for managing the delivery of outsourced work As part of your preparations for the delivery of the poll, you should check in with suppliers to finalise arrangements well before the start of the election period. This is especially important if you have long-standing contracts in place and you should check that all contractual arrangements are still appropriate and fully meet your requirements, or if there have been changes of personnel on either side. As part of the pre-poll check in you should cover: who the key contacts are from each side, and who can be contacted when the primary contacts are not available (including out-of-hours) to ensure that work progresses without unnecessary delay the timeline for all stages of the work to be delivered, including: when you will provide data and other information to the contractor when each round of proofs will be provided to you for each item being produced, and the deadline for you to undertake your checks and respond for each the printing and fulfilment windows for each item, including when and how quality assurance checks will take place at each stage the despatch window for each item, including likely delivery dates given the delivery service to be used and the quantities being despatched on each date the management of files of additional electors/electors to be removed from the data (where applicable) any proposed use of sub-contractors; including in relation to the use of downstream access providers (DSAs) for the delivery of materials to electors the formats and communication channels to be used to provide information to suppliers (especially data from your EMS), share proofs and provide confirmation of receipt of data, items or sign-off of proofs etc. throughout the process, and for confirmation of despatch of items. This is important to agree in advance to support a clear audit trail of each stage of the process the exact specifications for each item being produced; items such as ballot papers must, by law, be printed in accordance with the directions for printing in the appendix to the relevant election rules. For example, you should check with your print supplier the maximum size of ballot papers that they can produce and what contingency arrangements will be in place should longer ballot papers be required how you will inform each other of any issues that arise, and the escalation process involved for decision making and resolution if needed Once you have agreed on all of the particular arrangements as above, you should produce a written document which contains all of the details and can be referred to throughout the process to ensure every stage is managed and delivered as per your mutually agreed specifications. It is important to remember that the agreed deadlines will apply to both parties, so you will need to make sure that you carry out all required actions on the dates agreed to support the completion of the work to the agreed timetable. You can find more guidance to support you when working with suppliers in our section on quality assurance and proofing of election materials . Last updated: 31 July 2023 Book traversal links for Preparing for managing the delivery of outsourced work Developing contracts for outsourced work Working with mail delivery partners Working with mail delivery partners Unless you are planning to hand-deliver all of your election material, you will need have early discussions with your mail delivery provider to finalise arrangements. Your focus should be to ensure that material is delivered to electors successfully and maximises the time available to them to receive the information and take action as necessary. Some print suppliers use Royal Mail for the end to end delivery of mail, however some use downstream access (DSA) providers for the initial part of the distribution process. This

involves the mail being collected and processed by a company other than Royal Mail, but then handed over to Royal Mail mail centres for final processing and delivery from local delivery offices. Regardless of how the delivery of your mail is managed, it is important to retain an overview at all times as responsibility remains with you even where you outsource different processes. You should discuss with your print suppliers to confirm whether they intend to use DSA providers as part of the process of delivering your election material, or whether items will be handed over directly to Royal Mail. This will help you understand the full delivery process and manage any issues should they arise. If you have agreed with your supplier that DSA providers will be used as part of the despatch and delivery process, you should get updates from your supplier on the progress of the delivery throughout. Managing delivery schedules You should liaise with your print supplier to manage the delivery of materials and ensure that voters receive the material as soon as possible so that they have the maximum amount of time to act on the information. In making these arrangements you should: agree and obtain formal confirmation on strict delivery schedules well in advance of the poll. For example, when the dispatch of election material will commence and last date of dispatch obtain postal dockets to confirm the number of documents dispatched and the dates of dispatch, for all issues. This will also help to identify any possible issues that may have arisen with regards to dispatch and feed into any subsequent evaluation of contractor performance, and enable you to provide information to voters on dates that they should expect to receive material You can find more information in our guidance on options for delivery of postal ballot packs . Royal Mail You should contact your Royal Mail account manager, and continue to liaise with them on a regular basis. At an early stage in your planning process you should ensure that: any business reply licences you hold are up to date you obtain the estimated delivery window of election material based on the despatch dates and method of delivery/postal package chosen. This will help you to manage communication channels to voters in your area and assist in early detection of any issues encountered with the delivery of election material any postal voting arrangements will help to maximise the time available to postal voters to receive, complete and return their postal vote the correct postage will be included on any postal votes being sent to addresses outside the UK Royal Mail knows where and when to deliver your returned postal votes to a secure point, ready for processing; you may wish to consider a timed delivery You will also need to consider whether to arrange for any final sweeps of postal votes and weigh up what the benefits of the sweep would be. Last updated: 30 May 2023 Book traversal links for Working with mail delivery partners Preparing for managing the delivery of outsourced work Maintaining the integrity of the election Maintaining the integrity of the election Voters and campaigners should be confident that: elections are free from fraud votes cast will be counted in the way that voters intended the results you declare are true and accurate Trust and confidence in the integrity of elections is essential but can be fragile. It will be difficult for you to rebuild trust or confidence which has been lost as a result of allegations or proven cases of fraud. You should put in place effective strategies for preventing electoral fraud from the outset. You will also need to be prepared to work with the police and prosecutors to subsequently investigate any allegations which might be made. You should cover your approach to tackling electoral fraud with parties, candidates and agents at briefing sessions and as part of any written information provided to them. You should also invite the police to attend any such briefing sessions and invite them to supply you with any relevant documentation to include in your information pack. This guidance deals

specifically with the risk of electoral fraud in relation to election processes. Information on dealing with integrity issues related to fraudulent registration or absent vote applications can be found in the ERO guidance: Identifying suspicious registration applications in England , Scotland and Wales Identifying suspicious absent vote applications in England , Scotland and Wales Offences There are a number of electoral offences specified in electoral law. Part 4 of our guidance for candidates and agents provides information on these offences. Dealing with allegations of financial offences Candidates and their agents must follow rules set out in legislation about how much they can spend at an election. We produce guidance for candidates and agents , parties and non-party campaigners outlining rules on spending. Any queries on election spending should be referred to the Electoral Commission's Party Election Finance team via email: pef@electoralcommission.org.uk or telephone: 0333 103 1928 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Maintaining the integrity of the election Working with mail delivery partners Assessing and managing the risk of electoral fraud Assessing and managing the risk of electoral fraud Although there are no definitive signs of possible electoral fraud, you will need to have in place mechanisms to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate potential electoral fraud. You should be aware of and consider all the data which is available to you, including whether there: have been unusual patterns of rejected ballot papers, including rejected postal ballot packs, at previous elections are any unusual patterns of registration or absent vote applications in the period leading up to the election We also have further guidance on identifying suspicious: registration applications in England , Wales and Scotland absent vote applications in England , Wales and Scotland Voter Authority Certificate applications in England , Wales and Scotland You are uniquely placed to identify incidents and patterns of activity that might indicate electoral fraud in your area. Taking early action to address possible fraud could help to avoid costly police investigations or legal challenges to the results of elections. You should ensure that you have mechanisms in place to assess the risk of electoral fraud in your area, including considering: whether there has been a history of allegations of electoral fraud in the area whether the election is likely to be particularly close and hard fought whether it is a marginal seat, which would need only a relatively small swing in the number of votes to change control whether there is a contest based on strong personal disagreements as well as political arguments risks where there is a highly mobile population with a frequent turnover of electors risks where there are electors who may be more vulnerable because of low levels of literacy and/or language ability Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Assessing and managing the risk of electoral fraud Maintaining the integrity of the election Planning your approach to maintaining the integrity of the election Planning your approach to maintaining the integrity of the election You should have in place plans and processes to maintain the integrity of the election. Your plans should be developed in consultation with the police single point of contact (SPOC) . The plans should include: how you will work with the local police and the SPOC, outlining the division of responsibilities so that there is clarity about each other's roles, clear lines of communication and agreement how regularly you would expect to be in contact how you will communicate your approach to maintaining electoral integrity with stakeholders and electors, in order to support public confidence in the election mechanisms for monitoring indicators of possible electoral fraud and thresholds for action in response specific steps to deal with any potential electoral fraud such as: an agreed approach for referring allegations of fraud for further investigation where appropriate

establishing a process for handling evidence, so that the police can carry out any forensic analysis any specific risks you have identified in addition to any general fraud detection plans Specific risks might include the risks associated with houses of multiple occupation such as student halls of residence or care homes where other people may have access to personal mail or where care givers may assist residents in care homes with completing postal vote applications or postal votes. Making plans to ensure the security of papers Your project plan should include a review of security arrangements with the local police to ensure the security of ballot papers throughout the process. Your security arrangements should prevent unauthorised access to or use of the ballot papers during all stages of the production process and storage between printing and the poll. Whichever method of storage you choose, it should be such that you can be satisfied that you have taken all necessary steps to ensure that ballot boxes and other items are kept securely at all times and cannot be interfered with.

Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Planning your approach to maintaining the integrity of the election](#) Assessing and managing the risk of electoral fraud Security considerations at the verification and count Security considerations at the verification and count You should consider the security risks of the verification and count as part of your integrity planning and include them on your risk register. Security risks may vary within the electoral area and you may need to take a different approach in particular instances. You should consider liaising with your local police single point of contact (SPOC) when deciding on the most appropriate method for transporting and ensuring secure storage of ballot boxes and other materials . We have developed a template risk and issues register that you can use to record any risks you identify. It contains examples that you will need to consider and, if necessary, mitigate, as well as a log to record any issues that emerge and that you will need to address. Alternatively, you may wish to include risks including our examples in any risk management documentation you have already developed. Risk register At the count venue, you should arrange to have robust arrangements in place to check in all the materials and paperwork delivered to ensure that nothing is missing. You need to decide how the ballot papers and other materials will be kept secure once they arrive at the verification and count venue, for example, by ensuring they are never left unattended. You should also take all necessary steps to ensure the security of ballot boxes and relevant stationery from the close of poll through to the declaration of the result, particularly where there is a break in proceedings . Where there is a pause in proceedings for the whole or any part of the period between 7pm and 9am the next day, you have a legal duty to place the documents under your seal and to take proper precautions for the security of the papers and documents. You should liaise with your SPOC on this. You will need to have contingency arrangements in place in the event of any evacuation from any premises and consider how you will ensure the security of the ballot boxes and other materials. You should also brief candidates and agents about your security arrangements, so that they can have confidence in the integrity of the count. Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Security considerations at the verification and count](#) Planning your approach to maintaining the integrity of the election Working with your single point of contact officer Working with your single point of contact officer Every UK police force has a named single point of contact (SPOC) officer for election-related crime. Your local police force SPOC will be a key partner to help you to ensure that any possible integrity issues are quickly identified and dealt with. You should make contact with your named SPOC at the outset of your election planning process. Once established, you should maintain this contact

throughout the election period. If you have any problems establishing contact with your SPOC, please contact your local Commission team . Your discussions should cover your plans for maintaining the integrity of the election and your mechanisms for identifying possible issues and what actions should be taken where any suspicions arise. A checklist of topics that should be considered at any pre-election planning meeting between you and your SPOC is available to support your discussions. You should agree an approach with your SPOC for referring allegations of fraud you may receive for further investigation where appropriate. For example, will you be the initial point of contact and refer allegations to the SPOC, or will they be the initial point of contact and advise you of allegations? You should also agree a mechanism for handling evidence, so that the police can carry out any forensic analysis, where necessary. The College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice have provided guidance to local authorities for handling evidence . In addition, you should take all necessary steps to ensure that police officers (which can, in England and Wales, include police community support officers) attend at polling stations or call in during polling day, as appropriate, and discuss any security issues relating to any other aspects of the process including community safety for voters. You may also decide to undertake joint publicity work with the police to support your work in maintaining the integrity of the election. For example, you could collaborate on running public awareness campaigns within the electoral area to highlight what can be done to help detect and prevent electoral fraud. In England and Wales, a template memorandum of understanding between the Returning Officer and the police on the joint planning for elections and the reporting and investigating of electoral malpractice is available on the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice website . Police Scotland have provided guidance for Police Officers on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland. 2017 Guidance on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Working with your single point of contact officer Security considerations at the verification and count Dealing with allegations of electoral fraud Dealing with allegations of electoral fraud It is important that once you have put in place your plans for monitoring and maintaining the integrity of the election in your area you offer clear advice to candidates, agents and electors on how to make allegations to ensure an effective and consistent approach is taken to managing them. You should ensure that all candidates and agents understand: how to raise specific concerns about electoral fraud relating to the election what type and level of evidence will be necessary to enable allegations to be investigated by the police how allegations will be dealt with what information and feedback they should be able to expect about the progress of any investigations The police will investigate any allegations of fraud until, following consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) or, in Scotland, with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), they are either satisfied that no further action is necessary or appropriate, or they forward the case file to the CPS or COPFS for prosecution. The police should keep you and, where appropriate, the ERO informed of the progress of the case. The Commission and the National Police Chiefs' Council (formerly the Association of Chief Police Officers) have supported the College of Policing to produce a manual of guidance for policing elections in England and Wales . Police Scotland, in consultation with the Electoral Commission and the Electoral Management Board for Scotland (EMB), has produced a guidance document for police officers in Scotland on preventing and detecting electoral fraud. 2017 Guidance on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Dealing with

allegations of electoral fraud Working with your single point of contact officer Code of conduct for campaigners Code of conduct for campaigners Following consultation with Returning Officers, police forces and political parties, the Commission has produced a Code of Conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums. The code applies to all campaigners and sets out agreed standards of appropriate behaviour before and during an election or referendum. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 For England and Wales, the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice has developed a template letter seeking agreement from candidates to abide by the Code of Conduct and you should provide this to all candidates standing at a UK Parliamentary election in England or Wales. Police Scotland has also developed a template letter seeking agreement from candidates to abide by the Code of Conduct (see Appendix K in their guidance for Police Officers on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland) and you should provide this to all candidates standing at a UK Parliamentary election in Scotland. 2017 Guidance on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland The Code also makes it clear that if an (A)RO considers it appropriate to address further specific local risks, and has consulted with the relevant national and local parties, we will support them in introducing additional local provisions which go beyond the terms of the nationally agreed code. The Code also covers the requirement for photographic identification to be shown at polling stations. We consulted with the political parties that sit on the Westminster Parliamentary Parties Panel on this update to the code. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Code of conduct for campaigners Dealing with allegations of electoral fraud Planning for communication activity Planning for communication activity As RO, it is part of your role to ensure that everyone who wants to participate in the election is able to access clear information to enable them to do so. This section contains guidance to support the development of your plans for communicating with a range of audiences in advance of and during the election period. It includes guidance on public awareness activities to both encourage participation and to ensure that electors have the information they need in advance of polling day to assist them in ensuring they know what they need to do to vote. It also contains guidance on planning your engagement with candidates and agents to support their participation in the election. Early engagement is key to ensuring everyone has a good understanding the requirements of candidature, and resulting obligations during an election. Finally, it contains guidance to support your plan for communicating with the media and other stakeholders. General guidance for EROs on working with partners is contained in our guidance for EROs . Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Planning for communication activity Code of conduct for campaigners Engaging with voters Engaging with voters You must take appropriate steps to encourage the participation of electors in the election, and in carrying out such activity you must have regard to any guidance issued by the Electoral Commission. 1 Part of this engagement activity should include how you will communicate the voting process and support available for disabled voters . This should be both directly with local disability organisations and more general signposting to accessible communications, such as providing online versions of documents that are easy-read, compatible with screen-readers, or available in large print. Where you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to ensure that all of your activities are aligned and are designed to maximise impact ahead of the registration deadline. For more information on engagement as an ERO see our guidance on your public engagement strategy and registration plan . Your activity and messaging should aim to ensure that everyone who wants to vote has the information to

do so, and can vote using their preferred method. All outgoing communications should provide appropriate contact details to allow anyone to respond and obtain further information. When planning your activity you should consider and document: the identification of your target audience the objectives and success measures of the activity any risks –and mitigation of those risks resources – both financial and staffing plans for collaborative working with relevant local partners, including experts in the communications department of the local authority Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies Where your constituency covers more than one local authority area you should ensure that you liaise with the ERO and elections staff from the other local authority/authorities to develop a coordinated plan for public awareness activity across the constituency. Engaging with voters You should identify the most effective methods to ensure your public awareness activity reaches as wide an audience as possible and that it provides essential information electors need to enable them to take part in the election. You should use your website, social media and traditional methods such as notice boards to communicate this information. Information required by electors in order to successfully participate may include: details of the election itself the date and hours of poll different options for voting (e.g. in a polling station, postal or proxy voting) the location of polling stations any key deadlines (e.g. deadlines for applying for postal or proxy votes) how to register to vote requirement to show an accepted form of photographic ID in order to vote in a polling station how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document how to vote (i.e. how to mark the ballot paper) assistance available to electors and how to request reasonable adjustments (e.g. equipment to enable disabled voters to vote independently in the polling station) and how to request information in alternative formats (e.g. braille, easy read, large print) how votes are counted how the result will be made known In the lead-up to scheduled polls, the Commission may run a public awareness campaign to encourage registration. Such a campaign will usually involve mass media advertising, working with partners and public relations activities. We will also provide resources that can be used locally, such as posters, online banners, template press releases and social media content. The Commission provides public awareness resources to support electors in understanding the requirement for photographic ID in relevant election types. This includes resources specifically for different groups who might need greater support to provide acceptable forms of photographic ID. The Commission will provide a suite of resources which can help you to promote information about the voting process and support available for disabled people, including resources which will signpost to guidance on accessible communications. This information is available with our guidance on Enabling and making voting easier in polling stations . We will provide you with information on our public awareness campaigns via the EA Bulletin . We also publish a voter registration newsletter, Roll Call, which aims to help local council communications teams stay up-to-date with the latest campaign information and resources. You and your council communications team can sign up to receive the newsletter here . Enquiries resulting from public awareness activity You need to consider how you will receive feedback and enquiries from both your general public awareness messaging and more focused activity such as specific assistance available for disabled electors. While most public enquiries will be easy to manage via your contact centre or support staff you should have a clearly communicated process for reasonable adjustment requests. Requests may include making polling station notices available in braille, easy read or in a pictorial format, or different types of equipment or support to enable a person to vote independently in a polling station

such as audio devices■ or hearing induction loops. Staff dealing with these types of enquiries will need to be trained to understand the barriers that voters may face, the different types of alternative formats for information that are available and the types of equipment that you provide in polling stations. More guidance on managing requests for additional support and equipment to voters is available. ■ 1. Section 69(1) and (2) Electoral Administration Act 2006 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Engaging with voters Planning for communication activity Production and publication of notices Production and publication of notices When you are required to publish notices you should post them in conspicuous places within the electoral area. This should include local authority offices, noticeboards, libraries and other public buildings. The notice may also be given in such other manner as you think fit. 1 In order to ensure that voters can receive the information they need, in an accessible format and within time for them to cast their vote, you should ensure that information on the poll, including the notice of election and notice of poll, are easily accessible to voters, such as through the local authority website. If you are making information available on your website you should ensure it is accessible to all voters. For example, if you are providing information in PDF format, you should be aware that if certain steps are not followed when creating PDFs they may not be compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies. The UK Government has produced a guide to producing accessible PDFs you can refer to. You could also speak to your authority's equalities officer for advice. You should have robust proof-checking processes in place to ensure that there are no errors on the notices you are required to publish. Having robust proof checking processes in place could help detect any errors and avoid any potential data breaches before they occur. Guidance on the design of voter forms and notices The Commission's Making your mark guidance is focused on the design of usable and accessible forms and notices that put voters' needs first and enable them to vote confidently, according to their intentions. It provides guidance based on accepted industry good practice and findings from research with the public. Making your mark - design guidance for EAs Translation and formats of notices You are required, where you consider it appropriate to do so, to ensure that notices are translated or provided in another format. You may produce them: 2 in Braille in languages other than (or in Wales, and Welsh) using graphical representations in audio format 3 using any other means of making information accessible The nomination form and the ballot papers cannot be produced in any other language or format. However, both the enlarged hand-held and display copies of the ballot papers to be displayed in polling stations must have the instructions for voters printed at the top of the paper, and these words may be translated into languages other than or, in Wales, and Welsh. 4 Data protection considerations In accordance with data protection legislation, you will need to consider whether it is appropriate or necessary for the notices to remain published, on your website or elsewhere, beyond the expiry of the petition period for that election. Where the notices serve specific purposes, i.e. advising who will be a candidate at the election, once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, they serve no further purpose. You should either remove the notices, or remove the personal data contained in the notices, once the petition deadline for the election has passed. Data protection legislation does permit personal data to be stored for longer periods if the data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for scientific, historical, or statistical purposes and subject to the implementation of appropriate safeguards. For notices of election results, for example, you should

retain these on your website as they are for public interest and historical and statistical purposes. You can find more information in our data protection guidance .

1. Section 200 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.199B RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. S.199B(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. S.199B(5) and (6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Production and publication of notices Engaging with voters Providing information to electors on polling station locations Providing information to electors on polling station locations Where is my polling station? is a common question in the run-up to polling day and on polling day itself. In partnership with Democracy Club, we provide a postcode search tool on our website. When voters enter their postcode they are shown where their polling station is, and who their candidates are. You could embed this tool on your own website, using the widget, or add a link to our website. To facilitate this, we need you to send the polling station data for your area to Democracy Club. Once you have finalised your polling stations ahead of the election you can export the data from your EMS and email it to pollingstations@democracyclub.org.uk . Detailed instructions are available for each supplier , if you need them. We also provide your contact details in our postcode search tool. If your contact details change, we ask that you let us know as soon as possible so that we can update our records. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Providing information to electors on polling station locations Production and publication of notices Providing information to political parties, candidates and agents Providing information to political parties, candidates and agents Briefings You should ensure that you offer all potential candidates and agents a briefing session before or at the start of the nomination period. You should also hold an additional briefing session after the list of candidates standing for election has been confirmed after the close of nominations. As a minimum, your briefing should cover: the nomination process the election process election spending accessing the electoral register equipment provided to polling station that makes voting easier for disabled people You will also need to decide how information about local arrangements will be provided. This will include information on the dates, times and venues for the key election processes including: postal vote issues and openings polling day the verification and count The briefings should allow for the fact that there may be people who have little or no knowledge of election rules and procedures or who have not involved themselves in elections for some time. All briefing sessions should highlight the importance of following the election rules. You should also provide information on the standards of behaviour you expect from supporters in the area of the polling place on polling day. We have produced a template presentation for candidates and agents, which you may want to use as a basis for briefing candidates and agents in your area. Briefing for candidates and agents - UK Parliamentary election (PPTX) Providing written information You should ensure that candidates and election agents are also issued with written guidance on the election process and that the information is provided in good time to enable candidates and agents to act on it. The purpose of providing written guidance is so that parties, candidates and agents have access to authoritative and comprehensive guidance for reference at any time to ensure that they have all the information they need to take part in an election. Where appropriate, you can provide candidates and agents with a link to where they can find the relevant information online and it will be for you to ensure that candidates can easily access the information they need and to do whatever is necessary to facilitate this. You should ensure that candidates and agents can

easily access all the information they need in order to be able to participate in the election. You should bear in mind that candidates and agents may have specific access needs, and so may need any information or guidance produced in a large-print or other format, such as Braille or audio, or in a language other than (or, in Wales, in a language other than or Welsh). You should also consider that candidates and agents may have special requirements to support their attendance at briefings and you should make briefings available online or via video conference wherever possible. You can record your briefing and make this available online for candidates and agents to watch on demand at their convenience, with details of how they can ask any follow up questions afterwards included. However, you will also need to consider how you will offer briefings to those who are unable to, or uncomfortable with, accessing such information online, which may require you to provide some in-person briefings. You should inform candidates and agents of your proposed approach early to assist with your planning and preparation. Those interested in receiving a briefing should be asked to register in advance so that you can track numbers as well as accessibility requirements, which will enable you to tailor your approach and put the appropriate arrangements in place. Last updated: 27 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Providing information to political parties, candidates and agents](#)
[Providing information to electors on polling station locations](#)
[Providing information on the nomination process](#)
[Providing information on the nomination process As \(Acting\) Returning Officer](#)

you are responsible for all aspects of the nomination process at a UK Parliamentary election. 1 It is important to raise awareness of the availability of information for those wishing to stand for election through the provision of briefings and online or printed guidance, especially for those who have not made direct contact with you or your staff. When providing information or briefing sessions about the nomination process you should ensure you include information on: relevant deadlines submission rules subscriber requirements and use of the electoral register the use of commonly used names the completion of nomination papers the use of party names, descriptions and emblems the methods for paying the deposit any informal checking process arrangements you have in place Questions of eligibility or disqualification are for the candidate only and you should not give advice on such matters. The candidate should be directed to our guidance for candidates and agents in the first instance. Should they have any further concerns, you should advise them to seek their own legal advice.

Nomination packs You should prepare a nomination pack for any person who expresses an interest in standing for election. The nomination pack should contain: a nomination form a home address form a consent to nomination form a form for candidates to give notice of appointment of an election agent forms for candidates or their election agent to give notice of appointment of polling agents, postal voting agents and counting agents a certificate of authorisation to allow a candidate to stand on behalf of a registered political party a form for the candidate of a political party to request the use of an emblem details of how the deposit should be paid, including information on acceptable methods of payment written guidance for candidates and agents covering key aspects of the electoral process, including the qualifications and disqualifications for election, the nominations process, campaigning dos and don'ts, accessing electoral proceedings and what happens after the declaration of the result details of any local arrangements, such as the arrangements for the opening of postal votes, the poll and the count a copy of the Code of conduct for campaigners in Great Britain which sets out what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community details of how to obtain a copy of the electoral register and the absent voters'

lists, forms to make such requests with information on where to send these request forms to. You should highlight that the information contained in the electoral register and absent voting lists may only be used in accordance with the Representation of the People regulations 2001 and in accordance with data protection legislation. the relevant electorate figures to enable calculation of spending limits any other relevant information Our guidance for candidates and agents at a UK Parliamentary general election can be found on our website at: <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/uk-parliamentary-general-election-great-britain> Our guidance for candidates and agents at a UK Parliamentary by-election can be found on our website at: <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/uk-parliamentary-by-elections-great-britain> We have also produced a set of nomination papers that you can include in your nomination packs, which contains the required nomination papers as well as a certificate of authorisation, an emblem request form and an election agent appointment notification form. Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) 1. Rules 5 to 17, Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Providing information on the nomination process Providing information to political parties, candidates and agents Providing information on accessing the electoral register Providing information on accessing the electoral register Candidates are entitled on written request to the ERO to a free copy of the full register for the electoral area in which they are standing 1 . While the legal responsibility for receiving and supplying registers to candidates rests with the ERO for each local authority area, if you are the (A)RO of a constituency which crosses local authority boundaries, you should have in place plans for managing or coordinating requests and supplying copies of the registers to candidates. These plans should ensure that all candidates can be supplied with registers in such a way that they have timely and easy access to them. For example, you may consider supplying the registers to UK Parliamentary candidates centrally on behalf of all the EROs, and include a request form in the nomination pack that covers all local authority areas that are part of the constituency. The benefit of this approach is that it could operate so that candidates or election agents only need to complete one request form covering all local authority areas and receive their registers from a single place, instead of having to approach each ERO separately with individual requests. You would need to also consider the practicalities of collating the registers and, in particular, the updates to the register. You would need to discuss and agree with the EROs how the various registers and updates to them could be brought together for subsequent timely supply, including how this would work for both printed and data copies. The registers must be supplied in data form unless a printed copy has been specifically requested. We have produced template electoral register and absent voter list request forms that candidates can use. Register request form (DOC) Absent voters' list request form (DOC) Further information about candidate's entitlement to the register and absent votes list can be found in part 4 of our guidance for candidates and agents 1. Regulations 102 and 108, Representation of the People Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Providing information on accessing the electoral register Providing information on the nomination process Providing information on key election processes Providing information on key election processes As part of your plans for engaging with candidates and agents and supporting their participation in the election, you will need to determine how information about local arrangements will be provided to candidates. Local arrangements will include

information on the dates, times and venues for the key election processes, including: postal vote issue and openings polling day equipment provided to polling stations to make voting easier for disabled voters the verification and count As well as communicating your local arrangements, you should provide candidates and agents information on the requirement to show photographic ID at the polling station before a ballot paper is issued: accepted forms of photographic ID how electors who do not have an accepted form of photographic ID can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document the polling station process in respect of the identification requirement Your briefing session(s) should also highlight any security arrangements that you have put in place in consultation with the police. You may wish to invite your police single point of contact (SPOC) to attend any briefing sessions, or to provide written material that you can provide to candidates and agents. You should also cover what standards of behaviour you expect from supporters in the area of the polling place on polling day. The College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice have produced guidance on Maintaining order and preventing undue influence outside polling stations . This document is designed to help the police think about how best to approach the issue of policing polling stations and offers some practical steps to help them reduce the likelihood of problems arising and deal with any that occur. Although it is aimed at the SPOC it may also be of use to you, particularly in communicating to candidates and agents the standards of behaviour expected from supporters in the area of the polling place. It should be read in conjunction with section 3 of the code of conduct for campaigners: electoral registration, postal voting, proxy voting and polling stations. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 Tellers guidance Tellers do's and don't Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Providing information on key election processes Providing information on accessing the electoral register Providing information on election spending Providing information on election spending Candidates are required by law to follow certain rules regarding: • how much they can spend • who they can accept donations from • what they must report after the election You should ensure that candidates and election agents have access to information on calculating the spending limit 1 (including the electorate figure and whether the constituency is a county or borough constituency), spending returns and declarations in order to enable them to meet reporting requirements. Further information on the two types of constituency can be found here . At a general election, candidates will need the total number of electors on the UK Parliamentary register for the constituency on the last day for the publication of the notice of election (i.e. on the second day after the writ is received) excluding any attainers who will not be 18 years old on or before polling day. If you are not also the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) or your constituency crosses local authority boundaries, you should liaise with the relevant ERO(s) so that you are able to provide candidates with an accurate electorate figure that will allow them to calculate their spending limits. It is important that candidates are provided with the correct electorate figures so that they know how much they can spend. We have produced guidance on spending and donations at UK Parliamentary general elections which can be found in Part 3 of our guidance for candidates and agents . Our template presentation for candidates and agents also contains guidance on spending and donations. You can use these resources to provide candidates and agents with information on spending returns and declarations in order to enable them to meet their reporting requirements. Briefing for candidates and agents - UK Parliamentary election (PPTX) UK Parliamentary By-Elections UK

Parliamentary By-Elections For by-elections, the slides on spending will need to be amended to reflect the different regulated period and spending limits that apply to by-elections. The spending limit for candidates during the regulated period at a UK Parliamentary by-election is £100,000 . The regulated period begins on the day after the date the candidate officially becomes a candidate and ends on the date of the poll. A person officially becomes a candidate at a UK Parliamentary by-election at the time the vacancy occurred if on or before this date they have already declared that they are intending to be a candidate at the election (or another person has declared that the person is intending to be a candidate). 2 If after this date they or others declare that they will be a candidate at the election, they will become a candidate on the date such a declaration is made, or on the date that they submit their nomination papers, whichever is the earlier. For further information, see also our guidance for candidates and agents at UK Parliamentary by-elections . 1. Section 76(2)(b) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.118A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 27 September 2023

Book traversal links for Providing information on election spending Providing information on key election processes Working with the media Working with the media The media plays an important role in providing information to voters on the election and it is important for your communications with media outlets and representatives to be well-planned and managed in order to maintain public confidence that the election is being well-run. To achieve this effectively, there should be a clear process in place for communications relating to the poll in each constituency to be followed by you and, in the case of cross-boundary constituencies, the relevant staff at the other authority, and your respective communications team(s) to respond to any issues that arise. Your arrangements for working with the media should include: processes for dealing with general media enquiries strategies for dealing with both proactive communication and media liaison in relation to specific events such as the counting of votes and result declaration plans for reactive handling of any issues that arise in relation to the election, for example allegations of electoral fraud Media attendance at the count When developing your plan for how you will support media attendance at the count you should consider: contacting principal broadcast organisations in advance and outlining the press facilities available providing an opportunity for media representatives to inspect the verification and count venue to see what space and facilities are available, to give them the opportunity to raise any issues or technical requirements with you so you can incorporate these into your planning for venue layout discussing arrangements for the declaration of results arranging for sound systems to be used for the announcements and for any live feeds making accreditation arrangements for journalists, technicians and photographers attending and providing media passes ensuring that there is a nominated media spokesperson in place for the count, and that everyone is aware who this is and that all media questions should be directed to that person making sure that the media are aware of any restricted areas and procedures e.g. that camera operators are aware they must not overstep sensitive information (such as close-ups of ballot papers) or obstruct count staff ensuring that the council's public relations team are present to deal with media enquiries. You should make sure that they know who to approach if they are asked any technical electoral questions explaining the processes to be followed and the expected finish and declaration times for each poll putting steps in place to enable you to provide media representatives with a written copy of the results at the time the announcement is made In order to assist you and your communications team further with media liaison at the count, we have developed some

tips for managing the media at the count tips for managing the media at the count.
 Tips on managing the media at the count (DOC) Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Working with the media Providing information on election spending Accredited Observers and Commission representatives Accredited Observers and Commission representatives Observers accredited by the Commission are entitled to observe: the issue and receipt of postal ballot papers the poll the verification and counting of the votes 1 Your project plan should include processes to manage potential enquiries from observers and to support their attendance at the electoral processes they are entitled to attend. This should include providing observers with information on the location and timing of the above processes. Commission representatives are also entitled to observe these processes and, in addition, are entitled to observe your working practices. 2 Accredited observers and Commission representatives do not need to give advance notification of where they intend to observe, but will carry with them a photographic identification card issued by the Commission. Quick guide to the observer badge types Observer badge type Who are they? Access Electoral Commission representatives Same as candidates and agents, plus access to the issue of postal votes, and working practices of the (A)RO and ERO Observers accredited by the Commission Same as candidates and agents, plus access to the issue of postal votes If you are in doubt about the status of a particular individual seeking to gain access to election processes, you can check the registers of observers on the Commission's website . You have a legal duty to have regard to the Commission's Code of practice for observers when managing the attendance of observers. 3 Observers will have agreed to comply with the standards of behaviour set out in the Commission's Code of practice. If you think there has been a breach of the Code of practice, please inform your local Commission team . Observers at UK elections booklet 1. Section 6C(1) Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S. 6A(1) and 6B(1) PPERA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. S. 6F(7) and 6E(4)(b) PPERA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Accredited Observers and Commission representatives Working with the media Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Planning for the election Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Planning for the election Absent voters' list request form (DOC) Ballot paper account exercise (DOC) Briefing for candidates and agents - UK Parliamentary election (PPTX) Checklist for polling station inspectors (DOCX) Close of poll packing instructions (DOCX) Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 FAQs for frontline staff - UK Parliamentary election - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Forensic Science Service guidance UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX) UKPE By election timetable generic (DOCX) 2017 Guidance on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland Making your mark - design guidance for EAs Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) Observers at UK elections booklet - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary election - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Polling station quick guide - UK Parliamentary election - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Polling station staff briefing - UK Parliamentary election (PPTX) Polling station scenarios

for polling station staff - UKPGE (DOCX) Polling station quiz - UKPGE (DOCX) Project plan UKPGE EA (docx) Register request form (DOC) Risk register Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) Tips on managing the media at the count (DOC) Last updated: 28 September 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Planning for the election Accredited Observers and Commission representatives Voter Materials Voter Materials Voter Materials It is vital to the delivery of the election that voters can receive the information they need, without errors, in an accessible format and within time for them to take necessary action in relation to their vote. This guidance provides an overview of the legal requirements relating to poll cards, postal vote stationery and ballot papers, and of the areas where you have discretion regarding design and the information to be included on these materials. It also includes information to help you quality-assure the process of producing voter materials, including guidance on proof-checking and on working with suppliers and contractors. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Voter Materials Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Planning for the election Production of poll cards Production of poll cards Poll cards must follow the prescribed form in legislation. You must include on each poll card all of the elements specified in the relevant election rules and shown on the front and the back of the poll cards in the appendix to the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 (as amended). 1 You should liaise with your Royal Mail contact (or other commercial delivery partner) at an early stage to ensure that you have appropriate licences in place and that the poll card meets specific delivery requirements. Poll cards should be sent to electors and their proxies as soon as practicable after the publication of notice of election. If you are outsourcing the production of poll cards you will need to dispatch your poll card data to your printers and you should ensure that your software is able to produce a data file that your printers can use to produce the materials to the specification required. You should, at an early stage in discussions with your printers, have addressed in what format you will supply the data and in what format they will send you any proofs, and this should be included in your specification and contract. Further information can be found in our guidance on developing contracts for outsourced work and quality assurance checks . Subsequent issues of poll cards EROs must publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. These notices support the prompt dispatch of poll cards to those electors who have applied to register close to the registration deadline. 2 The first interim notice of alteration must be published on the last day for delivery of nomination papers, which is 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. 3 If you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to ensure that the timing of the publication of the second interim notice can support the production of your second wave of poll cards. The second interim notice must be published between the day after the deadline for delivery of nomination papers and the sixth working day before the poll. 4 An update of the registration data resulting from each of the notices of alteration should be sent to your printers as soon as practicable to enable the production of poll cards for new electors. Further information on interim notices can be found in our Electoral Registration Officer guidance for England , Scotland or Wales . You can also find further guidance on poll card delivery . Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, you will need to work with other local authorities to ensure you are able to provide the data from the other authority/authorities to the printers. You should also liaise with them to

obtain the information on new electors as soon as possible after the publication of the interim notices of alteration and the final election notice of alteration. 1. Schedule 3 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 & Schedule 3 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001. The latest versions of the poll cards at UK Parliamentary elections can be found in The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Description of Electoral Registers and Amendment) Regulations 2013 and, in Wales, should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. s13AB and s13B Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. s13AB(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. s13AB(6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 12 September 2023

Book traversal links for Production of poll cards Voter Materials Production of postal voting stationery Production of postal voting stationery As part of your planning, you will have decided whether the production of postal voting stationery and the issuing of postal votes will be carried out in-house or outsourced. Further guidance to support your decision-making on outsourcing can be found in our guidance on managing contractors and suppliers . Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you will need to establish whether your software system is able to correctly read the data provided by the other authority/authorities. You will also need to ensure you are able to get the data to printers for the production of the postal voting stationery. You will need to liaise with the other authority/authorities at the earliest opportunity. Contents of postal ballot pack Contents of postal ballot pack You must send a postal ballot pack to all eligible postal voters. 1 Postal ballot packs must include: 2 an outgoing envelope return envelopes: envelope 'A' (the ballot paper envelope) and envelope 'B' (the covering envelope for the return of envelope 'A' and the postal voting statement) a ballot paper a postal voting statement In addition you must issue instructional information ensuring that those entitled to vote by post are able to obtain: 3 translations into other languages of any directions to or guidance for voters sent with the ballot paper a translation into Braille of such directions or guidance a graphical representation of such directions or guidance the directions or guidance in any other form (including any audible form) 1. Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983), s24(1) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 reg 74, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 reg 74 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPA 1983 s24(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Production of postal voting stationery Production of poll cards Postal ballot pack envelopes Postal ballot pack envelopes You must address the outgoing envelope to the elector at the address they have asked for their ballot paper to be sent to and which is shown in the postal voters' list or the postal proxy voters' list. 1 To preserve the secrecy of the ballot, you must provide two separate envelopes provided for returning the ballot paper and the postal voting statement: 2 Envelope 'A' – this is the envelope for the return of the ballot paper, which is to be marked with the letter 'A', the words 'ballot paper envelope' and the number of the ballot paper. Envelope 'B' – this is the covering envelope for the return of the ballot paper envelope (envelope 'A') and the postal voting statement. It is to be marked with the letter 'B' and your address. You should print the name of your constituency on all 'A' and 'B' envelopes. This will help to reduce instances of postal votes becoming undeliverable if, for example, a voter returns the 'A' envelope with both the ballot

paper and postal voting statement inside it, without putting it in the 'B' envelope. Envelopes for anonymous electors Whenever you communicate with an anonymous elector you are required to send the communication in an envelope or other form of covering in such a way that does not disclose to any other person that the voter has an anonymous entry. You should therefore send postal ballot packs to anonymously registered electors in a plain outgoing envelope. 3 The envelope should include their name and correspondence address, but must not include their elector number or make any reference to the election or electoral register. Postage costs Unless you are delivering postal votes by hand, you are required to pre-pay postage on the outgoing envelope addressed to the postal voter. You are also required to pre-pay postage on all return envelopes, except where postal votes have been sent to an address outside of the UK. 4 You should, however, explore with Royal Mail and the printer what you can do to facilitate the timely return of completed postal ballot packs from outside the UK, including the potential for the inclusion of appropriate pre-paid postage for items being returned from overseas. You could decide to use a different design of envelope for postal votes being sent to an address which is outside the UK. For example you could add a different colour flash. This may facilitate more efficient sorting, identification and prioritisation of overseas postal votes. 1.

Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) reg 72(7), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S) 2001) reg 72(7) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 74, RPR(S) 2001 reg 74

■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 72(8), RPR(S) 2001 reg 72(8) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 76, RPR(S) 2001 reg 76 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Postal ballot pack envelopes Production of postal voting stationery Postal ballot paper, postal voting statement, and additional instructions for voters Postal ballot paper, postal voting statement, and additional instructions to voters Postal ballot paper The form of the ballot paper is prescribed in legislation and you have a legal duty to follow this precisely. 1 Further information can be found in our guidance on the printing of ballot papers . Postal voting statement The postal voting statement is set out in the legislation and must be produced in the prescribed form. 2 The postal voting statement must include: the voter's name (unless they are an anonymous elector) the number of the ballot paper being issued with the statement a unique identifying mark, which could be a barcode but could also be in another format - this mark does not have to be connected to the unique identifying mark on the ballot paper; it may be the same but equally it could be different or connected the prescribed instructions to the voter on how to vote by post The postal voting statement also contains space for a barcode. You must produce different forms of the postal voting statement for anonymous electors and for those who have been granted a waiver. The postal voting statement for anonymous electors must not show the name of the elector. Where an elector has been granted a waiver by the ERO, you are required by legislation to omit the signature box and any reference to signing the form in the instructions to voters. You should also design and test the postal vote statements to ensure that the signature and date of birth fields are in the correct place and format to be able to be processed on their return by your personal identifier verification system. Additional instructions to voters In addition to the prescribed content of the postal ballot pack as above, you should provide additional, more specific instructions - for example, graphical instructions for voters to help them complete the statement and ballot paper and return their postal vote stationery in the correct envelopes. You should include the information that you must provide to

postal voters on how to obtain instructions in alternative formats e.g. alternative languages, braille, and audio. As part of these instructions, you should also include information explaining the personal nature of the vote, setting out that it is secret and that anyone interfering with the voter marking their vote would be committing an offence. As well as information on how to report any concerns or suspected instances of electoral fraud.

1. Representation of the People Act 1983 sch 1 rule 19. The latest version of the UK Parliamentary ballot paper can be found in The Representation of the People (Ballot Paper) Regulations 2015 and in Wales should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 reg 66, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 reg 66. The latest version of the postal voting statement at UK Parliamentary elections can be found in The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Description of Electoral Registers and Amendment) Regulations 2013 and, in Wales, should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Postal ballot paper, postal voting statement, and additional instructions for voters

Postal ballot pack envelopes

Production of ballot papers

Production of ballot papers

You have a legal duty to follow precisely the design and print specifications of ballot papers prescribed in legislation. By law, ballot papers for postal voters and for polling station use must be the same in design and size, except that the official mark may be different if desire.

1 You should ensure that you check with your print supplier at an early stage to establish the maximum size of ballot paper that they can print and, if necessary, have contingency arrangements in place in the event that a larger ballot paper is required.

2 The final content of the ballot paper cannot be confirmed until nominations have closed, but you will need to make decisions about the following elements of the ballot paper specification at an early stage: the format of the ballot paper numbers the form of the reverse of the ballot paper the unique identifying mark the design of the 'official mark' what colour the ballot papers will be

1. Representation of the People Act 1983 sch 1 rule 19. The latest version of the UK Parliamentary ballot paper can be found in The Representation of the People (Ballot Paper) Regulations 2015 and in Wales should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. RPA 1983 sch 1 appendix of forms. The latest version of the UK Parliamentary ballot paper can be found in The Representation of the People (Ballot Paper) Regulations 2015 and in Wales should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Production of ballot papers

Postal ballot paper, postal voting statement, and additional instructions for voters

Print quantities

Print quantities

In your early discussions with your print supplier you must carefully consider the number of ballot papers that will need to be printed to allow you to allocate a sufficient number of ballot papers to polling stations and issue postal ballot packs. This will also enable sufficient paper stocks to be procured. You should base your print-run on 100% turnout of eligible electors. There are significant risks attached to printing ballot papers based on lower turnout levels. For example, if you start running out of ballot papers on polling day it will be more difficult at that stage to print additional ballot papers and send these to the affected polling stations in a timely manner. If you decide for any reason not to print ballot papers based on 100% turnout of eligible electorate, you should carefully assess the risks. As part of your risk assessment you should consider:

turnout projections for the poll, taking into account the potential for late engagement and interest - the last equivalent poll should be used as the minimum expected turnout the particular context of the poll any local or national issues which may affect turnout whether having a stock of additional ballot papers ready for rapid delivery to polling stations is preferable, for example printing a minimum of 100% of ballot papers but not issuing 100% of printed ballot papers to polling stations You should also take steps to ensure that additional ballot papers can be printed at short notice if required and decide how polling station staff would be briefed should this situation occur. Guidance on the allocation of ballot papers to polling stations can be found in our guidance on polling station voting. Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Print quantities Production of ballot papers Ballot paper design Ballot paper design Ballot paper numbers Ballot paper numbers should run consecutively, but do not have to start at '1'. Ballot paper numbers should be unique, and should not be reused, for example the polling station, postal vote and tendered ballot papers should all be numbered differently. Form of the reverse of the ballot paper The form of the reverse of the ballot paper is prescribed and you must ensure that the required information is included on the ballot paper reverse in the specified format. 1 There is no provision to put any hatching or other marks on the back of the ballot paper. Unique identifying mark (UIM) The unique identifying mark can be made up of letters and numbers and could be a repeat of the ballot paper number with the addition of a prefix or a suffix. The unique identifying mark can instead be, but does not have to be, a barcode. It is important to remember that the unique identifying mark is not the same as the official mark. The unique identifying mark: 2 should be unique for each ballot paper can be re-used at the next poll must be printed on the back of the ballot paper The official mark The official mark is a security mark that must be added to the ballot paper. The official mark: 3 can be the same for all ballot papers at an election or different official marks can be used for different purposes at the same election, for example one for postal votes and another for polling station ballot papers cannot be re-used for seven years at a UK Parliamentary election to the same constituency The mark should be distinctive. It could be a printed emblem or mark or a special printing device such as a watermark. It could also be a perforation added at the time of issue of the ballot paper if stamping instruments are used to create a perforating official mark. The mark should be capable of being seen on the front of the ballot paper without having to turn the ballot paper over. 4 Ballot paper colour The colour of ballot papers is not prescribed and is for you to determine. Tendered ballot papers are required by law to be a different colour from the ordinary ballot papers. 5 In deciding on the ballot paper colour you should take into account accessibility issues relating to colour and contrast. See our ' Making your mark ' good practice design guidance for more information on choosing ballot paper colours. Cross-boundary constituencies and combinations Cross-boundary constituencies and combinations You should decide at an early stage in the planning process and in consultation with the local government RO(s) in your constituency, what colour the UK Parliamentary ballot paper will be in your constituency. You should liaise with the other RO(s) in your constituency to ensure that in the event of a combined election the ballot paper colours are different for each election. 1. Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) sch 1 appendix of forms. The latest version of the UK Parliamentary ballot paper can be found in The Representation of the People (Ballot Paper) Regulations 2015 and in Wales should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPA 1983 sch 1 rule 19 ■

Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPA 1983 sch 1 rule 20 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPA 1983 sch 1 rule 20 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. RPA 1983 sch 1 rule 40(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Ballot paper design Print quantities Candidate details Candidate details Candidate name Candidates must appear on the ballot paper as listed as in the statement of persons nominated . Their names and relevant details must appear according to the directions for printing. 1 Candidate surnames must appear in capital letters, including the capitalisation of surnames beginning with MAC or MC and the names should follow strict alphabetisation e.g. MABBOT, MACLEAN, MATTHEWS, MCCORMICK, MORRISON. Where a candidate has listed multiple names as their surname, either hyphenated or not, you should reproduce the whole name as provided. For example Dick Van Dyke would appear as VAN DYKE, Dick on the ballot paper and for alphabetisation purposes their surname would start with a V. Similarly, Ann Smith-Jones would be SMITH-JONES, Ann on the ballot paper and would be listed as an S for alphabetisation purposes. In all cases, you should use the maximum possible sizes of font. To ensure consistency, the same font size should be used for each candidate on each equivalent line. Emblems If the candidate is standing for a registered political party and has requested the use of an emblem, you may be provided with a high-resolution copy of the emblem for use in the printing of ballot papers. Alternatively you may need to download the emblem from our website . You should ensure that whatever copy is used is in the same form as the registered emblem. The maximum size of an emblem on the ballot paper is two centimetres square. 2 Do not alter or distort the shape of the emblem to fit the ballot paper. You should ensure that the emblem is in the same form as the registered emblem – for example, do not stretch emblems into square shapes if they are not registered as square images on our website, as this would have the effect of altering their appearance. 1. Representation of the People Act 1983 sch 1 rule 19(1). The latest version of the UK Parliamentary ballot paper can be found in The Representation of the People (Ballot Paper) Regulations 2015 and in Wales should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Directions as to Printing the Ballot Paper. Appendix of forms to Representation of the People Act 1983 sch 1. The latest version of the UK Parliamentary ballot paper can be found in The Representation of the People (Ballot Paper) Regulations 2015 and in Wales should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015. ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Candidate details Ballot paper design Quality assurance and proof checking of election materials Quality assurance and proofing of election materials It is vital that you undertake careful and thorough checks of all draft proofs of your election materials before they are signed off and ready to be printed and dispatched. This is often a very time-consuming and time-critical stage of the process as your suppliers will be working to tight timetables and will likely give you hard deadlines. You should decide who from your team will be involved in the checking of proofs and the quality assurance of the production process. It is possible that you will need a number of team members to play a role, and it may be helpful to involve others not as close to the raw candidate information or base proofs to ensure that nothing has been missed. Where possible, it is helpful to ensure that more than one person checks each set of proofs before approving them to ensure that errors are spotted. This can be especially helpful in mitigating the risk of errors being made when turning around a large number of proofs in a short timeframe. You can carry out checks in person by attending the premises of your supplier and accessing your printed material directly, though some suppliers may

offer to conduct these checks for you as part of their service instead. Where you are using suppliers to conduct checks, you must ensure that you get a detailed breakdown of what print quality checks are being undertaken. These should include: checking that the printed material is accurate by checking against a specimen copy of the final signed off live proof for each version of the material where necessary, checking that all personalised text has been printed correctly Alternatively, you may have materials sent to you for checking before they are despatched from your premises. You should produce guidance notes for those members of staff checking election materials. Checking base text You should ensure that you check the base text of all material carefully; this is the text that will not change, regardless of contest, number or details of candidates, or elector information. For efficiency, some suppliers may produce your proofs from templates used for previous polls. Do not presume that the information output by your electoral software management system will automatically be correct. For example, there may have been legislative or boundary changes, or changes to your contact information. It is your responsibility to check that all the information is accurate and also that the election materials comply with all legislative requirements. Checking live proofs You should have in place a process for checking live proofs of all forms of election material at the print stage to check that there are no errors and that they are being printed to the required specification. This should include items that have smaller print runs too, such as tendered ballot papers, postal proxies or additional postal vote print runs to include those who applied after the initial data files were provided. You need to decide how many items will be checked for each item/print-run/fill. As a minimum, for print checks, at least the first and last item for each version of the item should be checked to ensure that the print runs start and end as expected. Carrying out checks at the live proof stage will allow staff to check that the print run reflects the latest approved version of the item which will highlight if any of the signed-off proofs have been inadvertently altered, that there is no bleeding of ink and that the print quality is good and consistent. You are likely to have many different sets of proofs for the same item, so you should be checking that the variable text on each set of proofs has been correctly included. It is helpful to have a spreadsheet of all the variable text per version ready for checking against. This could include, for example, a sheet containing: a list of all of your contested elections the number of vacancies per election candidate names, descriptions and emblems It is important to pay particular attention to emblems as many may look similar at first glance. You should proof any spreadsheets to be used for quality assurance purposes against original data, such as nomination papers. You should keep a record of stationery that has been checked to provide a clear audit trail of the processes that have been undertaken and which you can refer back to should any issues subsequently arise. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Quality assurance and proof checking of election materials Candidate details Tips for proof checking Tips for proof checking When producing guidance to support your staff with proof checking election materials particular attention should be paid to checking that: every detail on all printing materials is spelt correctly electors' names and addresses are accurate and match those on the electoral register / absent voting lists materials being sent to electors are the correct ones for them (e.g. the ballot paper is the correct one for their electoral area; postal proxies are being sent postal proxy poll cards) where relevant, the correct deadlines appear (for example, for postal/proxy applications on poll cards) where a form is prescribed, that it meets the prescribed requirements For the ballot paper, you should also check that: the directions for printing have been

followed precisely the official mark and unique identifying mark are correctly printed the ballot paper includes the details of all validly nominated candidates for that particular electoral area; as part of this you should check that: all candidate names (or commonly used name(s) where relevant) are correct where relevant, party names, descriptions and emblems are correct and as registered on the Commission's register of political parties the instructions at the top of each ballot paper are the correct ones for the electoral area For the postal voting statement, you should also check that: the correct ballot paper numbers are printed the correct voting instructions for the electoral area are included Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Tips for proof checking Quality assurance and proof checking of election materials Post production quality assurance checks Post production quality assurance checks Once your election materials have been produced, you need to ensure that all materials have been printed, collated and prepared for despatch to electors or for use at polling stations without errors. Checking filled postal vote packs before despatch When carrying out quality assurance checks of filled postal ballot packs this should include checking: that ballot paper and PVS numbers align personalised name/address information appears as expected in windows that each pack contains the correct items - for example check that the correct ballot papers and reply envelope have been included You should carry out random spot checks across all packs to ensure a representative cross-section has been checked with at least two packs from each batch of 250 packs (which is roughly the equivalent of a full Royal Mail postal 'tray'). You should also ensure that there are specific checks of any fills that include additional items, such as where a by-election means an additional ballot paper is being included. You should make sure that you keep a clear audit trail of the proofing and other quality assurance processes that have been undertaken either by your staff or by your supplier which you can refer back to should any issues subsequently arise. You can find more guidance to support you in this process in Quality assurance and proof checking of election materials and further guidance on quality assuring the issuing process is available in our section on absent voting. Checking ballot paper books before allocation When you receive the printed ballot paper books, you should carry out a final check before any ballot papers are supplied to a polling station. When carrying out final quality assurance checks of the printed ballot paper books, you should check that: the first and last ballot paper in every book and by checking that the ballot paper numbers in each book or packet run sequentially every detail on the ballot paper is spelt correctly every emblem that has been validly requested has been included beside the correct candidate and matches the party's entry in the Commission's register all candidate descriptions have been printed in the line for the correct candidate the voting instructions at the top of the ballot paper match the legislative requirements the ballot papers have been cut to the correct size the official mark has been included You can find guidance on the allocation of ballot papers to polling stations in our section on polling station voting. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Post production quality assurance checks Tips for proof checking Ballot paper security Ballot paper security You must ensure the security of ballot papers during production, delivery and storage. Once the official mark is printed on your ballot papers, they are effectively 'live'. Regardless of whether you have outsourced your printing or are printing in-house, in order to ensure that voters can have confidence in the process, your security arrangements should prevent unauthorised access to or use of the ballot papers. These restrictions should apply during all stages of the production process and storage between printing and the poll. You can find further information in our

guidance on planning for ballot paper security. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Ballot paper security Post production quality assurance checks Starting the election timetable Starting the election timetable This section of the guidance covers the statutory actions that must take place to enable the election timetable to formally commence. This includes: the process for the issue and receipt of the writ the subsequent publication of the notice of election the requirement to deliver poll cards as soon as is practicable after the notice of election is published Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Starting the election timetable Ballot paper security The issue and receipt of the writ The issue and receipt of the writ A writ requiring the UK Parliamentary election to be run in your constituency will be issued after the dissolution of the UK Parliament. The writ will be delivered to the RO unless they have appointed you (the (A)RO) or someone else as their deputy. The writ will be sent to the RO by title, rather than by name. 1 The Clerk of the Crown maintains a list of ROs to whom the writ will be sent. If you, as (A)RO, have been appointed by the RO to receive the writ, the RO must give notice to the Clerk of the Crown on a prescribed form . 2 The writ will usually be delivered by Royal Mail and once it has been issued, your local Royal Mail contact will usually contact the RO or (A)RO to make an appointment for the delivery. It is essential that any changes to the address of the person who will receive the writ are notified to the Clerk of the Crown and the Royal Mail immediately. Regardless of who receives the writ, a receipt provided by Royal Mail must be completed. This gives the date on which it is received and the name of the officer accepting it. Copies should be taken of the writ and the original kept secure. 3 The writ is taken to have been received the day after dissolution of Parliament. 4 This allows you to begin making arrangements the day after the election writs are issued, even in the event that the physical delivery of the writ is delayed. The date the writ is taken to have been received affects the UK Parliamentary election timetable. The notice of election must be published no later than 4pm on the second day following the date the writ is taken to have been received. 5 The period for delivery of nomination papers will begin from the day after the publication of notice of election. UK Parliamentary by-elections UK Parliamentary by-elections The writ is taken to have been received the day after the issue of the warrant for the writ triggering the by-election timetable, but this timetable is more flexible than the timetable at a general election. This is because at a by-election, the (Acting) Returning Officer has some discretion over the length of the nomination period, which also impacts on polling day. The process for receiving the writ is the same at a UK Parliamentary by-election as it is for a general election. However, the timing of the issue of the writ for a by-election is dependent on when a motion is moved in the House of Commons for the issue of the writ. A writ may also be issued in certain circumstances during Parliamentary recess. You must fix the date of the poll and the length of the nomination period. The deadline for the receipt of nomination papers cannot be earlier than the third working day after the date of publication of the notice of election and not later than the seventh working day after the writ is received. 6 You should seek to maximise the length of time that candidates have to submit their nomination papers within the limits set by the timetable Polling day must not be earlier than the 17th and not later than the 19th working day after the last day for delivery of nomination papers. If you have a by-election, you should contact your local Commission team who will be able to assist you by checking the election timetable. The issue and receipt of the writ We have produced a timetable with all of the relevant deadlines for a UK Parliamentary election, as well as a separate template timetable for a UK

Parliamentary by-election. UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX) UKPE By election timetable generic (DOCX) Information about endorsing and returning the writ after the declaration of the result can be found in our guidance on Providing notice of the result . 1. Sections 27 and 28 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 4 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 3 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 28 (3A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 1 Rule 1 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Schedule 1 Rule 1 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 12 September 2023 Book traversal links for The issue and receipt of the writ

Starting the election timetable Notice of election Notice of election You must publish the notice of election for the constituency by not later than 4pm on the second working day following the receipt of the writ. The notice of election may be published on the same day that the writ is received and should be published as soon as practicable to allow the maximum time for nominations. 1 The notice of election must include the following: 2 the place and times at which nomination papers can be delivered, and at which nomination papers may be obtained the date of the poll if the election is contested where you have decided to accept electronic payments, the arrangements for electronic payment of deposits the date by which applications for absent votes (including emergency proxies) must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the election The notice of election should also include the date by which applications for registration and Voter Authority Certificates or Anonymous Elector's Documents must reach the relevant ERO in order to be effective for the election. The address given for the delivery of nomination papers should be exact, and include any room number. This will avoid any doubt should nominations be delivered close to the deadline. You should inform all reception staff at offices of the building and other connected buildings that they should not take receipt of nomination papers. We have developed a template notice of election that you can use:

Notice of election - UK Parliamentary elections (DOCX) 1. Schedule 1 Rule 1 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 5 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 12 September 2023 Book traversal links for Notice of election The issue and receipt of the writ Poll Card delivery Poll Card delivery You must send out poll cards as soon as practicable after the publication of the notice of election. 1 A poll card must be sent to the elector's qualifying address or, in the case of a proxy, to the proxy's address as shown in the list of proxies. 2 For anonymous electors, you must send their poll card in a covering envelope to the elector's qualifying address or, where a different address has been specified on their registration application, to that address. 3 In order to ensure that voters receive the information they need and within time for them to cast their vote you should ensure that poll cards can be received by voters as soon as possible, so that they have the maximum amount of time to change their registration details or apply for an absent vote. This could, for example, include publishing the notice of election as soon as the writ is received. Once the notice of election has been published, the poll cards can be issued. You will need to determine the optimum distribution date for poll cards and you should focus on when electors will expect to receive their poll cards. Poll cards may be delivered by hand, by post, or by some other method determined by you as the most appropriate. 4 Delivery by hand If you deliver poll cards by hand you should plan for how this will work in practice. You should appoint sufficient staff to ensure that voters receive poll cards as soon as possible to maximise the time they have to change registration details or apply for an absent vote. You should clearly set out

in your instructions to staff the last day by which you would expect all poll cards to have been delivered. You should ensure that staff are aware of data protection considerations, and should consider requiring staff to confirm in writing at the point of recruitment, that they will abide by your data protection policy. You should monitor delivery, to ensure that poll cards have been delivered across the whole of the constituency and to agreed timeframes. This may include requiring delivery staff to fill in log sheets and having supervisors carry out spot-checks. Delivery by post You may use Royal Mail or any other commercial delivery firm for the delivery of poll cards. If you deliver poll cards by post, you should liaise with your postal services provider to agree timescales for delivery and obtain any proof of postage that the firm provides. You should monitor the delivery of poll cards, to ensure that they have been delivered across the whole of the constituency and to agreed timeframes. If possible, you should have arrangements in place to track deliveries to assist with responding to any enquiries from electors. Your contingency planning should address how you would issue any poll cards, in the event that Royal Mail or the commercial delivery firm you have contracted are unable to deliver the poll cards, for example, due to industrial action.

1. Schedule 1 Rule 28 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Schedule 1 Rules 28(2) and (2A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Schedule 1 Rules 9B(8) and 28(3A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Schedule 1 Rule 28(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 12 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Poll Card delivery](#)

[Notice of election Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Starting the election timetable](#)

[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Starting the election timetable UKPGE Election timetable generic \(DOCX\)](#)

[UKPE By election timetable generic \(DOCX\)](#)

[Notice of election - UK Parliamentary elections \(DOCX\)](#)

Last updated: 12 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Starting the election timetable](#)

[Poll Card delivery](#)

[Nominations](#)

[Nominations As Returning Officer](#)

you are responsible for the administration of a nomination process which supports candidates to stand for election and enables them to have confidence in the management of the election. The following guidance is designed to support you in the decisions you will need to take to manage the nomination process efficiently and effectively. It includes information on the requirements for nomination including candidate details, deposits and methods of delivery, guidance to support the processing and determining of nominations and guidance on the processes to be followed after the close of nominations such as the publishing of official notices. It also includes information on the actions required following the death of a candidate. Providing information on the nomination process to candidates and agents

There may be new or less experienced candidates, agents and political parties who are unfamiliar with the practices and processes of standing for election and who will need your support to be able to participate effectively. As part of your preparations for the polls, you will have put plans in place to ensure that you offer all potential candidates and agents a briefing session before or at the start of the nomination period, and are also issued with written guidance on the election process in good time to enable them to act on it. Details of what the briefings and written information should include, and links to template briefings, can be found in our guidance on providing information to political parties, candidates and agents.

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Nominations](#)

[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Starting the election timetable](#)

[Forms for nomination](#)

[Forms for nomination](#)

A candidate is deemed to be validly nominated if you have received a deposit of £500 and the following completed forms by the close of

nominations (4pm on the 19th working day before the poll for a UK Parliamentary general election or by 4pm on the date fixed by you 1 for a UK Parliamentary by-election): 2 the nomination form (as prescribed) a home address form a consent to nomination candidates If a candidate wishes to stand on behalf of a registered political party then, in addition to the above they must also submit a certificate of authorisation, authorising the use of the party name on the ballot paper (as prescribed), and may also include a written request to use one of the party's registered emblems if they choose. 3 The party name or description authorised by the certificate must match the party name or description given on the nomination form or the whole nomination will be invalid. 4 The party must be registered on the Commission's register of political parties at <http://search.electoralcommission.org.uk> and be listed as allowed to field candidates in the part of the UK that they are standing in. Production of nomination papers Nomination papers can only be produced in or, in Wales, in and/or Welsh, and not in any alternative languages or formats. 5 However, you are required by law to prepare nomination papers for signature if someone requests. 6 This means providing all of the documents required for nomination and completing them with all of the information given to you so that only the required signatures need to be added. We have produced a set of nomination papers, which includes all of these forms that you can provide to candidates. Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) Candidates do not have to use the nomination form that you have produced and supplied, as long as their nomination form is as prescribed. 1. Not earlier than the third working day after the date of publication of the notice of election and not later than the seventh working day after the writ is received. ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 rules 1,6,8 and 9 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 rule 6A and 19 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Schedule 1 rule 6A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. S. 199B(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Schedule 1 rule 7 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Forms for nomination Nominations Nomination form - the candidates name Nomination form - the candidates name The candidate's full names must be listed on the nomination form, surname first, followed by all of their other names in full. 1 Prefixes and suffixes The nomination form does not prescribe a space for prefixes or suffixes. Candidates should be advised not to use prefixes such as Mr, Mrs, Dr or Cllr, or suffixes such as OBE or MBA as part of their full name. If a prefix or suffix is included as part of the actual name the nomination form would not be invalid as a result, but the prefix or suffix should not be transferred to the statement of persons nominated. If a candidate has submitted a nomination form with a prefix or suffix as part of their actual name, you should inform them that it will not appear on the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll or the ballot paper, but that their nomination as a candidate has not been affected. The only exception to this is where a prefix or suffix has been included as part of a commonly used name and that is how the candidate claims to be commonly known. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 6 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Nomination form - the candidates name Forms for nomination Commonly used names Commonly used names Where a candidate commonly uses a different name from their actual name, they can ask for this to be used instead of their actual name. 1 A candidate can request to use a commonly used forename, surname or both. They may also use initials if they are commonly known by them. For example, they may be known by their abbreviated name Andy, rather than their full first name

Andrew. In that case, they can write Andy into the commonly used forename box on the nomination form if they would prefer that name to appear on the ballot paper. The legislation makes it clear that a commonly used name is one which, as a forename is different from any other forename (whether the first or middle name) of the candidate or, as a surname is different from any other surname of the candidate. If a candidate wishes to use a commonly used forename, this must be different from their actual forename as it appears on the nomination form. If a candidate wishes to use a commonly used surname, this must be different from their actual surname as it appears on the nomination form. For example, in the case of Andrew John Smith, he could not use Andrew Smith as his commonly used name, although he would be able to use Andy Smith (if Andy was the name by which he is commonly known). A candidate with a hyphenated surname may choose to use one part of their surname if this is how they are commonly known. For example, in the case of Andrew Smith-Roberts, he could use Andrew Roberts or Andrew Smith (if either was the name by which he is commonly known). However, if a candidate has a title, they can use this as their full name. For example, if the candidate's actual name is Joseph Smith, but their hereditary title is Joseph Avon, they can use the name Joseph Avon as their full name. The table below sets out a non-exhaustive list of potential variations:

Candidate actual name	Commonly used name	Different forename from any other forename or surname from any other surname?	Acceptable?
Andrew John Smith-Jones	Andrew Smith-Jones	No	No – a commonly used name cannot be used to drop a middle name.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	John Smith-Jones	No	No – a commonly used name cannot be used to drop a first name.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	Andy Smith-Jones	Yes	Yes - if Andy was the name by which he is commonly known.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	Johnny Smith-Jones	Yes	Yes - if Johnny was the name by which he is commonly known.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	Andrew John Smith	Yes	Yes - a candidate with a hyphenated surname may choose to use one part of their surname if this is how they are commonly known.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	Andy Jones	Yes	Yes - if Andy was the name by which he is commonly known and a candidate with a hyphenated surname may choose to use one part of their surname if this is how they are commonly known.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	AJ Smith-Jones	Yes	Yes - if AJ are initials by which he is commonly known.
Andrew John Smith-Jones	Andrew J Smith	Yes	Yes - if Andrew J was the name by which he is commonly known and a candidate with a hyphenated surname may choose to use one part of their surname if this is how they are commonly known.

It is not for you to decide whether the commonly used name is a name that the candidate commonly uses or whether it meets the legal requirement that a forename needs to be different from any other forename and a surname needs to be different to from any other surname they may have. The law requires you to take whatever has been entered in the commonly used name box at face value and to accept it as the candidate's commonly used name. The only grounds you have in law for rejecting a commonly used name is that you consider that: 2 its use may be likely to mislead or confuse electors, or it is obscene or offensive. If, at an informal check stage, you are presented with a nomination form that has been completed in such a way that it appears to you that the commonly used name given is not different from any other forename or surname that the candidate has, you should: draw the candidate's attention to the legal definition of a commonly used name highlight that it is an offence to knowingly make a false statement on the nomination form point out that if a nomination form is not completed in accordance with the law, the candidate will run the risk of challenge if they are elected. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that they have completed their nomination form in accordance with the law and to be satisfied that the given commonly used name is a name that they genuinely

commonly use. In the course of providing informal advice, you may wish to draw the candidate's attention to our guidance for candidates and agents on commonly used names. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 6 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 14 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Commonly used names Nomination form - the candidates name Reproducing commonly used names on election material Reproducing commonly used names on election material The table below contains a number of worked examples of various combinations of commonly used names and how this would affect the appearance of the candidate's name on the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll and the ballot paper: Candidate's actual surname Candidate's other names in full Commonly used forenames Commonly used surname Name to go on statement of persons nominated Name to go on ballot papers Elector Ann Elsie Voter Voter, Elsie VOTER, Elsie Elector Ann [Blank] Voter Voter, Ann VOTER, Ann Elector Ann Elsie [Blank] Elector, Elsie ELECTOR, Elsie Elector-Voter Ann [Blank] Voter Voter, Ann VOTER, Ann If either the commonly used forenames or commonly used surname box is left blank, then the candidate's actual forenames or surname, depending on which commonly used name box has been left blank, will go on the statement of persons nominated and on the ballot paper. You should advise the candidate that the use of commonly used names applies only to the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper. The candidate's actual name should appear on any documents that are required to show the candidate's name, such as the imprint and candidate's spending returns. If you refuse the use of a commonly used name, the validity of the paper remains unaffected. Instead, the effect is that the candidate's full name will appear on the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper. This should be made clear to candidates and agents and you must write to the candidate setting out the reasons for refusing to allow the use of the commonly used name. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Reproducing commonly used names on election material Commonly used names Nomination form – Subscriber requirements Nomination form – Subscriber requirements Nomination forms must include an indication of support for the candidate from 10 electors registered on the UK Parliamentary register in the constituency. These are known as subscribers - the first two are the proposer and seconder, while eight other electors are the assenters to the nomination. 1 There is nothing preventing a candidate from subscribing their own nomination provided they are registered in the constituency. Each subscriber is required by law to sign the nomination form in the appropriate place and must include their electoral number in the spaces provided alongside their signature, along with the polling district's identifying letters. There is no requirement for a subscriber to print their name on a UK Parliamentary nomination form. Once a nomination form has been formally delivered, even if it is later deemed invalid, the signatures of the subscribers will still count towards the one form that the subscriber may subscribe. If an elector is later removed from the register or dies before the election (or indeed even before the nomination is delivered), their signature remains valid and the nomination is not affected. A person who is shown on the register as being under 18 years old at the time of nomination can only subscribe a nomination form if they will be 18 years old on or before polling day. Only the first 10 subscribers on any nomination form can be considered. If more subscribers are included, any subsequent names must not be considered at all. If one of the first 10 subscribers is invalid, irrespective of whether more subscribers have been added to the nomination form, the nomination must be held invalid. Signatures on nomination forms, once given, cannot be withdrawn by subscribers. If a subscriber contacts you to say that they wish to

withdraw their subscription, you should inform that that this is not permitted by law and that the subscription remains valid. You must reject a nomination if the nomination form is not subscribed as required. 2 Checking subscribers are on the register Subscribers must appear on the Parliamentary electoral register that is in force on the last day for publication of notice of election (i.e. on the second day after that on which the writ is received). It is essential that the correct version of the register is used for checking that the subscribers are valid. An elector must not subscribe more than one nomination form at the Parliamentary election. If they do, their signature will only be valid on the first paper to be delivered to you, even if this was not the first paper that they signed. 3 You should have a robust system in place to ensure that no elector subscribes more than one nomination form. You should use both a hard copy of the register and the electoral management system in order to minimise the risk of missing a subscriber who has subscribed more than one form, and physically mark the hard copy of the register when nominations are formally submitted. As you must accept the nomination form at face value, you must accept that the signature made on the nomination form is that of the person listed on the register under the relevant elector number, even if the signature suggests another name. You may draw the attention of the person delivering the paper to the issue if you are concerned, but you must take the elector number and the signature at face value. If after having raised the issue you still have any concerns, you should raise these with your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Crossed out subscribers' names Occasionally a mistake is made and one or more of the subscribers' names may be crossed out. If the signature and elector number for a subscriber are clearly crossed out, you should ignore it and treat it as if that row did not appear at all. If asked, you should advise that any crossings out should be clear and, ideally, initialled. You should not cross out any entry. If the entry that has been crossed out was that of a proposer or seconder, then the new proposer or seconder must be indicated. Where an entry has been crossed out, the first ten subscribers excluding that entry must still be valid for the nomination to be valid. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 7 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 12 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 7 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Nomination form – Subscriber requirements Reproducing commonly used names on election material Home address form Home address form Candidates are required to complete a home address form. It must be delivered by hand by the persons who can deliver the nomination form and by the close of nominations. The form is not prescribed but the information that needs to be provided is set out in law. 1 The candidate must state their name and home address on the home address form. The address does not need to be in the constituency in which the candidate intends to stand. The home address: must be completed in full must not contain abbreviations must be their current home address must not be a business address (unless the candidate runs a business from their home) If any detail of the home address is wrong or omitted, the nomination is not automatically invalid if the description of the place is such as to be commonly understood. The Commission has produced a home address form as part of its set of nomination papers that you can use to provide to candidates and agents. Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) The home address form, along with the nomination form, is available for inspection by those people entitled to attend at the delivery of nomination papers. Candidates who don't want their home address published A candidate may choose for their home address not to be published on the statement of persons nominated or the ballot paper. In

this case the home address form will contain, as well as the full name and home address: 2 a statement, signed by the candidate, which states that they require their home address not to be made public the UK Parliamentary constituency or, if they live outside the UK, the country in which their home address is situated If the candidate chooses not to have their home address appear on the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper, the constituency in which the candidate's home address is situated or, if they live outside the UK, the country in which they live must be printed instead. If by the close of nominations more than one validly nominated candidate has asked for their home address not to be published, you must consider if two or more of them have the same or so similar a name that they are likely to cause confusion. If you consider that this is the case, you may add such details from their home address or nomination form as you consider appropriate to reduce the likelihood of confusion. 3 Before you make a decision on which details should be included, you must consult the candidate(s) affected, if it is practicable to do so. You must then give notice in writing to the affected candidate(s) informing them of the additional information that will be published. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 6 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 6(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 14(4A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Home address form

Nomination form – Subscriber requirements Candidate's consent to nomination

Candidate's consent to nomination Candidates must formally consent to their nomination and deliver their consent by the deadline for delivery of nomination papers. The consent to nomination form is not prescribed, but the required content is set out in law. 1 The form must contain: the candidate's date of birth a statement that they are aware of the provisions of the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 a statement that to the best of their knowledge they are not disqualified from being a Member of the House of Commons a statement that they are not a candidate at an election for any other UK Parliamentary constituency with the same polling day Candidates are not allowed to sign their consent form earlier than one calendar month before the deadline for submitting their nomination papers. The consent must be witnessed by another person, but there are no restrictions on who can be a witness to the consent to nomination. There is an exception to the requirement for the consent to be delivered in writing and by hand. You may be satisfied that, due to the absence of the candidate from the UK, it is not reasonably practicable for the candidate to provide their consent in writing. In this circumstance, you can treat a candidate's consent given by email or scanned document sent electronically or by other similar means of communication, as written consent. The consent is deemed as having been given on the date it is sent, and does not need to be attested. 2 1. Schedule 1 Rule 8 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 8(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Candidate's consent to nomination

Home address form

Offence of making a false statement on a nomination paper

Offence of making a false statement on a nomination paper You should remind any person delivering the nomination papers that it is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement on nomination papers. If the nomination form includes a commonly used name, you should highlight that the offence also applies if a candidate has given a commonly used name that they do not actually commonly use. You may warn candidates that the penalty for a false statement is either an unlimited fine in England and Wales, £10,000 in Scotland and/or up to one year's imprisonment. 1 You should not give advice on questions of candidates' eligibility or disqualification but should direct

them to our guidance for candidates and agents at UK Parliamentary general elections and UK Parliamentary by-elections in the first instance. You should advise them to seek their own legal advice should they have any further concerns. 1. Section 65A Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Offence of making a false statement on a nomination paper Candidate's consent to nomination Use of party names and party descriptions Use of party names and party descriptions Political parties can register up to 12 descriptions 1 and the Welsh translations of those descriptions. You must check that the party name or description as given on the nomination form is registered on Commission's register of political parties and matches it exactly. The party must also be listed as being allowed to field candidates in that part of the UK that the candidate is standing in. If it does not, you must reject that nomination. 2 Even if a registered party is well known, it is vital to check the register of political parties for the exact details of the party as registered with the Commission. In Wales, a candidate may use either the version, Welsh version or both versions of either the party name or a description as long as they are on the register. Translations of party names are listed on the website under other name and translations of descriptions are listed to the right of the description under translation(s). At a UK Parliamentary election, if the party has not registered a translation, a translation of any party name or description cannot be used. In case of any future challenges and to maintain a clear audit trail you should print a copy of the relevant part of the register of political parties showing the descriptions and party name at the time of your determination. What descriptions may be used? A candidate may only use one of the following descriptions: 3 the word 'Independent' or, in Wales, 'Independent' and/or 'Annibynnol' the registered party name of a registered political party one of the descriptions the party has registered with the Commission Certificate of authorisation If a candidate wishes to use a party name or description, this must be authorised by the party's Nominating Officer (or a person authorised to act on their behalf). 4 The candidate must submit a certificate of authorisation, signed by or on behalf of the party's Nominating Officer, by the deadline for the delivery of nomination papers. You can check who the Nominating Officer for a particular party is by referring to our register of political parties . However, as long as the person who has signed the certificate claims that they have been authorised to do so by the registered Nominating Officer, the certificate should be taken at face value. Some candidates provide a document showing the delegation of powers to authorise the use of a party name or description to someone else (sometimes known as the 'Local Nominating Officer certificate' or 'Deputy Nominating Officer certificate'). There is no need for this document to be submitted as it is not part of the nomination paper and is therefore not required. Therefore, if it is supplied, it can be a copy. A Nominating Officer may stand as a candidate. If this happens, the candidate, as Nominating Officer, may authorise their own description. A person authorised by the Nominating Officer to sign a certificate of authorisation may also be a candidate and sign a certificate for their own nomination. Description for the Speaker of the House of Commons The current Speaker of the House of Commons may use the description 'The Speaker seeking re-election' (and/or the equivalent in Welsh). The use of this description in these circumstances does not need to be supported by a certificate of authorisation or any documentary evidence. Any such candidate cannot request a party emblem, and so no emblem of any kind can be printed on the ballot paper beside their name. While the current Speaker of the House of Commons may use the description 'The Speaker seeking re-election', there is no requirement for them

to do so, in which case the preceding paragraphs on candidate's description and the certificate of authorisation would apply to them as to any other candidate. The use of joint descriptions Candidates standing on behalf of more than one political party may use a joint description which is registered with the Commission. 5 Such candidates must submit a certificate of authorisation issued by each of the parties' Nominating Officers (or persons authorised to act on their behalf) by the deadline for the delivery of nomination papers. 6 You can find joint descriptions listed on the register of political parties . To view them, go to the registration page for the relevant parties and within the descriptions section, any joint description will be followed by the words (Joint Description with the xx party). For example The Square and Circle Party Candidate (Joint Description with the Circle Party) would be how the joint description would be listed on the Square Party page. The words in brackets are for explanatory purposes only and do not form part of the description and therefore should not be included on the statement of persons nominated or ballot papers. 1. Section 28A Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 6(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Schedule 1 Rule 6A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 1 Rule 6A (1C) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Schedule 1 Rule 6A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Use of party names and party descriptions Offence of making a false statement on a nomination paper Request for a party emblem Request for a party emblem Political parties can register up to three emblems. 1 A candidate of a registered party can choose to have a registered emblem of the party they are representing displayed on the ballot paper. The candidate, not the election agent or the Nominating Officer, must make the request in writing to you not later than the deadline for delivery of nominations. 2 To be able to use an emblem a candidate must have used a party name or description other than Independent, or Annibynnol in Wales. 3 In some instances a candidate may also choose to use an emblem of their party without choosing to use an authorised description. They would need to provide the certificate of authorisation as well as the emblem request form but may choose not to include an authorised description on the nomination paper. If the party has more than one registered emblem, the candidate should specify which one they want to use. 4 If the candidate does not specify one, or the registered party changes an emblem after the nomination papers have been submitted but before the close of nominations, you should try to contact the candidate and ask them to select one. You should also tell them that if they do not select a particular emblem before the close of nominations, you will not be able to print an emblem against their name on the ballot paper. The candidate may provide a high-resolution copy of the emblem for use in the printing of ballot papers, or may request that you download the emblem from our website. You must ensure that whatever copy is used is the same as the registered emblem. The maximum size of an emblem on the ballot paper is set by the directions for printing. When adding a party emblem to a ballot paper, the shape of the emblem should not be altered. For example, do not stretch emblems into square shapes if they are not registered as square images on our website, as this would have the effect of altering their appearance. Candidates standing on behalf of more than one party who use a joint description may choose to use a registered emblem of one of the parties that have authorised the use of the description. There is no provision for joint emblems to be registered with the Commission. A zip file of emblem images is available and can be used by your printer to prepare ballot papers. However, it is the information

on our register of political parties that should be used for confirming which emblem to print. 1. Section 29 Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Schedule 1 Rule 19(2A) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Schedule 1 Rule 19 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Schedule 1 Rule 19(2A) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Request for a party emblem](#) [Use of party names and party descriptions](#) [Changes to the register of political parties](#) [Changes to the register of political parties](#) Our register of political parties contains up-to-date information about political parties, registered descriptions and emblems, and shows which names, descriptions and emblems are currently registered for each political party. Removals or substitution of any registered party descriptions on the Commission's register of political parties may take effect up to and including the day before the actual date the notice of election is published. (NOTE - that this is NOT the last day for publication of the notice of election but the date the notice is actually published.) 1 Once the notice of election is published any changes or deletions to any party descriptions do not apply for that election. 2 For example, if you decide to publish your notice of election before the last day that the notice must be published by law, it is possible that a nomination may be submitted which bears a registered party description that no longer appears on the register of political parties. If the deletion of the description has taken effect after you have published your notice of election but before the last day for publication of notice of election, the deletion does not apply to your election and the 'old' description is still valid. In such circumstances you can check with you local Commission team and whether or not the submitted party description applies for your election. 3 You should also note that political parties may change their registered party name and emblems, and add any new description if they previously had registered fewer than 12, at any time until the close of nominations. 4 The table below sets out the deadlines for making changes to the register of political parties in the run up to a poll. After that point, any changes or deletions to any party descriptions do not apply for that election. 5 What does the party want to do the register of political parties? When can this be done? Add any new descriptions where fewer than 12 are held Up until the close of nominations 6 Alter party names and/or emblems Up until the close of nominations 7 Remove or substitute any register description Up to and including the day before the actual date for the publication of the notice of election 8 Party description - not yet registered Where a candidate attempts to submit a nomination paper bearing a description that has yet to be registered, you should advise the candidate not to formally submit the paper, but to take it back and submit it once the description has been successfully registered. If a candidate formally submits their nomination form with a description that is not yet registered, you must determine the nomination invalid on the basis that, when the determination is made, the description provided does not match any registered with the Commission. 9 You may wish to contact your local Commission team for confirmation that a description is not yet registered before making your determination. 1. Section 30(6A), Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act (PPERA) 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 30 (6A), PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section 30 PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 30 PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Section 30 (6A) PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Section 30 PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) 7. Section 30 PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 7](#) 8. Section 30(6A) PERA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 8](#) 9. Schedule 1 Rule 6A Representation of the People Act 1983

(RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 9 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Changes to the register of political parties Request for a party emblem Deposit to stand for election Deposit to stand for election In order to be validly nominated, a candidate or someone acting on the candidate's behalf must also deposit the sum of £500 with you by the close of nominations. 1 You must accept deposits made using: legal tender (cash in British pounds only) a UK banker's draft You may refuse to accept a banker's draft if you do not know whether the drawer carries on business as a banker in the United Kingdom. You can also choose to accept funds by means of: a building society cheque a debit or credit card electronic transfer of funds You should accept building society cheques if they carry out business in the United Kingdom. You should also accept banker's payments, which are orders issued by a bank guaranteeing payment to the recipient. If you decide to accept any of these methods you should list them on the notice of election and make any requirements you have clear in the nomination pack. If the deposit is given to you by someone acting on behalf of the candidate, the person delivering the deposit must give you their name and address, unless they have already provided this information as part of their notification of appointment as an election agent. You must return the deposit to the person who made it or, if they have died, their personal representative, in the following circumstances: the candidate withdraws before the deadline for withdrawals you reject a candidate's nomination and they are not shown as validly nominated on the statement of persons nominated the candidate dies and proof of death has been given to you before you conclude the first count 2 If there is a fee attached to the form of payment, you can pass this on to the candidate. If so, you should make this clear on the notice of election and the nomination pack. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 9 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 53 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Deposit to stand for election Changes to the register of political parties Delivery of nomination papers Delivery of nomination papers This guidance explains the requirements for the delivery of nomination papers. It sets out what you should do to prepare for and undertake informal checking of papers before they are formally delivered and who can deliver nomination papers to you for submission. It also explains what papers must be submitted and how they should be completed in order for you to be able to determine them, along with the method of submission and who is entitled to deliver and attend the delivery of nomination papers. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Delivery of nomination papers Deposit to stand for election Carrying out informal checks Carrying out informal checks The purpose of an informal check is to check that a nomination paper appears to be complete in respect of all the legal requirements. When conducting an informal check you should make it clear that the nomination papers are being looked at informally only. This process allows you to highlight any errors which would invalidate the paper or which may give reason for a challenge following the election, allowing the opportunity for these to be corrected before being formally submitted. Once informal checks are complete, the papers will either be handed back, or if there are no amendments to be made, they may be formally submitted. The person delivering the nomination paper may choose not to wait for an informal check or may choose not to make any changes following advice given at the informal checking stage. If that is the case the paper should be considered as formally submitted and you should accept it at face value. All candidates and agents should be given an equal opportunity to access an informal check. You should consider how you are going to manage this process, for example by putting in place an appointment system. Last updated: 31 May

2023 Book traversal links for Carrying out informal checks Delivery of nomination papers Time for delivery of nomination papers Time for delivery of nomination papers The deadline for the delivery of nominations for a UK Parliamentary general election is 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. This deadline cannot be moved or extended for any reason. Nomination papers can be delivered to you between the hours of 10am and 4pm from the day after publication of notice of election. 1 UK Parliamentary by-elections UK Parliamentary by-elections For a UK Parliamentary by-election, the deadline for the delivery of nominations is fixed by you, within the constraints of the statutory timetable. The date fixed should not be earlier than the third working day after the date of publication of the notice of election and not later than the seventh working day after the writ is received. The date you choose should maximise the length of time that candidates have to submit their nomination papers. Once fixed, this deadline cannot be moved or extended for any reason. Time for delivery of nomination papers A nomination paper is considered delivered when it is delivered by hand at the place specified in the notice of election. For party candidates wishing to use a description and/or an emblem, you must also receive a certificate of authorisation and an emblem request form as applicable during the time specified for the delivery of nomination papers. No appointment is required for the delivery of nomination papers but you could offer and encourage appointments as a way to manage the potential volume of nominations that you will receive during the very short period for UK Parliamentary nominations. The candidate is responsible for making sure that their nomination papers are delivered in the correct way and by the required deadline. If a completed set of nomination papers and the deposit have not been delivered by that time, the nomination is treated as not having been made which means that you cannot rule the nomination valid or invalid. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Time for delivery of nomination papers Carrying out informal checks Place of delivery of nomination papers Place of delivery of nomination papers Nomination papers must be delivered to a specific location of your choice at the relevant council offices. You must include the location on the notice of election. In England and Wales, the location you choose must be: 1 in the constituency, or in the registration area which includes the constituency, or in the case of a county constituency – in a district or a Welsh county or county borough adjoining the constituency or registration area The registration area is defined as the area of two or more constituencies which have the same registration officer. 2 In Scotland, the location must be: 3 in the constituency, or in the local government area (or, if more than one, any of the local government areas) in which the constituency is situated, or in any local government area adjoining the local government area (or local government areas) in which the constituency is situated The location included on the notice of election for the delivery of nomination papers should be exact and include any room name or number. This ensures there can be no doubt about where a nomination paper should be delivered. You should: ensure that only you or your staff take delivery of nomination papers at the specified location clearly signpost the location from the building entrance ensure the route is fully accessible or provide an appropriately signposted alternative give details to other local authority staff, such as reception staff, of what to do if a person tries to deliver a nomination paper to them and make it clear that they: should not handle nomination papers should not offer to deliver them should instead direct the person delivering the forms to you You or an appointed deputy must be present throughout the period for nominations to deal with nominations. 4 1. Schedule 1 Rule 10

Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 10 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 10 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. S. 28 and Schedule 1 Rule 10 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Place of delivery of nomination papers Time for delivery of nomination papers Who can deliver nomination papers? Who can deliver nomination papers? The nomination and home address form may only be delivered by: 1 the candidate the proposer or seconder as shown on the nomination form the candidate's election agent, provided you have received notification of their appointment The notice of appointment of the election agent may be delivered at the same time as the nomination and home address form. There are no restrictions on who can deliver the consent to nomination, certificate of authorisation and emblem request forms. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 6 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Who can deliver nomination papers? Place of delivery of nomination papers Attendance at delivery of nomination papers Attendance at delivery of nomination papers Only certain people are entitled to attend the delivery of nomination papers and to inspect and make any objections to the validity of a nomination form or home address form. You can find more information on dealing with objections in our guidance: Objections to nominations . After a candidate has delivered their nomination papers and deposit and they stand validly nominated, they are entitled to attend the delivery of other candidates' nomination papers and make objections. In addition to the candidate, the following persons will also be able to attend and make objections: 1 their election agent their proposer or seconder, as stated on the nomination form If a candidate is their own election agent, they can appoint one other person to attend the delivery of nomination papers and make objections. If a candidate has submitted more than one nomination form, only the proposer and seconder from the nomination form they have selected will be entitled to attend. If none has been selected, it will be the proposer and seconder of the first submitted nomination form who will have that entitlement. Nomination papers cannot be inspected by anybody else at any time. Electoral Commission representatives and one other person chosen by a validly nominated candidate can also be present at the delivery of nomination papers, but they are not allowed to inspect or make any objections to nomination papers. You should make it clear to persons inspecting a home address form which asks for the candidate's home address not to be published that the information on the form should only be used by the person inspecting to: object to the nomination lodge an election petition make a complaint to the police that a person has made a false statement You should make it clear to the person inspecting that any other use of the information on the form may be in breach of data protection legislation and so could make a person using the information for any other purpose liable to criminal prosecution. You must keep the nomination papers securely stored and allow inspection of the nomination and home address forms by the persons permitted to inspect these until the deadline for making objections to the nomination papers. 2 Once the deadline for making objections has passed, you should store the nomination papers securely for one year after the election due to the time limit for prosecution in case of an election petition. The home address form must be destroyed after 21 days. 3 1. Schedule 1 Rule 11 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 11 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 53A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Attendance at delivery of nomination papers Who can deliver nomination papers? How nomination papers must be

submitted How nomination papers must be submitted The original version of each completed document must be submitted. 1 The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination must be delivered by hand. 2 This includes delivery by courier. The only exception to this is where a candidate is overseas, in which case their consent to nomination may be sent electronically. 3 Certificates of authorisation and emblem request forms may be delivered by hand or by post, but cannot be delivered by email or other electronic means. This is because a document that is printed out is not an original document – it would be a copy document. For a document to become a certificate (as required for a Certificate of Authorisation), it requires a method of authentication. In most cases, the authentication takes the form of a signature to attest the truth of the facts stated. A seal could also be used. Whatever method of authentication is used, the document delivered must be the original document. A copy document is not acceptable. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 6 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rules 6 and 8 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rules 6 and 8 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for How nomination papers must be submitted Attendance at delivery of nomination papers Nomination papers received by post Nomination papers received by post Nomination forms, home address forms and consent to nomination forms cannot be delivered by post. Only the certificate of authorisation and emblem request can be received by post. Any certificates of authorisation and emblem requests received by post should be stored securely until required and collated with corresponding nomination papers delivered by hand as appropriate. You should have a process in place to monitor your incoming mail to ensure it does not contain nomination papers that must be delivered by hand. If you receive a nomination paper, home address form or consent to nomination form by post, you should try to contact the candidate and explain: that their nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination cannot be accepted by post that they (or someone on their behalf) needs to hand deliver these in accordance with the rules that it is their responsibility to ensure that this is done by the deadline that they do not need to produce new nomination papers or obtain new subscribers You should keep any nomination papers you receive by post so they can be collected and then delivered to you by hand. You and your staff are not permitted to deliver the forms for the candidate. The candidate is deemed not to have been nominated if: you receive a nomination form, home address form or consent to nomination by post 1 you have not received all of the required nomination forms by the deadline for delivery of nomination papers You cannot determine forms which have not been delivered or take any decision as to whether these papers are valid. 2 1. Schedule 1 Rules 6 and 8 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rules 6 and 8 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Nomination papers received by post How nomination papers must be submitted Delivery of multiple nomination forms Delivery of multiple nomination forms There is no limit to the number of nomination forms that may be delivered for the same candidate. If a candidate is validly nominated by more than one form: the candidate should choose one of the valid nomination forms – to be known as the 'selected' nomination form details on this selected nomination form should be added to the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper If the candidate does not select a form, you must choose which one of the forms will be used. 1 A candidate may request that the details of their proposers, seconders and other subscribers for up to two more valid nomination forms be added to the statement of persons nominated. As such, the

statement should have space to enable the names of up to 30 subscribers to be added if requested. If more than one nomination form is delivered and one of the nomination papers is invalid: the invalid form is excluded from those that can be chosen by the candidate or yourself as the selected form as long as at least one nomination form is valid, the candidate can be validly nominated. Signatures from subscribers on any delivered nomination form will count towards the maximum number they may subscribe. 2 For more information see our guidance on the subscriber requirements . 1. Schedule 1 Rule 14 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 7 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Delivery of multiple nomination forms Nomination papers received by post Formal delivery Formal delivery A nomination is formally delivered at the point where: a paper is left with you and the offer of an informal check was not accepted the informal check has been conducted, any issues addressed and the person delivering the nomination paper has indicated they are satisfied that it is ready to be determined All candidates should be offered an informal check. Further information is available in our guidance on carrying out informal checks. Once a nomination form has been formally delivered, no changes can be subsequently made to it (subject to your power to correct minor errors). You can find more information on your power to correct minor errors in the section Mistakes on nomination papers . You should endorse each form with the date and time of formal delivery, so that you have a record of when each paper was formally submitted. If a candidate later decides that they want to make a change to their nomination paper after it has been formally submitted, for example to the description, this can only be done by: withdrawing their candidature submitting new nomination papers within the statutory timeframe Similarly, there is no provision to allow a subscriber to withdraw their signature from a nomination paper once it has been delivered. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Formal delivery Delivery of multiple nomination forms Processing nominations Processing nominations Determining nomination and home address forms after formal delivery A candidate who delivers completed nomination papers by the required deadline will be deemed nominated unless: you decide that the nomination form is invalid a candidate dies or withdraws before the deadline 1 You must determine the validity of a nomination form and home address form as soon as possible after formal delivery. This enables candidates whose nominations have been deemed invalid to submit new papers before the close of nominations. We have also produced a checklist to assist you with processing nomination forms. Nomination checklist for UK Parliamentary elections (DOC) Accepting nominations at face value You must not: undertake any investigation or research into any candidate. Your duty does not go beyond seeing that a nomination form is correct on face value 2 You should not: investigate whether a name given on a nomination form is genuine You should: disregard any personal knowledge you may already have of the candidate determine nominations on the basis of the form itself 1. Representation of the People Act 1983 sch 1 rule 12 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Greenway Stanley v Paterson [1977] 2 All ER 663; R v An Election Court ex parte Sheppard [1975] 1 WLR 1319 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Processing nominations Formal delivery Determining a nomination to be invalid Determining a nomination to be invalid Grounds for determining a nomination form invalid By law, the only grounds you have for determining that a nomination form is invalid are: 1 that the particulars of the candidate or the persons subscribing the nomination form are not as required by law that the paper is not subscribed as required that the person is disqualified under the Representation of the People Act

1981 on the grounds that they are imprisoned and serving a sentence of a year or more

Particulars of the candidate The particulars of the candidate include the description given on the nomination paper, therefore, the nomination must be deemed invalid if:

- the party does not appear on the Commission's register of political parties as a party that can contest elections in your part of the country
- the party name or description used on the nomination form does not exactly match the party name or description as registered with the Commission
- the use of the party name or description has not been authorised by a certificate of authorisation signed by or on behalf of the party's Nominating Officer
- the certificate of authorisation explicitly authorises a specific name or description and this does not match the party name/description on the nomination form

2 There is case law that provides that candidates who give descriptions that are obscene, racist or an incitement to crime should be considered to have provided particulars that are "not as required by law". This is because they contravene the law and/or will inevitably involve the Returning Officer in a breach of the law. If the nomination form does not comply with the description rules you must give a determination decision to that effect as soon as practicable after the delivery of the nomination form and in any event within 24 hours after the deadline for the delivery of nominations.

3 We have produced a nominations checklist for (A)ROs which sets out what you will need to consider and specific things to look out for when determining a nomination.

Nomination checklist for UK Parliamentary elections (DOC)

Subscribers Our section 'Nomination form - subscribers requirements' contains detailed information on subscribers. If a nomination is not subscribed as required it must be deemed invalid.

Failure to provide a deposit If you have not received the required £500 deposit or any of the required nomination papers by the deadline for the submission of nomination papers, the candidate has not been validly nominated. There is then no need to make a formal determination, and their name should not appear on the statement of persons nominated.

4 **Return of deposit due to nomination not being valid** You must return the deposit of any candidate whose nomination you have rejected. The deposit must be returned to the person who made it and as soon as practicable after the statement of persons nominated has been published.

5 For guidance on returning deposits to validly nominated candidates after an election see [Post election activity](#).

Grounds for determining a home address form invalid You must determine that the home address form does not comply with the legal requirements if:

- 6 it does not state the candidate's full name
- it does not state the candidate's home address in full

Sham nominations You may come across a situation where the candidate's nomination is clearly a sham - for example, if a candidate has given an obviously fictitious name or address such as 'Mickey Mouse of Disney Land'. In such a case, the nomination form must be held to be invalid on the grounds that the candidate's particulars are not as required by law.

7 When considering the name, the first consideration should be whether the "name" that has been provided on the nomination form appears to be "obviously fictitious" on the face of the paper. If the "name" does not appear to be a genuine name and instead appears to be a statement or slogan, for example, you may consider that it is "obviously fictitious". Any conclusion would be supported by considering the wider context. For example, does the name appear to be a political slogan made in response to topical political events, rather than the genuine name of a real person? A court would likely in those circumstances conclude that such names are "obviously fictitious" and that the nomination form should be rejected.

1. Schedule 1 rule 12(2) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Schedule 1 rule 12(2) RPA1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Schedule 1 rule

12(3A) RPA1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Schedule 1 rule 12(1) RPA1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 1 rule 53(3) RPA1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Schedule 1 rule 12(1) RPA1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Sanders v Chichester (1995) 139 SJLB 15 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Determining a nomination to be invalid Processing nominations After formally determining a nomination paper After formally determining a nomination paper Once you have decided that a nomination is valid, it cannot be challenged during the election, although it may be challenged after the election through an election petition. 1 If you have made a formal determination but then, as a result of an objection, later decide that the nomination should in fact have been determined as invalid, you can make a further determination to this effect. If you determine a nomination to be invalid, you must: state this on the nomination form write the reasons for rejection on the form sign the form contact the candidate and agent as soon as possible so that they may have the opportunity, wherever possible, to submit another nomination form before the close of nominations 2 1. Schedule 1 rule 12 (5) and (6) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 rule 12 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for After formally determining a nomination paper Determining a nomination to be invalid Withdrawal of a candidate before the deadline Withdrawal of a candidate before the deadline A nominated candidate can withdraw their candidature if they do so before the deadline. A withdrawal notice is not prescribed in legislation but we do provide a template withdrawal notice for candidates to use. A notice of withdrawal must be: 1 signed by the candidates attested by one witness delivered by hand to the place for the delivery of nomination papers delivered by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll There are no restrictions on who can deliver a notice of withdrawal. If the candidate is not in the UK, a notice of withdrawal will be effective if it is: 2 signed by the proposer accompanied by a written declaration that the candidate is abroad (also signed by the proposer) delivered to you by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll If the candidate was nominated by more than one nomination form, each proposer must sign the notice and declaration. 3 If any of the proposers are outside the UK they do not need to sign the notice, but the notice must, by law, include a statement that they are also outside the UK. 4 Template Withdrawal Form Return of deposit due to withdrawal You must return the deposit of any candidate who has withdrawn their candidature. The deposit must be returned to the person who made it and as soon as practicable after the statement of persons nominated has been published. 5 For guidance on returning deposits to validly nominated candidates after an election see our section on Post election activity . 1. Schedule 1 Rule 13 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 13 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 13(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Schedule 1 Rule 13(2)(b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 1 Rule 53(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Withdrawal of a candidate before the deadline After formally determining a nomination paper Mistakes on nomination papers Mistakes on nomination papers Subject to your power to correct minor errors no changes can be made to a nomination paper once it has been formally delivered. Correction of minor errors The information in this section explains how to deal with minor errors and you must have regard to this. 1 You can, by law, correct minor errors made on nomination and home address forms at any time before you publish the statement of persons nominated. 2 You should attempt

to contact the candidate or agent before making any minor error amendment. The table below sets out some of the minor errors which can be corrected and guidance about exercising your power to correct minor errors. You should contact us for advice when considering correcting minor errors.

Type of error **Guidance**

Errors in elector numbers

Where an elector number has been entered incorrectly, you may amend it if you are satisfied that an error has been made. However, where the elector number has been omitted altogether this does not amount to an error and the nomination form should be deemed invalid on the basis that the number has not been supplied ³ .

Obvious spelling errors in candidate's details

Care should be taken in exercising this power - what is an obvious spelling error to one person may not be to another.

Errors in a home address

Where a home address is not absolutely correct there may not be a need to make a correction. By law, errors in a home address do not affect the validity of a nomination form, as long as the address can be commonly understood.

1. Schedule 1 rule 14A Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Schedule 1 rule 14A RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Schedule 1 rule 12(2)(a) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Mistakes on nomination papers](#)

[Withdrawal of a candidate before the deadline](#)

[Objections to nominations](#)

Objections to nominations

Certain people may object to the validity of a nomination form or home address form. More information on who can object to nominations can be found in the attendance at nominations section. Objections can be made on the last day for delivery of nomination papers during the hours for delivery and for one hour after (i.e. up until 5pm).

1 The only exception is where the objection is on the grounds that a candidate is disqualified because they are serving a prison sentence of a year or more . In this case, objections can be made between 10am and 4pm on the next working day after the deadline for delivery of nomination papers.

Timetable for objections

The time within which an ordinary objection can be made depends on when the nomination papers are delivered.

2 When was the nominations form delivered? When can the nomination form be objected to?

Nominations delivered up to 4pm on the day before the deadline for delivery of nomination papers (E-20) Objection must be made between 10 am and 12 noon on the last day for submitting nomination papers (E-19)

Nominations delivered after 4pm on the day before the deadline for delivery of nomination papers (E-20) Objection must be made between 10am and 5pm on the last day for submitting nomination papers (E-19) and also must be made at or immediately after the time of the delivery of the nomination

1. Schedule 1 Rules 1 and 11 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Schedule 1 Rule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Objections to nominations](#)

[Mistakes on nomination papers](#)

[Objections on the grounds that a candidate is imprisoned for a year or more](#)

[Objections on the grounds that a candidate is imprisoned for a year or more](#)

If it appears to you that a candidate might be disqualified from standing for election by the Representation of the People Act 1981 (i.e. because they are imprisoned and serving a sentence of a year or more), you must publish a draft statement of persons nominated that shows persons who have been and stand nominated as soon as practicable after the close of nominations. The draft statement must: be headed 'draft statement of persons nominated' contain a notice stating that any person who wishes to object to the nomination of a candidate on the ground that they are disqualified from standing for election by the Representation of the People Act 1981 may do so between 10am and 4pm at the place specified in the notice specify the date on which such objections can be made

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Objections on the grounds that a](#)

candidate is imprisoned for a year or more

Objections to nominations

Decisions on objections

You should consider any objection that you receive during the allowed time for objections to be made. You are only entitled to hold a nomination invalid on the following grounds:

- 1 that the particulars of the candidate or subscribers are not as required by law
- 2 that the form is not subscribed as required
- 3 that the candidate is disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1981 on the grounds that they are imprisoned and serving a sentence of a year or more

You should not undertake any investigation or hear any representations in support of or challenging any fact or statement given on the nomination or home address form. You must decide any objection as soon as practicable after it is made and in any event within 24 hours after the close of nominations.

- 1 You should limit the objection process to the nomination and home address forms. Where you decide that, as a result of an objection, a nomination you have already determined should have been ruled invalid, you must: show on the statement of persons nominated any candidate who is no longer validly nominated the reason why they no longer stand nominated You should inform the candidate as appropriate.
- 2 For more information see section Determining a nomination to be invalid .
- 3 Schedule 1 Rule 12 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Schedule 1 Rule 12(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2
3. Schedule 1 Rule 12(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Decisions on objections

Objections on the grounds that a candidate is imprisoned for a year or more

After the close of nominations

After the close of nominations

After the close of nominations

you must publish a statement of persons nominated and a notice of poll.

- 1 For details on what these notices should contain and steps you should take when proofing, see our guidance on production of notices .

Uncontested elections

The election is uncontested if either:

- only one valid nomination is received
- all valid nominations are properly withdrawn by the deadline except one

If the election is uncontested, you must publish the statement of persons nominated as soon as practicable declaring the one validly nominated candidate elected.

- 1 You should then return the writ with the details of the successful candidate. No poll is necessary.
- 2 Schedule 1 Rule 14 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Schedule 1 Rule 17(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for After the close of nominations

Decisions on objections

Producing election notices

Producing election notices

Translation and formats of notices

You must ensure that notices are translated or provided in another format if appropriate.

- 1 You may produce them: in Braille in languages other than (or, in Wales, and Welsh) using graphical representations in audio format
- 2 using any other means of making information accessible

The nomination form and the ballot papers cannot be produced in any other language or format.

- 3 The enlarged hand-held and display copies of the ballot paper(s) used in the polling station must have the instructions for voters printed at the top of the paper(s). These instructions may be translated into languages other than or, in Wales, and Welsh.
- 4 Ensuring information on notices is accessible

You should ensure that any information about the polls, including the notices of election and notices of poll are:

- easily accessible to all voters
- available in an accessible format
- available in time for voters to cast their vote

Information can be made available through the local authority website. The information provided on your website should be accessible to voters. You could speak to your authority's equalities officer or web team for advice on how to do this. If you are providing information in PDF format, you should be aware that if certain steps are not followed when creating PDFs, they may not be compatible with screen

readers and other assistive technologies. The UK Government has produced a guide to producing accessible PDFs you can refer to. 1. Section 199B(2) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 199B(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 199B(4)(b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 199B(5) and (6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Producing election notices

After the close of nominations

Publishing election notices

Publishing election notices

When you are required to publish notices, you should publish and display them in a place in the electoral area where they will be seen. This should include local authority offices, noticeboards, libraries and other public buildings. You may also give notices in any other manner you think fit. 1 You should apply robust proof checking processes to help: detect any errors avoid any potential data breaches before they occur You can find more information on proof checking processes in our quality assurance guidance and you can find a quality assurance checklist here. Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) Data protection considerations for election notices

As the data controller you will need to consider whether it is appropriate or necessary for notices to remain published, on your website or elsewhere, beyond the expiry of the petition period for the election. For example, where a notice serves a specific purpose – such as advising who will be a candidate at the election - once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, the notice serves no further purpose. Once the petition deadline for the election has passed you should either remove the notices from the website or remove the personal data contained in the notices. Data protection legislation permits personal data to be stored for longer periods, subject to the implementation of appropriate safeguards if the data will be processed:

- solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, or
- for scientific, historical, or statistical purposes

For example, notices of election results on your website should be retained as they are for public interest and have historical and statistical purposes. For more information see our guidance on data protection considerations. 1. Section 200(1A) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Publishing election notices

Producing election notices

Publishing the statement of persons nominated

Publishing the statement of persons nominated

If there are no objections to nomination papers, you must publish a statement of persons nominated for the constituency at 5pm on the last day for delivery of nomination papers. If there are objections, the statement must be published by 4pm on the working day after the last day for nominations. 1 Contents of the statement of persons nominated

The statement of persons nominated must include the following information for all candidates who are validly nominated: name home address (or, if they have requested not to make their home address public, the constituency name or country as appropriate) description (if any) subscribers' names (up to 30, taken from the 'selected nomination form' and up to two others if multiple nomination forms have been delivered) It must also include those who no longer stand nominated and the reason why (i.e. those who have withdrawn or whose nomination you have rejected). 2 Your privacy notice should make clear that, under electoral legislation, you are required to publish the candidates' name and address information in the statement of persons nominated. You can find out more about the data protection considerations of a privacy notice in our data protection guidance. The statement of persons nominated must also include the notice of poll if the election is contested. More information about the notice of poll can be found in our guidance on Publishing the notice of poll .

Ordering of names on the statement of persons

nominated The names of the candidates must be listed in alphabetical order of their surname. 3 This is also how they will appear on the ballot paper. 4 If there are two or more candidates with the same surname, the alphabetical order of the other names will decide which candidate is listed first. 5 If a person has requested the use of a commonly used name on their nomination paper, the commonly used name must be shown on the statement instead of the actual name. 6 Where a candidate has requested the use of a commonly used surname, the candidate's alphabetical position on the statement of persons nominated and on the ballot paper must be made by reference to their commonly used surname. If, however, you have rejected the use of any commonly used name as you think it is likely to mislead or confuse electors, or is obscene or offensive, the actual name must, by law, be published on the statement of persons nominated instead of the commonly used name. Considerations where a candidate has asked for their home address not to be published If more than one validly nominated candidate has: asked for their home address not to be published, and has provided the same relevant area of the UK (or the same country) on their home address form as another candidate(s) You must consider whether two or more of them have the same name or a name so similar that it is likely to cause confusion. 7 If you consider that this is the case, you may add such details from their home address or nomination form as you consider appropriate to reduce the likelihood of confusion. 8 You must consult the candidate(s) affected, if it is practicable to do so, before you make a decision on which details should be included on the statement of persons nominated. You must give notice in writing to the affected candidate(s) informing them of the additional information that will be published. 9 You should have robust proof-checking processes in place to ensure that there are no errors on the statement of persons nominated. You can find information about proof checking in our quality assurance guidance , and in the following quality assurance checklist. Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) 1. Schedule 1 Rule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 14 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rule 14(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Schedule 1 Rule 19(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 1 Rule 14(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Schedule 1 Rule 14(2A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Schedule 1 Rule 14(4A)(a) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Schedule 1 Rule 14(4A)(b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Schedule 1 Rule 14(4B) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 9 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Publishing the statement of persons nominated Publishing election notices Publishing the notice of poll Publishing the notice of poll You must publish a notice of poll for the constituency if there are two or more candidates and there is to be a contest, stating the day and hours fixed for the poll. 1 You must include the notice of poll on the statement of persons nominated. You should give a copy of the statement of persons nominated with the notice of poll to all candidates and election agents as soon as practicable after its publication. We have published a template notice of poll here. Notice of poll - UK Parliamentary elections (DOC) 1. Schedule 1 Rule 23 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Publishing the notice of poll Publishing the statement of persons nominated Publishing the notice of situation of polling stations Publishing the notice of situation of polling stations You must publish the notice of situation of polling stations. It must give public notice of: 1 the situation of each polling station in the area the description of voters entitled to vote there If no objections to nominations have been received, you must publish the notice no later than 5pm on the last day for the delivery of

nomination papers. If objections have been lodged, you must publish the notice on the next working day after the last day for delivery of nomination papers. 2 You may choose to combine the notice of the situation of polling stations with the statement of persons nominated and notice of poll. Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies You should liaise with the local government ROs within your area to ensure you have all of the relevant information regarding elections and by-elections in other local authorities and the location of polling stations to enable you to produce the notice of situation of polling stations. Publishing the notice of situation of polling stations You should have robust proof-checking processes in place to ensure that there are no errors on the notice of situation of polling stations. You can find more information about proof checking in our quality assurance guidance , and you can find a quality assurance checklist here. Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) You must give a copy of the relevant notice of situation of polling stations and descriptions of voters entitled to vote there to all election agents as soon as practicable after giving the notice. 3 You should also give a copy of the relevant notice to all candidates. You should also be prepared to make these notices available to any accredited observers on request. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 23 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rules 1 and 23(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rules 1 and 23(2)(c) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Publishing the notice of situation of polling stations Publishing the notice of poll Death of a candidate Death of a candidate The impact that the death of a candidate will have on the election depends on whether the deceased candidate was standing as an independent or was standing on behalf of a registered political party. For the purposes of the management of the election, it is the time at which you receive proof of the candidate's death that is the relevant factor, not the actual time of death. Proof of death is not defined. You should be satisfied with any information that you have received to indicate that the death has occurred. Death of an independent candidate In the event that an independent candidate dies during the election period the election continues as normal. The impact of the death of an independent candidate on the result of an election is set out in the following table. Scenario Action Scenario one If the deceased candidate receives the most votes, they are not elected and the election is re-run. All of the existing candidates remain nominated for the new election although candidates may withdraw. 1 New nomination forms are not required. No new nominations are allowed. The retention or return of the deposit for candidates is determined by the result of the re-run election. Scenario two If the deceased candidate did not receive the most votes, the winning candidate is declared elected and the election is not affected. Scenario three If the deceased candidate came joint first with the same number of votes as any other candidate, the other candidate is declared elected. Scenario four If only two persons are standing nominated and an independent candidate dies, the election is treated as an uncontested election and the other candidate is declared elected. In all circumstances, you must return the deposit of the deceased candidate to the person who made it. If the deceased candidate made the deposit, you must return the deposit to their personal representative. Death of a party candidate Scenario Action Scenario one If a candidate standing on behalf of a political party (or as a joint candidate standing on behalf of two or more parties) dies before polls open, the poll will be countermanded, meaning the poll will be cancelled. Scenario two If a candidate standing on behalf of a political party (or as a joint candidate standing on behalf of two or more parties) dies after the polls have opened but

before the declaration of result, the election is stopped immediately. Scenario three If a candidate standing on behalf of a political party (or as a joint candidate standing on behalf of two or more parties) dies after the poll has closed and count is being undertaken, the count process stops. In all of the scenarios concerning death of a party candidate, there will be a new election. 2 All of the existing candidates remain nominated for the new election although they may withdraw. 3 New nomination forms are not required. No new nominations are allowed. The only exception is that a new candidate can be nominated to stand on behalf of the same party (or parties) as the candidate who died. In this circumstance, the nomination paper for the new candidate must be submitted by the close of nominations based on the new timetable. The retention or return of the deposit is determined by the result of the re-run election. Death of the Speaker of the House of Commons If a candidate who was the Speaker of the House of Commons seeking re-election has died after the polls have opened but before the declaration of the result, the election is stopped immediately. If a candidate who was the Speaker of the House of Commons seeking re-election has died and the polls have not opened, the poll is countermanded. If the count is being undertaken, that process stops. In the circumstance of any of the scenarios above, there will be a new election. 4 In the case of the death of the Speaker new nominations are allowed for the new election. These must be submitted in the usual way and by the deadline for nominations based on the new timetable. Timetable for the new election due to death of a candidate The timetable for the new election will be prepared as if the writ was received seven working days after you received proof of the death. The new polling day must be between 21 and 27 working days after the day on which the writ is taken to have been received. 5 1. Schedule 1 Rules 60, 61 and 62 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 1 Rule 63 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 1 Rules 60, 61 and 62 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Schedule 1 Rule 64 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 1 Rule 61 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Death of a candidate Publishing the notice of situation of polling stations Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Nominations Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Nominations Emblem_UK-V2 Nomination checklist for UK Parliamentary elections (DOC) Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) Notice of poll - UK Parliamentary elections (DOC) Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) Withdrawal form - must be printed off (DOC) Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Nominations Death of a candidate Agents Agents This section of the guidance covers the appointment of election agents, the requirement to give public notice of the appointment of election agents and how an appointment can be revoked. You will also find guidance on the appointment of agents to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the verification and count, and information on the secrecy and conduct requirements for attendance at these key electoral events. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Agents Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Nominations Appointment of election agent Appointment of election agent An election agent is the person responsible for the proper management of the candidate's election campaign and, in particular, for its financial management. Every candidate must have an election agent. The notice of the appointment of an election agent must be delivered to you by the latest time for the delivery of notices of withdrawals by 4pm on the last day for the delivery of nomination papers. We have produced an election agent notification form as part of the following set of nomination papers. 1 Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general

election (DOC) Can a candidate be their own agent? A candidate may appoint themselves as their own election agent. If no agent is appointed by the deadline for withdrawals, the candidate automatically becomes their own election agent. 2 A candidate also becomes their own agent if: they revoke their agent's appointment, or their agent dies, and a replacement is not appointed on the day of the death or on the following day 3 Election agent's office address The election agent must have an office address to which all claims, notices, legal notices and documents may be sent. This must be a physical address – PO boxes or similar mailboxes cannot be used. 4 The location of the office must be in one of the following locations: within the parliamentary constituency where the candidate is standing within a constituency which adjoins the constituency where the candidate is standing within Wales, within a Welsh county or county borough which is part of, or adjoins, the constituency where the candidate is standing within London, within a London borough which is part of, or adjoins, the constituency where the candidate is standing 5 The election agent's office address is often the same as their home address. Alternatively, it might be the local political party office or an office especially set up for the election. If the candidate gives you written notification of their appointment as their own election agent, they must give an office address within the qualifying area as defined in the bullet points above. Where a candidate acts as their own election agent as a result of not having appointed anybody else, the office address is deemed to be the address given on the statement of persons nominated, i.e. the one provided on the home address form. If that address is outside the relevant qualifying area as defined in the bullet points above, the office address is deemed to be the address of the person named in the statement of persons nominated as proposer. 6 1. Section 67(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S. 67(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. S. 70(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. S. 69(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. S. 69(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. S. 70(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Appointment of election agent Agents Publishing the notice of election agents Publishing the notice of election agents You must publish a notice setting out the election agent's name and address as soon as possible after you have been notified of the appointment. You should also include the full name of the candidate on this notice, and you could add any commonly used name in brackets, for completeness. The notice must be updated if any agent's appointment is revoked, or the agent dies, and the new agent's details published on the revised version. 1 Your privacy notice should make clear that you are required under electoral legislation to publish an election agent's name and address information in the notice of election agents. The notice serves a specific purpose, i.e. advising who will be a candidate's election agent, so once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, they serve no further purpose. You should either remove the notice, or remove the personal data contained in the notice, once the petition deadline for the election has passed. Our data protection guidance covers the requirements of a privacy notice and document retention considerations. 1. Section 67(6) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Publishing the notice of election agents Appointment of election agent Revoking the appointment of an election agent Revoking the appointment of an election agent Once an election agent has been appointed by a candidate they cannot resign from their role. Only the candidate may revoke the appointment. In this case the candidate would need to appoint a new election agent or would become their own agent. 1 If a

candidate is acting as their own election agent, irrespective of whether they became an agent as a result of not appointing one or because they had given you written notice of their own appointment, they can also revoke their own appointment and appoint a new agent. Wherever a candidate revokes the appointment of an election agent they must notify you in writing. 2 You must then publish a revised version of the notice of election agents. A candidate may revoke the appointment of an election agent at any time during the election period. Where possible, if an election agent is revoked but has already been involved in authorising expenditure or campaign materials, the candidate should obtain a declaration from their previous agent regarding any expenses which occurred during their time as agent, to support the candidate's submission of their final expenses return. 1. Section 70(3)

Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. S. 67(3) and (4) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Revoking the appointment of an election agent](#) [Publishing the notice of election agents](#) [Appointment of sub-agents](#) [Appointment of sub-agents](#) An election agent in a county constituency may appoint sub-agents to act on their behalf. No sub-agents can be appointed in a borough (or burgh) constituency. 1

Election agents at a county constituency may appoint sub-agents for particular parts of the constituency, as long as those parts do not overlap. The agent can determine the parts into which they wish to sub-divide the constituency. 2 The office of the sub-agent must be in the area within they are appointed to act. 3 A sub-agent can do anything that the election agent is entitled to do within the area to which they are appointed. 4 The election agent must declare to you in writing the name, address and office address of each sub-agent they have appointed and the area in which they may act by the second working day before the day of the poll. You should include a form for the notification of appointment of sub-agents in your nomination packs. We have produced a form for the notification of appointment of sub-agents as part of the following set of nomination papers which you could use for this purpose. 5 Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) The election agent can revoke the appointment of a sub-agent at any time. If a sub-agent dies or has their appointment revoked, the election agent may appoint a new sub-agent by declaring in writing the name, address, office address and area of appointment of the new sub-agent to you. Once the name, address, office address and area of appointment of a sub-agent have been declared to you, you must give public notice of these details. 6 1. Section

68(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. S. 68(1) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. S. 69(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. S. 68(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. S. 68(3) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. S. 68(4) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Appointment of sub-agents](#) [Revoking the appointment of an election agent](#) [Postal, Polling and Counting Agents](#) [Postal, Polling and Counting Agents](#) Candidates, or their election agent, can appoint agents to observe the opening of postal votes, the conduct of the poll at polling stations and the verification and count of votes. You are responsible for receiving the notifications of appointment of these agents. 1 You will find more details on these agents in the guidance that follows. You are required to ensure that all appointed agents are given a copy of the following relevant secrecy requirements for opening of postal votes, the poll and the count which we have published on our website. 2 [Secrecy requirements - postal voting \(DOC\)](#) [Secrecy requirements - the poll \(DOC\)](#) [Secrecy requirements - count - S66](#) For guidance on revoking agent appointments and appointing new agents see [Revoking the appointment of an election agent](#) . 1.

Schedule 1 Rule 30 Representation of the People Act 1983, (RPA 1983) Regulation 69 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) and Regulation 69 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S. 66 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Postal, Polling and Counting Agents Appointment of sub-agents Postal Voting agents Postal Voting agents Postal voting agents are permitted by law to observe the opening of the postal voters' ballot box, the opening of returned postal votes and the checking of signatures and dates of birth provided on returned postal voting statements. 1 You are required to give candidates at least 48 hours' notice of the time and place of any postal vote opening session and the number of agents a candidate may appoint to attend each opening. 2 You must be given written notice of the name and address of any postal voting agents before the start of any particular session that the agents are seeking to attend. The Commission has developed the following form for the notification of appointment of a postal voting agent. 3 Postal voting agent appointment form (DOC) Secrecy and conduct requirements Ballot papers will be kept face down throughout a postal vote opening session. You should supply all postal voting agents with the requirements of secrecy for the opening of postal votes. Secrecy requirements - postal voting (DOC) The key points are that: anyone attending an opening session must not attempt to see how individual ballot papers have been marked or keep a tally of how ballot papers have been marked anyone attending a postal vote opening must not attempt to look at identifying marks or numbers on ballot papers, disclose how any particular ballot paper has been marked or pass on any such information gained from the session. anyone found guilty of breaching these requirements can face an unlimited fine, or may be imprisoned for up to six months 1. Regulation 68(d) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR E&W) 2001), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg. 80 RPR (E&W 2001) and Reg. 80 RPR (S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg. 69 RPR (E&W) 2001 and Reg. 69 RPR (S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Postal Voting agents Postal, Polling and Counting Agents Polling agents Polling agents Polling agents are entitled by law to access polling stations for the purpose of detecting personation. 1 They can also observe the procedures to be followed inside a polling station. You must be notified in writing of any polling agents that have been appointed by not later than five working days before the poll for their appointment to be in force for the poll. The Commission has developed the following form for the notification of appointment of a polling agent. 2 Polling agent appointment form (DOC) Limiting the number of agents in attendance There is no limit on the number of polling agents that may be appointed at a UK Parliamentary election. A polling agent can be appointed to a particular polling station or stations, or to all polling stations within the electoral area. The same polling agents may be appointed to attend more than one polling station. However, by law only one polling agent may be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same candidate. 3 Secrecy and conduct requirements Anyone attending a polling station has a duty to maintain the secrecy of the ballot. You should supply all Polling Agents with the following requirements of secrecy for the poll. Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) In particular, the following information must not be disclosed: the name or electoral number of who has or has not voted the number or other unique identifying mark on the ballot paper Anyone attending a polling station must also not try to ascertain how a voter has voted or who they are about to vote for. A polling agent can mark off on

their copy of the register of electors those voters who have applied for ballot papers. If the polling agent leaves the polling station during the hours of polling, they will need to leave the marked copy of the register in the polling station to ensure that secrecy requirements are not breached. Any person found guilty of breaching the secrecy requirements can face an unlimited fine, or may be imprisoned for up to six months. Polling agents' seals cannot be attached to ballot boxes at the start of or during the poll. While a polling agent can observe the poll, they do not have to be present in a polling station for polling and related procedures to take place.

1. Schedule 1 Rule 30 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Schedule 1 Rule 30 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Schedule 1 Rule 32 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Polling agents](#)

[Postal Voting agents](#)

[Counting agents](#)

Counting agents Counting agents can be appointed to observe the verification and counting processes.

1 You are legally required to give appointed counting agents notice in writing of the time and place at which the verification and count will begin.

2 You must be notified in writing of the appointment of counting agents by not later than five working days before the poll for their appointment to be in force for the verification and count.

3 The Commission has developed the following form for the notification of appointment of a counting agent. [Counting agent appointment form \(DOC\)](#)

Limiting the number of agents in attendance You are permitted by law to limit the number of counting agents appointed. The number that may be appointed by each candidate must be the same and, unless there are special circumstances, must not be less than the number obtained by dividing the number of counting assistants (i.e. those staff counting the ballot papers) by the number of candidates.

4 When determining the maximum number of counting agents, each candidate should, as far as possible, be permitted to appoint sufficient numbers of counting agents to enable full and proper scrutiny of the verification and count processes. You should, however, consider any health and safety implications, including fire regulations for the verification and count venue, when deciding on maximum numbers of counting agents. For more details on who is permitted to attend the verification and count see our guidance on [Attendance at the verification and count](#).

Secrecy and conduct requirements Anyone attending the count has a duty to maintain the secrecy of the count. You should supply all Polling Agents with the following requirements of secrecy for the count.

Secrecy requirements - count - S66 In particular, anyone attending must not:

- ascertain or attempt to ascertain the number or other unique identifying mark on the back of any ballot paper
- communicate any information obtained at the count as to the candidate for whom any vote is given on any particular ballot paper

1. Schedule 1 Rule 30(1)(b) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Schedule 1 Rule 30 and 44 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Schedule 1 Rule 30(3)(b) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Schedule 1 Rule 30 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Counting agents](#)

[Polling agents](#)

[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Agents](#)

[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Agents](#)

[Counting agent appointment form \(DOC\)](#)

[Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election \(DOC\)](#)

[Polling agent appointment form \(DOC\)](#)

[Postal voting agent appointment form \(DOC\)](#)

[Secrecy requirements - postal voting \(DOC\)](#)

[Secrecy requirements - the count](#)

[Secrecy requirements - the poll \(DOC\)](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Agents](#)

[Counting agents](#)

[Absent Voting](#)

[Absent Voting](#)

The effective management of the absent voting process is essential to ensure that absent voting is accessible and that electors are able to

exercise their vote as they have requested. This section includes guidance on the absent voting timetable, the key deadlines for the process and how and when electors can make changes to their existing absent voting arrangements ahead of an election. It also covers arrangements that should be put in place for proxy voting, and guidance for the issuing of postal votes, including how to quality assure the process. You will also find guidance on the processes that must be followed on the receipt of postal votes. It includes information on the postal vote opening process, who can attend postal vote opening sessions and the records you must keep as part of the process. Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Absent Voting Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - Agents](#)

[Absent voting timetable](#)

[Absent voting timetable](#)

You must issue postal votes to electors as soon as is practicable. 1 In practice, this means at any time after the details to be printed on the ballot papers have been confirmed, i.e. after the deadline for withdrawals, which is 4pm on the last day for the delivery of nomination papers. The early dispatch of postal votes will maximise the time available for electors – especially overseas and service voters – to receive, complete and return their postal votes. You can find more information in our guidance: [Issuing and distributing postal votes](#)

You may only issue a postal vote to someone who has been added to the electoral register and has made a successful application for a postal vote. The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) is required to publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 2 This supports the dispatch of postal votes at an early stage in the timetable to those electors who have applied to register and applied for a postal vote close to the registration deadline. More information is available in our guidance for EROs: [election notices of alteration](#) . If you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to obtain the postal voters' list and the postal proxy voters' list as soon as possible after the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration to include these electors in the initial dispatch of postal votes. This notice must be published on the same day as the deadline for the delivery of nomination papers. 3 You will also need to liaise with the ERO to obtain any subsequent updates once the second interim election notice of alteration and the final election notice of alteration have been published. You can find further information on interim notices of alteration in our guidance for EROs in England , Scotland and Wales . Our template election timetable for a UK Parliamentary general election and the timetable for by-elections also includes the relevant publication dates for these notices. [UKPGE Election timetable generic \(DOCX\)](#) [UKPE By election timetable generic \(DOCX\)](#) [Cross-boundary constituencies Cross boundary constituencies](#)

If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you should liaise with the ERO(s) in the other authority/authorities to obtain the data you need. If there is a need for exchanging data electronically, you should ensure that a test of the process is carried out ahead of the first scheduled transfer.

[Absent voting timetable](#)

[Deadlines for absent vote applications and requests for changes to existing arrangements](#)

The deadline for electors to submit new postal and postal proxy applications is 5pm, 11 working days before polling day. This is also the deadline: to cancel existing postal votes for electors to make changes (i.e. amending the delivery address) to any existing absent vote (i.e. postal, proxy and postal proxy) arrangements

If, however, an elector is an existing postal voter and has already returned their postal ballot paper, they cannot make changes after that time, even if this is before 5pm, 11 working days before polling day. 4 The deadline for new proxy applications (not postal proxy), excluding emergency proxy applications, is 5pm, 6

working days before polling day. 5 The deadline for emergency proxy applications is 5pm on polling day. 6 You can find more information in our guidance: voting by emergency proxy . This table summarises the deadlines for easy reference:

Application/Request	Deadline
Submit new postal and postal proxy vote applications	5pm, 11 working days before polling day
Cancel existing postal votes	5pm, 11 working days before polling day
Make changes to existing absent voting arrangements	5pm, 11 working days before polling day
New proxy (not postal proxy) applications	5pm, 6 working days before polling day
Emergency proxy applications	5pm, polling day

The ERO will provide you with the final lists of absent voters, i.e. the list of postal voters, the list of postal proxy voters and the list of proxies, after the deadline for applications has passed. The final lists of absent voters may not be available until after the registration determination deadline, which is six working days before the poll. This is because where a completed registration application is made by the deadline but the applicant's identity cannot be verified against DWP records or through local data matching, the ERO has until the determination deadline for applications to receive the required evidence from the applicant under the exceptions process and make a determination. Where the applicant has also applied for an absent vote by the relevant absent vote deadline, the absent vote cannot be granted until the registration application has been positively determined and the application appears on the electoral register.

1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR(E&W)) 2001 reg 71, RPR(Scotland) 2001 reg 71 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) section 13AB ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. RPA 1983 s13AB(5) ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 56 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

5. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 56, RPR(S) 2001 reg 56 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#)

6. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 56(3A), RPR(S) 2001 reg 56(3A) ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#)

Last updated: 26 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Absent voting timetable](#)

[Absent Voting Changes to absent voting arrangements ahead of an election](#)

[Changes to absent voting arrangements ahead of an election](#)

The deadline for making changes to existing absent vote arrangements, or cancelling an existing postal vote, is 5pm, 11 working days before the poll. A person who is sent their postal vote early in the election timetable may receive it before this date, but subsequently decide they no longer wish to vote by post. They are still able to make changes to their absent voting arrangements to take effect at the election as long as their request is received by the deadline and they have not yet returned their postal ballot paper. You will need to have a system in place that will allow you to promptly identify if a postal ballot paper has already been returned. An elector who has received their postal ballot pack and who has already returned their completed postal ballot paper will not be allowed to cancel or make any changes to their absent voting arrangements for that election. Any elector who has already returned their postal ballot paper can still make a request to make changes to their absent vote arrangements but these changes will not take place until any future poll, unless the ballot paper has been returned as spoilt or lost before the deadline for changes has passed. This is also the case for an elector voting by proxy, where their proxy has a postal vote and has already voted on behalf of the elector by returning their completed postal vote. The ERO will administer the changes to any absent vote arrangements, and they must notify you whenever they have granted:

- 1 a postal vote cancellation
- a change from postal to proxy
- a change from proxy to postal
- an application for a postal ballot paper to be sent to a different address
- a cancellation of a proxy appointment in time to take effect at the election.

You should let the ERO know when postal ballot papers are dispatched as, in practice, it

will only be from that point forward and before the final deadline for cancellations and changes that the ERO would need to check whether a postal ballot paper has been returned and so whether it is permissible to allow an application for changes or a cancellation to take effect in time for the election. You will need to retrieve any ballot papers that have been received before the absent vote deadline and subsequently cancelled by the elector. You can find more information in our guidance on the retrieval of cancelled postal votes . Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you should liaise with the ERO(s) at the other authority/authorities to decide how any requests for changes to absent voting arrangements and information on returned postal ballot papers will be exchanged so that: the ERO knows whether a postal ballot paper has been received, and subsequently whether or not they can allow a request for changes to absent voting arrangements to take effect for the elections you can cancel the relevant postal ballot papers if the request has been allowed 1. Representation of the People Act 1983 section 13B ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Changes to absent voting arrangements ahead of an election Absent voting timetable Proxy voting Proxy voting The ERO will provide you with a list of all electors who have, by 5pm, six working days before polling day, appointed a proxy to vote on their behalf. You must supply Presiding Officers with the relevant parts of this list of proxies. 1 A separate list will contain the details of postal proxies. The polling station register must be marked with an 'A' against the name of the elector, as any elector who has appointed a proxy and their proxy has applied to vote by post can no longer vote in the polling station. 2 Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you will need to liaise with the ERO(s) at the other authority/authorities to obtain the list of all electors for the relevant parts of the constituency who have, by 5pm, six working days before polling day, appointed a proxy to vote on their behalf. Proxy voting Restrictions on proxy voting A person may not have more than one appointed proxy at any time. 3 A person is not entitled to vote as proxy at the same UK Parliamentary election in any particular constituency on behalf of more than two electors who are not close relatives. 4 A person can additionally act as proxy for any number of the following close relatives: spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild. A proxy would be committing an offence if they voted on behalf of more than two electors who are not close relatives at the election. 5 1. Representation of the People Act 1983 section 13B ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPA 2000 sch 4 para 6(8) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPA 2000 sch 4 para 6 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPA 1983 s61(4) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. RPA 2000 sch 4 para 8 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Proxy voting Changes to absent voting arrangements ahead of an election Emergency proxies Emergency proxies An elector may find that they are unable to go to the polling station after the deadline for arranging an ordinary proxy has passed. An elector may appoint an emergency proxy to vote on their behalf at the polling station in certain circumstances: 1 in the case of a disability (whether a medical condition, illness or otherwise) arising after the deadline for ordinary proxy applications (i.e. after 5pm on the sixth working day before the poll) if they are a mental health patient detained under civil powers (i.e., who are not also detained offenders) if their occupation, service or employment means they cannot go to the polling station in person, provided that they only become aware of this fact after the deadline for

ordinary proxy applications (i.e. 5pm on the sixth working day before the poll) if they meet any of the conditions relating to emergency proxies on the grounds of voter identification after the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document (i.e. 5pm on the sixth working day before the poll). Further information can be found in our guidance for EROs in England, Scotland and Wales. Electors can apply for an emergency proxy after the deadline for normal proxy applications has passed (i.e. after 5pm on the sixth working day before the poll) up until 5pm on polling day. If you are not also the ERO, you should agree a method with them for communicating any additions to the list of proxies that result from the granting of emergency proxy applications. Cross-boundary constituencies

If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, you should agree the ERO(s) at the other authority/authorities a method for communicating any additions to the list of proxies that result from the granting of emergency proxy applications. Emergency proxies

Whenever an emergency proxy has been appointed, you should inform the appropriate polling station staff as soon as possible after the proxy has been appointed, and by any means available to you. Someone appointed as an emergency proxy will be required to produce photographic ID at the polling station to prove their identity before they can be issued with a ballot paper. Wherever possible, the ERO should provide the proxy of any voter whose application has been accepted with a letter authorising them to act as a proxy, which should include details of the person on whose behalf they are voting. The ERO should advise the proxy to take that authorisation with them when they go to vote and to hand it to polling station staff. If such a letter is provided at the polling station, polling station staff should mark it to show that the proxy has been issued with a ballot paper and the marked letter should then be retained with the list of proxies. The ERO should also, where possible, provide a supplementary list of proxies which can be issued to the relevant polling station and added to the list originally supplied. The agreed method for communicating additions to the list of proxies on polling day should be covered at the training session for polling station staff. Further information on training polling station staff can be found in our guidance on staffing and training. You could ask polling station inspectors to liaise with the electoral registration office regarding emergency proxy applications granted on polling day and should advise them of the procedures to be followed. You can find more information in our guidance on emergency proxies.

1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 section 56(3A), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 s56(3A) and (3B) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Emergency proxies

Proxy voting

Issuing and distributing postal votes

Issuing and distributing postal votes

As part of your planning for the delivery of key processes, you will have made decisions on the process for issuing postal votes and how you will distribute these. This section includes further guidance relating to the issue and delivery of postal votes, including re-issuing and cancelling vote packs, as well as guidance to quality assure the process. Last updated: 30 March 2023

Book traversal links for Issuing and distributing postal votes

Emergency proxies

Planning for the issue of postal votes

Planning for the issue of postal votes

Who must be sent a postal vote? You must send a postal vote to: any elector who appears on the postal voters' list for the election any proxy who appears on the postal proxy voters' list for the election

Timing of the issuing of postal votes

Postal votes must be issued as soon as practicable. 1 In practice, this means that, once the deadline for the withdrawal of candidates has passed, postal ballot papers should be issued to

existing electors who have successfully applied for a postal vote. You should put arrangements in place to ensure that electors receive their postal ballot papers as soon as possible and prioritise any postal votes that may need to be sent overseas in order to maximise the time that postal voters have to receive, complete and return their postal vote. The ERO must publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. If you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to ensure you obtain the information on any new electors who have applied for a postal vote as soon as possible so that you can arrange for the necessary additional postal votes to be sent urgently. You can find further information on interim notices of alteration in our guidance for EROs in England, Scotland and Wales. Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, you should liaise with the ERO(s) at the other local authority/authorities as soon as possible to ensure you obtain the relevant data for any new electors who have applied for a postal vote.

Planning for the issue of postal votes For more information on timings see our guidance on the absent voting timetable. 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 regulation 71, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 reg 71 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Planning for the issue of postal votes Issuing and distributing postal votes The issuing process The issuing process The processes to be followed when issuing postal ballot packs are provided for in legislation. 1

Corresponding number list You must produce a corresponding number list at postal vote issuing sessions. The corresponding number list is prescribed and must contain the ballot paper number and unique identifying mark of all ballot papers to be issued to that elector. 2 When the ballot paper is issued, the elector number must be marked on the corresponding number list beside the ballot paper number and unique identifying mark. 3 New lists and associated packets are required at every issue. The list could be printed single-sided and cut at the point where the last ballot paper was issued at any particular issue of postal ballot packs. The remaining corresponding number list can then be used at any further issuing sessions and for the issue of replacement postal ballot papers. The corresponding number list relating to the ballot papers that have been issued must be sealed in a packet as soon as practicable after each issue of postal ballot packs, this can only be opened and inspected by the order of a court. 4 The postal ballot pack The number of the postal ballot paper(s) must be included on the postal voting statement to be sent with the ballot paper(s). 5 The address to which the postal ballot pack should be sent is the address shown in the relevant postal voters' list. In the case of a postal proxy, this is the address shown in the postal proxy voters' list. In the case of an anonymous elector, the address can be found in the records of granted applications. Our guidance on the production of postal voting stationery contains information on the content required for the postal ballot pack. Marking the polling station registers To indicate that an elector is entitled to vote by post and must not be given an ordinary ballot paper at a polling station, the polling station register must be marked with an 'A' using the information contained in the postal voters' list and the postal proxy voters' list. A mark must be placed in the postal voters' list (or the postal proxy voters' list as the case may be) to show that a postal ballot pack has been issued. You should maintain a clear audit trail of the issue of postal ballot packs. As part of this, you should ensure that the number of postal votes issued is accurately recorded at the end of each issuing session and when issuing replacement postal ballot packs.

These numbers will be required for the completion of the statement as to postal ballot papers. This table summarises the issuing process:

Order Action to take

Step 1 Read out the name and address of the postal voter from the postal/proxy postal voters list and check that those details appear on the outgoing envelope.

Step 2 Read out the ballot paper number listed. Check the numbers are the same on: the back of the relevant ballot paper the postal vote statement the ballot paper envelope

Step 3 Make up the postal ballot pack into the outgoing envelope by including: the ballot paper(s) envelope 'A' the postal vote statement the return envelope (envelope B) any additional instructions

Step 4 Mark the postal voters / proxy voters list to show you have completed the postal vote pack.

Step 5 Close the envelopes as requested by the supervisor. Do not seal them unless instructed.

Who can attend the postal vote issuing process? In addition to you and your staff, Commission representatives and accredited observers are entitled to attend the issuing process.

6 If you have outsourced the postal vote issuing process, you should ensure that these people are able to access the premises of the company conducting the issue. Anyone attending a postal vote issue session, including your staff, must be provided with a copy of the relevant secrecy provisions.

7 Secrecy requirements - postal voting (DOC)

1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W)) regulation 72, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S)) regulation 72 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 72(2), RPR(S) 2001 reg 72(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. RPR (E&W) 2001 Reg 72(2), RPR (S) 2001 Reg 72(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 75(1), RPR(S) 2001 reg 75(1) ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 72(4), RPR(S) 2001 reg 72(4) ■ Back to content at footnote 5

6. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 67, RPR(S) 2001 reg 67 ■ Back to content at footnote 6

7. Representation of the People Act 1983 section 66 ■ Back to content at footnote 7

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for The issuing process

Planning for the issue of postal votes

Quality assuring the issuing process

You are responsible for ensuring that the issuing of postal votes is carried out in accordance with legislation, regardless of whether you have outsourced the process. The contents of the postal vote pack are prescribed and you should ensure that all the relevant details have been included on those materials. You can find more information on what must be included in the postal vote pack and how to quality assure the production process in our guidance:

Production of postal voting stationery. You should also ensure that you have arrangements in place which enable you to quality-assure the end-to-end postal vote issuing process including: where you have outsourced the issuing process, having a member of staff in attendance when postal votes are being issued, with knowledge of the agreed specifications checking the correct details are on the stationery and that packs are properly collated with all required elements checking the packs at the start and end of polling districts carrying out random spot checks with a ratio of at least two packs per 250 postal ballot packs within polling districts so a representative cross-section can be checked across your area and within each batch checking that packs being sent to overseas addresses contain a reply envelope that is capable of being used overseas keeping an audit trail of the stationery that has been checked and processes that have been undertaken

You should pay particular attention to checking that: the ballot paper number on the reverse of the ballot paper exactly matches the ballot paper number on the accompanying postal voting statement the name of the elector on the postal voting statement matches the name of the elector on the outgoing envelope all required items are in the outgoing envelope

If you have outsourced the issuing process, discussions to facilitate these checks should occur

at the time the contract is negotiated and be reflected in it. Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Quality assuring the issuing process](#)

[The issuing process](#)

[Issuing postal votes to overseas addresses](#)

[Issuing postal votes to overseas addresses](#)

Postal ballot packs that are to be sent overseas should be prioritised in order to allow as much time as possible for the ballot pack to reach the elector and to be completed and returned. As part of your preparations for the issue of postal votes, you should agree with your printers a process that will enable you to do this. Postal votes going overseas should be sent via air mail (or by the British Forces Post Office for relevant service voters) in order to allow the maximum possible time for postal votes to be received, completed and returned. Postal ballot packs to be sent overseas should be sorted and identified to the mail service provider so that they can be sent by the appropriate mail service. You should liaise with Royal Mail about the cost of postage for sending items overseas in order to ensure that the correct postage is included on all outgoing postal ballot packs. You must include an envelope to facilitate the return of the postal ballot pack, 1 but for items sent overseas, the envelope should not include UK return postage as this will not be sufficient for the return of the postal ballot pack to the UK and could result in a delay to the return of the completed postal ballot pack. Instead, you should put in place arrangements with Royal Mail for an international business response licence to be used on all return envelopes included in postal ballot packs which are sent to overseas addresses in order to facilitate the timely return of completed postal ballot packs from outside the UK. Where it may not be realistic for a postal ballot pack to be dispatched, completed and returned before the close of poll, the ERO should make the elector aware of this fact and advise the elector to appoint a proxy as an alternative. It is, of course, the choice of the elector as to which method of voting they prefer, but it is important that electors are fully advised of the circumstances surrounding their choice so that they can make an informed decision. 1. Regulation 76(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 and Regulation 76(3) Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Issuing postal votes to overseas addresses](#)

[Quality assuring the issuing process](#)

[Issuing postal votes to anonymous electors](#)

[Issuing postal votes to anonymous electors](#)

Postal ballot packs sent to anonymously registered electors must be sent in an envelope or covering that does not disclose that the elector is registered anonymously. 1 You should send postal ballot packs to anonymously registered electors in a plain outgoing envelope. The postal voting statement must also omit the elector's name. 2 As part of your preparations for the issue of postal votes, you should agree with your printers a process that will enable you to do this. The ERO's records of granted applications will include the address to which the anonymous elector has requested that their postal vote should be sent. 1. Section 9B(8) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 regulation 66, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 reg 66. The latest version of the postal voting statement at UK Parliamentary elections can be found in The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Description of Electoral Registers and Amendment) Regulations 2013 and, in Wales, should be read alongside The Parliamentary Elections (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2015 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Issuing postal votes to anonymous electors](#)

[Issuing postal votes to overseas addresses](#)

[Subsequent issues of postal ballot packs](#)

[Subsequent issues of postal ballot packs](#)

Following the initial issue of postal ballot packs, subsequent issues of postal

ballot packs will be required where electors have applied to vote by post close to the absent voting deadline which is 5pm, 11 working days before polling day. 1 Any subsequent postal ballot pack issue is likely to be at an already busy time in the election timetable, so it is important that you have the necessary arrangements in place to issue and deliver subsequent postal ballot packs as quickly and efficiently as possible. You should ensure that: you have sufficient staff to maintain oversight of the overall process, whether you are issuing postal votes in-house, or using an external provider your printer is aware of the timings of data transfers and, where applicable, dispatch of postal ballot packs you have processes in place to perform ongoing quality assurance monitoring of the production and delivery of your subsequent postal ballot pack issues Special arrangements for ad hoc issues of postal ballot packs You should put a mechanism in place to ensure that you are able to carry out additional unscheduled issues. For example, when you become aware that one or more electors are going to be on holiday or away on business by the time of the next scheduled issue of postal votes you should, as far as is practicable, issue postal ballot packs outside of your scheduled issue to those individual electors. 1.

Regulation 56 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 and Regulation 56 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Subsequent issues of postal ballot packs Issuing postal votes to anonymous electors Options for delivering postal ballot packs Options for delivering postal ballot packs You will need to put arrangements in place for the delivery of postal ballot packs. You have a choice of two methods: 1 by hand by post Whichever method you choose, you should ensure that you have a detailed plan covering all actions required to achieve the successful delivery of postal ballot packs. You can find more information in our guidance: Working with mail delivery partners . As part of your integrity planning for the election, you should inform your police single point of contact (SPOC) of the date you will start dispatching postal ballot packs to electors. This will mark the date from which there is a higher risk of postal voting fraud and they should build this into their own planning. You can find more information in our guidance: Maintaining integrity . 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 regulation 76, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 regulation 76 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Options for delivering postal ballot packs Subsequent issues of postal ballot packs Delivering postal ballot packs by hand Delivering postal ballot packs by hand If you decide to deliver postal votes by hand, you should plan for how this will work in practice. You should appoint sufficient staff to ensure that postal ballot packs are received by postal voters as soon as possible to maximise the time postal voters have to receive, complete and return their postal vote. You should ensure that staff are aware of data protection considerations, and should consider requiring staff to confirm in writing at the point of recruitment, that they will abide by your data protection policy. You should also have in place a mechanism for monitoring the delivery of postal ballot packs, with a view to ensuring that they have been delivered across the whole of the constituency and to agreed timeframes. This may include requiring delivery staff to fill in log sheets, having supervisors carry out spot-checks, and monitoring any unusually low returns of completed postal ballots by polling districts. Planning for ad-hoc deliveries by hand There may be circumstances where you will need to issue postal ballot packs by hand, even where the majority of your packs have been delivered by post, for example when replacing lost or spoilt postal ballot packs, or when conducting a subsequent or ad hoc issue

of a small number of packs. You should plan for how this will work in practice, including how you will ensure that these postal ballot packs can be printed and delivered at short notice. Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Delivering postal ballot packs by hand](#)

[Options for delivering postal ballot packs](#)

[Delivering postal ballot packs by post](#)

[Delivering postal ballot packs by post](#)

You may choose to manage the supply of your postal vote packs to a delivery partner directly or have this managed by your print supplier. You may use Royal Mail or any other commercial delivery firm for the delivery of postal votes. You can find more information in our guidance: [Working with mail delivery partners](#) .

[Options for delivery](#)

If you are using Royal Mail to deliver your postal votes, you should put in place arrangements for the relevant licenses and Business Reply numbers as soon as possible and confirm that your proposed stationery meets their specifications in order to avoid any potential delays at the time when your postal ballot packs are due to be distributed to electors. If you are using a commercial delivery firm, you should make similar arrangements as appropriate. Your contingency planning should address how you would issue and receive any returned postal ballot packs in the event that Royal Mail or the commercial delivery firm you have contracted are unable to deliver the postal ballot packs, for example, due to industrial action. If you are using Royal Mail to deliver your postal votes, you should ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of Royal Mail's best practice guidance on postal voting, [Managing Postal Voting](#) .

[Quality assuring the despatch process](#)

You should make arrangements for the secure transfer of the postal ballot packs from your printer to Royal Mail or your chosen delivery firm. You should ensure that a clear procedure and audit trail is in place for transferring postal ballot packs. You must count the total number of outgoing envelopes and arrange delivery of the envelopes to your delivery contractor along with a receipt showing the total number of postal ballot packs in that batch. 1

This receipt should be endorsed by Royal Mail or your delivery firm to acknowledge that they have received the batch prior to despatch. If your printing supplier is despatching materials to electors on your behalf, it is important that you continue to liaise with them once final sign-off of all printed and filled material is completed and it is ready for despatch. You should ensure that you get confirmation from your print supplier once despatch has begun, confirmation of how many packs have been or will be despatched per day and an update on how long it will take for the despatch to be completed. You should ask your print supplier for a copy of the postal dockets for each despatch for adding to your formal audit trail of the process. These dockets should detail the number of items despatched per day, and confirm the postal services used. Photos/scanned images of the dockets will suffice for these purposes. If you have agreed with your print supplier that down stream access (DSA) providers will be used as part of the despatch and delivery process, you should get updates from your delivery contractor on the progress of the delivery throughout. You should have in place a mechanism for monitoring the delivery of postal ballot packs, with a view to ensuring that they have been delivered across the whole of the constituency and to agreed timeframes. All of the measures above will help to identify possible issues that may have arisen with regards to despatch, feed into any subsequent evaluation of contractor performance, and enable you to provide information to voters on dates that they should expect to receive material through your social media channels and call centres as appropriate. [Quality assurance measures for monitoring delivery](#)

If possible, you should have arrangements in place to track deliveries in order to assist with responding to any enquiries from electors regarding the delivery of their postal ballot pack. You should also ensure you monitor the level of queries

from electors being received through all channels as this will help to highlight any issues being experienced with the delivery of materials in practice. You should monitor any unusually low returns of completed postal ballots by polling districts, as that may be an indication of delivery issues. You should also ensure that you have clear methods of communication to enable any issues or queries to be addressed quickly. You can find more information on quality assurance in our guidance on managing contractors .

1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 regulation 76(2), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 reg 76(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 20 June 2023

Book traversal links for Delivering postal ballot packs by post Delivering postal ballot packs by hand Re-issuing postal ballot packs Re-issuing postal ballot packs It is possible to re-issue postal ballot packs: 1 to replace a spoilt postal ballot paper/papers and/or postal voting statement to replace a lost or not received postal ballot pack to correct a procedural error You will find guidance on the process to be followed for each type of reissue in the following pages.

1. Regulations 77, 78 and 78A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 and regs 77, 78 and 78A Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Re-issuing postal ballot packs Delivering postal ballot packs by post Procedure for re-issuing spoilt postal votes Procedure for re-issuing spoilt postal votes If a person spoils their postal ballot paper and/or postal voting statement, it is possible for them to obtain a replacement postal ballot pack. Replacements can be issued up until 5pm on polling day.

1 All parts of the postal vote pack must be returned before a replacement can be issued, regardless of whether or not these have been spoilt. 2 This includes: the spoilt postal ballot paper or the spoilt postal voting statement along with any remaining ballot papers or postal voting statement return envelope 'B' ballot paper envelope 'A' A new postal ballot pack can then be issued to the elector. The legislation requires that any returned spoilt ballot papers and postal voting statements must be cancelled and sealed in a packet for spoilt postal ballot papers, even if only one of them has actually been spoiled. 3 In certain circumstances you can cancel a postal vote which is considered spoilt, even if it has been returned to the RO. In this case, the spoilt ballot paper and postal voting statement must be retrieved and sealed as described above 4 . If the request for a replacement postal ballot pack is made between 5pm on the day before polling day and 5pm on polling day itself the replacement postal vote may only be issued to the elector if the spoilt documents are returned by hand. 4 In such cases, the issue of a replacement can also only be made by hand. You must put in place systems to enable you to issue replacements up to 5pm on polling day. 5 You will need to give particular consideration to this if you have outsourced the issue of postal votes. You should consider whether or not particular arrangements need to be put in place for disabled electors when making arrangements to re-issue spoilt ballot papers, as there may be some electors who are unable to attend the elections office due to disability. Record keeping for spoilt postal ballot papers 6 The elector's name and electoral number must be added to the list of spoilt postal ballot papers to show that the spoilt postal vote has been cancelled. The name must not, however, be added if the elector is registered anonymously. The ballot paper number of the replacement ballot paper must also be added to the list. In the case of a postal proxy, the name and address of the proxy must be added to the list alongside the other details. This table summarises the procedure for re-issuing spoilt postal votes: Step Action to take Step

1 Before taking the next steps, it is good practice to check if the postal pack has

been marked as returned on the postal voters or proxy postal voters list - in this case refer to retrieval of cancelled ballot papers

Step 2 Ask for the return of the complete postal pack

Step 3 Issue a new postal ballot pack (ballot paper(s), postal voting statement and relevant envelopes) to the elector

If the request is made after 5pm on the day before polling day, the replacement pack may only be handed to the elector

Step 4 Cancel any returned spoilt ballot papers and postal voting statements

Step 5 Seal the cancelled documents in a packet for spoilt postal ballot papers and add details to the list of cancelled postal ballot papers

Step 6 Add the name* and electoral number of the elector and the number of the replacement ballot paper(s) to the list of spoilt postal ballot papers. For postal proxies, also add the proxy name and address. *Exclude the name of anonymously registered electors. For the purposes of collating data for the statement of postal ballot papers (Form K), you should

■ also add the details of any spoilt ballot papers which have been cancelled to the list of all cancelled postal ballot papers (see our guidance on record keeping for cancelled ballot papers).

1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 77 and 78, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) reg 77 and 78 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 77, RPR(S) 2001 reg 77 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 77, RPR(S) 2001 reg 77 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. RPR (E&W) 2001 regs. 56(5A), 77(6) and 86A , RPR (S) 2001 regs. 56(5A), 77(6) and 86A ■ Back to content at footnote 4

a b 5. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 77(3), RPR(S) 2001 reg 77(3) ■ Back to content at footnote 5

6. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 77(8), RPR(S) 2001 reg 77(8) ■ Back to content at footnote 6

7. RPR E&W) 2001 reg 91(1)(b), RPR(S) 2001 reg 91(1)(b) ■ Back to content at footnote 7

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Procedure for re-issuing spoilt postal votes

Re-issuing postal ballot packs

Procedure of re-issuing lost/not received postal votes

Procedure of re-issuing lost/not received postal votes

Where a voter claims either to have lost or not to have received their postal ballot paper, postal voting statement, or envelopes 'A' and/or 'B', it is possible for a replacement postal ballot pack to be issued from 4 working days before polling day up until 5pm on polling day.

1 The voter must apply in person and the replacement pack may only be issued by hand

2 if the request for a replacement postal ballot pack is made between 5pm on the day before polling day and 5pm on polling day itself. You must re-issue a postal ballot pack if you are satisfied as to the postal voter's identity and have no reason to doubt that they have lost or did not receive their original postal ballot pack.

3 To establish the postal voter's identity, a proportionate approach should be adopted that seeks to use some proof of identity that can be easily verified by staff, but that is not too onerous for the elector. Legislation does not prescribe which forms of ID are required but the RO must be satisfied of the elector's identity.

4 For more information, see our guidance on proof of identity recommendations for reissuing postal votes . You should consider whether or not particular arrangements need to be put in place for those electors who are unable to attend the elections office in person, for example due to disability or being overseas. For example, you could consider accepting scanned copies of proof of identity listed in the examples in the next section via email, or utilising video-calling technology. If not all parts of the postal ballot pack have been lost or not received, the voter must return those documents that they do have. You are then required to immediately cancel those documents.

5 Voters may telephone your office to enquire about a replacement postal ballot pack if their postal vote has failed to arrive. If this is the case, your staff should advise about the procedure for re-issuing and explain what proof of identity they will be asked to produce before a

replacement postal ballot pack will be issued. Record keeping for lost/not received postal ballot papers

6 Where you re-issue a postal vote due to it being lost or not received, you must add the elector's name and elector number to the list of lost postal ballot papers. The name must not, however, be added if the elector is registered anonymously. The ballot paper number of the replacement ballot paper must also be added to the list. In the case of a postal proxy, the name and address of the proxy must be added to the list alongside the other details. This table summarises the procedure for re-issuing lost or not received postal votes:

Step Action to take

Step 1 There are no provisions to retrieve a postal ballot paper which reported lost / not received, but before taking the next steps it is good practice to check if the postal pack has been marked as returned on the postal voters or proxy postal voters list

Step 2 Ensure you are satisfied as to the postal voter's identity by requiring proof of identification

Step 3 Where an elector has lost only part of their postal ballot pack, the remaining parts must be returned when applying for a replacement. Returned parts must be cancelled, sealed in the packed for lost postal ballot papers and details added to the list of cancelled postal ballot papers

Step 4 Issue a new postal ballot pack (ballot paper(s), postal voting statement and relevant envelopes) to the elector

If the request is made after 5pm on the day before polling day, the replacement pack may only be handed to the elector

Step 5 Add the name* and electoral number of the elector and the number of the replacement ballot paper(s) to the list of lost postal ballot papers

For postal proxies, also add the proxy name and address

*Exclude the name of anonymously registered electors

For the purposes of collating data for the statement of postal ballot papers (Form K), you should also add the details of any lost ballot papers which have been cancelled to the list of all cancelled postal ballot papers. For more information see our guidance on record keeping for cancelled ballot papers .

7 1. Regulation 78 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)), Regulation 78 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78(3A), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78(3A) ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78(3), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78(3) ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78(3)(a) ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78 (2A) and (2B), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78 (2A) and (2B) ■ Back to content at footnote 5

6. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78(4), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78(4) ■ Back to content at footnote 6

7. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78, RPR(S) 2001 reg 78 ■ Back to content at footnote 7

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Procedure of re-issuing lost/not received postal votes

Procedure for re-issuing spoilt postal votes

Proof of identity recommendations for reissuing postal votes

Proof of identity recommendations for reissuing postal votes

You should consider what process you will follow when determining how you will want to be satisfied as to the identity of an elector seeking to be issued with a replacement postal ballot pack, where the original has been lost or has not been received. This section provides a set of recommendations regarding proof of identity.

Recommendation 1 – Primary proofs of identity

One primary proof of identity should be provided before a replacement postal ballot pack is issued. This should be an official document that includes a photograph of the elector, together with the elector's name. The two most secure examples are: passport photocard driving licence

Other documents may be acceptable as primary proof, as long as they have a sealed photograph. Examples include: local bus pass student card issued by a recognised further or higher education body identity card issued by a recognised employer

Some electors may not be able to produce photographic identification. In these circumstances, it is recommended that they should be asked

to provide two examples drawn from the list of secondary proofs as listed below.

Recommendation 2 – Secondary proofs of identity If you still have any doubt about the identity of an elector requesting a replacement postal ballot pack, a secondary proof of identity could be sought. If an elector cannot produce a primary proof of identity, two secondary proofs of identity could be requested. Secondary proofs of identity include: full driving licence (without photograph) council tax payment book or recent council tax bill council or social landlord rent book recent rent receipts or tenancy agreement allowance, benefits or pension book issued by the Department for Work and Pensions cheque book, cheque card or National Savings book recent bank or building society statement (not a store card statement) recent utility bill (two different ones are preferable; not a mobile phone bill) P45 correspondence from a government department identity card issued by a member state of the European Union/European Economic Area, travel document issued by the Home Office, or certificate of naturalisation or registration letter (attested statement) from a responsible person such as a solicitor, doctor, minister of religion, magistrate, teacher, hostel manager, social worker, district nurse, midwife or other responsible person, which says that they know the elector and can confirm their name and address. You may wish to include the elector's landlord or tenant in this category, and possibly stipulate that they are on the electoral register National Health Service medical card or National Insurance card birth, adoption, marriage, civil partnership, divorce or statutory declaration certificates (these should preferably have been issued within six months of the event to which they refer and not be replacements) You should also consider the following points: for added security, originals, not photocopies, of the proof of identity should be produced where possible the evidence provided by the voter should show a clear link between the name on the identifying document and the current entry on the electoral register birth certificates are not absolute proof of identity and so the voter may be asked to provide additional evidence to allow their identity to be checked where utility bills or bank statements are provided, they should be recent (i.e., issued within the last three months) bank or credit cards should be checked against the voter's signature before an attestation is sought, the voter should be advised that some signatories may charge a fee for the service you should state that proof of identity will not be retained and that the documents will be treated confidentially and originals will be returned Data protection legislation does not set out any specific maximum periods for retention of personal data, but it states that personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose. 1 1. Article 5(1)(c) General Data Protection Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Proof of identity recommendations for reissuing postal votes Procedure of re-issuing lost/not received postal votes Procedure for re-issuing as a result of a procedural error Procedure for re-issuing as a result of a procedural error If you have issued incorrect or incomplete postal ballot packs in error, you may be able to re-issue postal ballot packs using your powers to correct a procedural error. 1 Depending on the circumstances, you will need to decide whether to re-issue some or all of the postal ballot packs. For example, if an error in collation affected a certain range of packs, only those packs would need to be re-issued. Decisions about re-issuing as a result of a procedural error should be made on a case-by-case basis. In each case, consideration should be given to the impact that the error and any action to correct it could have on electors. For example, you will need to ensure that any action will rectify the error and not cause unnecessary confusion or result in a different error. Any decision to take action to rectify a

procedural error should be made following legal advice. You should document both the error and any corrective action taken in case there is a challenge to the election and a need to claim against insurance. Whatever action is taken, you should ensure that any communications to those voters who are affected clearly explain the error and the steps that you are taking to remedy it. You should also notify candidates and agents of the error and your intended corrective action as soon as possible. By being transparent about the problem and the solution you will minimise the risk of a loss of confidence in the administration of the election. See our guidance on Breach of official duty and power to correct procedural errors for more information on your power to correct procedural errors. When considering using this power, you should contact your local Commission team, who may be able to provide further tailored support to you. Record keeping for reissuing after a procedural error

When a postal vote has been re-issued as a result of a procedural error, the original ballot paper must be cancelled, added to the list of cancelled ballot papers, and must not be allowed to go forward to the count. 2 1. Section 46 Electoral Administration Act 2006 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 78A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001, reg 78A Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Procedure for re-issuing as a result of a procedural error Proof of identity recommendations for reissuing postal votes Cancelling postal ballot packs Cancelling postal ballot packs As postal ballot packs must be issued as soon as practicable to electors, there may be circumstances where a person you have already sent a postal ballot paper to subsequently applies to the ERO to cancel their postal vote, or make any changes to their absent voting arrangements, within time for the changes to be able to take effect at the election(s). However, a postal ballot paper that has already been returned to the RO cannot be cancelled 1 Our ERO guidance in England , Wales and Scotland contains further information on changing or cancelling postal votes at an election. If you are not also the ERO, you need to arrange how you will liaise with them, so that any changes to absent voting arrangements can be communicated to you in a timely manner and you know which ballot papers need to be cancelled. Upon notification you must immediately cancel any postal ballot paper that has been issued to such an elector or postal proxy, and add the details of the cancelled ballot paper to the list kept for that purpose (see our guidance on record keeping for cancelled postal votes). 2 You should consider how to manage the process of removal of those packs from any postal vote batches not yet despatched from your printer. Where the change to the absent voting arrangements relates only to the address to which the ballot paper should be sent, you must, in addition to cancelling the original postal ballot paper issue a replacement postal ballot pack to the new address. 3 You must also cancel any lost or spoilt postal ballot papers you have had to replace (see our guidance on re-issuing spoilt postal votes and lost/not received postal votes). 4 You need to maintain an audit trail of all the cancellations, including how your software system can be used to log all cancellations to enable you to produce the required list of cancelled postal ballot papers (see our guidance on record keeping for cancelled ballot papers) and identify any postal ballot papers that have been cancelled but have been returned and so need to be retrieved. Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, the ERO(s) at the other authority/authorities will notify you where a person who has already been sent a postal ballot paper/papers subsequently applies to them to cancel their postal vote, or to make any changes to their absent voting arrangements. You must

immediately cancel any postal ballot paper that has been issued to such an elector or postal proxy. 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 56(5A), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) reg 56(5A) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR(E&W) 2001 Regulation 78A, RPR(S) 2001 reg 78A ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 78A, RPR(S) 2001 reg 78A ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 77 and 78, RPR(S) 2001 reg 77 and 78 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 13 September 2023

Book traversal links for Cancelling postal ballot packs

Procedure for re-issuing as a result of a procedural error

Record keeping for cancelled ballot papers

Record keeping for cancelled ballot papers

You must record the details of all cancelled postal ballot papers on one list. You must also make separate lists for spoilt, lost and cancelled papers containing the details outlined under the headings below:

List of spoilt ballot papers

The list of spoilt ballot papers must contain: 1 the name and number of the elector as stated in the register (or, in the case of an elector who has an anonymous entry, only their electoral number) where the postal voter whose ballot paper is spoilt is a proxy, the postal proxy's name and address the number of the replacement postal ballot paper

List of lost ballot papers

The list of lost ballot papers must contain: 2 the name and number of the elector as stated in the register (or, in the case of an elector who has an anonymous entry, only their electoral number) where the postal voter whose ballot paper is lost is a proxy, the postal proxy's name and address the number of the replacement postal ballot paper

List of cancelled postal ballot papers as a result of any change to absent voting arrangements after a postal vote has been sent

This list of cancelled postal ballot papers must include: 3 the name and number of the elector as stated in the register (or, in the case of an elector who has an anonymous entry, only their electoral number) where the postal voter whose ballot paper is cancelled is a proxy, the postal proxy's name and address the number of the postal ballot papers cancelled the number of the replacement postal ballot papers

The contents of any postal ballot pack that has been cancelled, including any envelopes, must be made into a packet and sealed. The seal must only be opened to include additional cancelled documents in the packet.

4 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 77(8), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) reg 77(8) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR 2001 (E&W) reg 78(4), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78(4) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPR 2001 (E&W) reg 78A(3), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78A(3) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPR 2001 (E&W) reg 78A(2)(c), RPR(S) 2001 reg 78A(2)(c) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Record keeping for cancelled ballot papers

Cancelling postal ballot packs

Retrieval of cancelled postal votes

Retrieval of cancelled postal votes

Where a postal ballot paper has been cancelled, you must retrieve both the postal voting statement and the ballot paper, if they have been returned, so that they do not go forward to the count. There are no provisions to retrieve a postal ballot paper that has been reported as lost / not received postal ballot paper . You must ensure that the postal ballot box is resealed in the presence of any agents present once cancelled postal ballot papers have been retrieved from the postal ballot box. 1

Cancelling postal votes that have been returned

2 You should make arrangements for how you will deal with cancellations after postal packs have been issued and returned to you, including: how you will be able to retrieve and cancel any postal ballot papers and postal voting statements that are going through or have already gone through the postal vote opening process how you will explain what is happening to candidates and agents present at an opening session at which you need to retrieve and

cancel a postal ballot paper This table summarises the steps you should take for managing the retrieval of cancelled postal votes: Steps Actions to take Step 1 During an opening session, retrieve the postal voting statement from the appropriate packet or box Any retrieval of documents must be done in full view of those who are entitled to be present at the postal vote opening. You must show them the ballot paper numbers on any cancelled documents Step 2 Open the relevant postal ballot box and retrieve the ballot paper You should organise a system of batching postal ballot papers to aid the retrieval of any cancelled postal votes Step 3 Mark the retrieved documents as 'cancelled'. Place the cancelled documents in the relevant packet and add details to the list of cancelled postal ballot papers The list of cancelled ballot papers must include the following: 3 the name and number of the elector as stated in the register of electors (or, in the case of an elector who has an anonymous entry, only their electoral number) the number of the cancelled ballot paper the number of any replacement postal ballot paper that has been issued to the elector where the postal voter is a postal proxy, the name and address of the proxy In the case of cancelled spoilt ballot papers, the list of spoilt ballot papers must also include the following: 4 the name and number of the elector as stated in the register of electors (or, in the case of an elector who has an anonymous entry, only their electoral number) the number of any replacement postal ballot paper that has been issued to the elector where the postal voter is a postal proxy, the name and address of the proxy Step 4 Reseal the postal ballot box any agents present should be invited to apply their own seal to the resealed postal ballot box 1. Regulation 86A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001, (RPR (E&W) 2001), regulation 86A Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR (E&W) 2001 reg 56(5A), RPR (S) 2001 reg 56(5A) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPR (E&W) 2001 reg. 78A(3) , RPR (S) 2001 reg. 78A(3) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPR (E&W) 2001 reg. 77(8), RPR (S) 2001 reg 77(8) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Retrieval of cancelled postal votes Record keeping for cancelled ballot papers Managing issues with postal vote production or delivery Managing issues with postal vote production or delivery Whilst having robust quality assurance measures in place will help to ensure that supplier services are delivered correctly, it is important to be prepared for managing any errors or issues that may arise. As soon as you are made aware of an issue, either through escalation from your supplier, or through contact with electors, it is important to talk to your supplier to try to understand the scale and scope of the issue, and consider your pre-existing contingency plans as appropriate, as this will impact on your decision making on how to resolve the issue. Before making any decisions on what action to take, it is important that you contact us so that we can discuss the issue with you and provide tailored advice and support in how to manage it. Once you have all of the relevant information, have taken the appropriate advice and have made a decision on what action to take, you should agree plans with your suppliers accordingly and keep in close contact as these contingency plans are carried out. This may involve needing to re-check and approve proofs, or data figures or similar very urgently – but it is important that you still ensure that quality assurance checks are carried out to prevent any further errors. You can find more information about proof checking in our guidance on quality assurance . You will also need to consider what additional communications may be needed for electors or candidates and agents as a result of the issue; again this is something that Commission contacts can help you think through, so it is important that you contact us to discuss at the earliest opportunity. To find out how to contact your local

Commission team see our Contact Us page. Depending on the decision you make as the result of any issue, you may need to read our guidance on reissuing as a result of a procedural error. Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Managing issues with postal vote production or delivery](#)

[Retrieval of cancelled postal votes](#)

[Receiving and opening postal votes](#)

As part of your planning for the delivery of key processes, you will have made decisions on the process to follow when you receive completed postal votes. This section includes further guidance relating to the processes you must follow on receipt of completed postal votes, including managing the postal opening process and the records you must keep as part of this process. Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Receiving and opening postal votes](#)

[Managing issues with postal vote production or delivery](#)

[Return and receipt of postal votes](#)

Return and receipt of postal votes

You must have received a postal ballot pack by the close of poll via the post or having been handed in at a polling station or council buildings in the constituency, for it to be treated as duly returned. You should confirm the arrangements for the return of postal votes and any final sweeps to be carried out on polling day with Royal Mail. If a person is delivering their postal vote to a polling station and they are in a queue at the polling station at 10pm on polling day they must still be permitted to return a postal ballot pack.

[Secure storage of returned postal ballots](#)

Returned postal ballots should be stored securely at all times. This includes when they are transported to any postal vote opening session and to the verification and count venues. For more information see our guidance on ensuring the security of ballot papers. All postal votes returned to you, either at your office or at a polling station on polling day, must be stored in appropriate receptacles. You have a legal duty to take proper precautions for the safe custody of these receptacles. The methods of storage and transportation you choose should allow you to be satisfied that the returned postal ballot papers are kept securely and cannot be interfered with.

[Postal ballot boxes and packets for returned postal votes](#)

You must have two types of ballot boxes for securely storing returned postal votes: the postal voters' ballot box(es) the postal ballot box(es)

- 1 At each opening session, you must also provide receptacles for the following: rejected votes postal voting statements ballot paper envelopes rejected ballot paper envelopes

You are also required to have a copy of the postal voters' list and the postal proxy voters' list so that entries can be marked when postal voting statements are returned.

[Postal voters' ballot box](#)

The postal voters' ballot box is used to store returned postal votes while they await opening. Any postal ballot papers, postal voting statements or ballot paper envelopes that are not received as a complete pack should also be placed in the postal voters' ballot box. All postal voters' ballot boxes must be marked with the words 'postal voters' ballot box' and the name of the constituency.

- 2 You must take precautions to ensure the safe custody of the postal voters' ballot box.
- 3 You should seal the postal voters' ballot box and store it in a place that is secure, for example a locked cupboard or room, until the next scheduled opening of postal votes. These precautions will ensure the security of the contents of the postal voters ballot box is maintained at all times.

[Postal ballot boxes](#)

Postal ballot boxes are used to store the postal ballot papers which have been through the opening process and are to go forward to the count. All postal ballot boxes must be marked with the words 'postal ballot box' and the name of the constituency.

- 4 All postal ballot boxes must be stored securely until the count. Any agents present at a postal vote opening are entitled to add their seals to postal ballot boxes if they wish.
- 5 Postal votes returned to polling stations

You should emphasise to polling station staff, including

polling station inspectors, the importance of maintaining at all times the security of postal votes handed in to polling stations on polling day. To help to minimise the likelihood of receiving large quantities of postal votes at the count and help reduce the risk of delays to the start time of the count, you should arrange to collect postal votes from polling stations at various points throughout polling day. You should supply polling station staff with sufficient packets for postal votes returned to the polling station. These packets should be clearly labelled as containing postal votes and include the name of the polling station and polling station identifier. Further guidance on dealing with postal votes returned to polling stations can be found in the Commission's polling station handbook. Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice.

1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 81, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) 2001 reg 81 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 81(2), RPR(S) 2001 reg 81(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. RPR(E&W) 2001, reg 81(6) RPR(S) 2001 reg 81(6) ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 81(2), RPR(S) 2001 reg 81(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 81(4) ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Return and receipt of postal votes](#) [Receiving and opening postal votes](#) [Planning for postal vote opening](#) [Planning for postal vote opening](#)

As part of your planning, you will need to identify the number of postal vote opening sessions that you think you will require and when these should be held, and make arrangements for these as necessary. The number of postal vote opening sessions you will require will depend largely on the total number of postal voters that you have and your estimated turnout of postal voters. For more considerations see our [guidance on planning for the delivery of key processes](#) . Your first opening session should be held within a couple of days of your first issue. Even if you have not received a high number of returned postal votes by then, you should still conduct a session at that time and take the opportunity to test your equipment and assess your workflows under real conditions. After this first session you should gauge whether your estimate of the number of postal vote opening sessions required is sufficient or whether you will need to revise it. Nothing prevents the opening of postal votes being carried out on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, and indeed you may wish to consider doing so, particularly if it's apparent you will need additional postal vote opening sessions. You must give each candidate at least 48 hours' notice, in writing, of the time and location of each opening session and of the maximum number of postal voting agents that may be appointed to attend the opening of postal votes.

1 Who can attend the opening of postal votes? The following people are entitled to attend the opening of postal votes:

2 you and your staff candidates election agents (or a sub-agent on their behalf, or any person appointed by a candidate to attend in the election agent's place) postal voting agents Commission representatives accredited observers

The postal vote opening process should be transparent and all those entitled to attend should be able to clearly view the whole process. You could hand out copies of your layout plan to assist those present to follow what is happening, where and when. You should provide anyone attending the postal vote opening with information on the processes you are going to follow. This can be a verbal explanation or through the provision of written guidance notes. You should inform candidates, election agents and postal voting agents of the process to be followed

should they wish to object to the rejection of a postal voting statement. More information on the process for managing this can be found in our guidance: checking personal identifiers . Everyone attending a postal vote opening session, including your staff working at the session, must: be provided with a copy of the secrecy requirements, available in and bilingually in and Welsh 3 maintain the secrecy of voting 4 You must take proper precautions for preventing any person from seeing the votes made on the ballot papers. Throughout the opening sessions you must keep the ballot papers face down. There may be occasions when the front of a ballot paper becomes visible. It is an offence for anyone to: attempt to find out the candidate(s) for whom any vote is given on any particular ballot paper communicate any such information obtained at those proceedings Equipment for opening of postal votes You should consider what other equipment you will require at the opening of postal votes, and ensure that it is in place and tested in advance. This should include: scanners extension leads printer projector and screen laptop rejected stamp and pad assorted stationery 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 80, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) reg 80 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 68, RPR(S) 2001 reg 68 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) section 66 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPA 1983 s66 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Planning for postal vote opening Return and receipt of postal votes Keeping records of the receipt and opening of postal ballot packs Keeping records of the receipt and opening of postal ballot packs Keeping accurate records at the receipt and opening of postal votes is key to maintaining a clear audit trail. You are required to complete a statement as to postal ballot papers for the constituency 1 and the records you keep will be essential for ensuring that the statement is complete and accurate. You should ensure that all of the figures required for the statement are accurately recorded during the receipt, opening and verification of postal votes. You should: maintain a clear audit trail of the receipt and opening of postal ballot packs record the total number of envelopes received record the number of envelopes counted ensure that all of the figures required for completion of the statement as to postal ballot papers are accurately recorded keep a record of the total number of envelopes received at your office and placed in a postal voters' ballot box for audit purposes to check against the number of envelopes counted at opening complete a postal ballot paper account for every postal ballot box – we have provided a template prepare a list recording: the total number of postal votes placed in each box the total number of postal voters' ballot boxes batch ballot papers in a way that ensures you are able to retrieve and cancel a particular ballot paper if required – for example, if you have to re-issue following a procedural error For information on keeping a record of postal voting statements that have gone through the opening process and have been rejected, see our guidance on checking the personal identifiers . Postal voting ballot paper account (DOC) 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 regulation 91, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 reg 91 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Keeping records of the receipt and opening of postal ballot packs Planning for postal vote opening Marking the postal voters' and postal proxy voters' lists Marking the postal voters' and postal proxy voters' lists You must mark the postal voters' list or postal proxy voters' list whenever a postal voting statement is returned, regardless of whether or not it is accompanied by a ballot paper. 1 Confirming to voters their postal vote has been returned You are required to confirm to a voter or postal proxy, if requested,

whether you have received a postal voting statement or postal proxy back. You can do this by checking the marked lists. 2 You are also required to confirm, if requested, if the number of the ballot paper issued to the elector or postal proxy has been recorded on either of the two lists of provisionally rejected votes that are required to be kept and used for matching up documents. For more information on this see our guidance on the process for opening postal votes . 3 You must be satisfied that any request has been made by the elector or postal proxy themselves before providing any confirmation regarding the status of their ballot. 4 You could, for example, ask for their name, address and date of birth before providing the information. 1. Regulation 87(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)), reg 87(3) Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 84A RPR(E&W) 2001, reg 84A RPR(S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 84A RPR (E&W) 2001 reg 84A RPR(S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 84A(2) RPR(E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Marking the postal voters' and postal proxy voters' lists Keeping records of the receipt and opening of postal ballot packs Process for opening postal votes Process for opening postal votes The process for opening postal ballot packs is set out in legislation: Stage 1: opening of the postal voters' ballot box 1 count and record the number of returned postal ballot packs (i.e., the number of envelopes 'B' in the postal voters' ballot box) open covering envelope 'B' and remove the postal voting statement and ballot paper envelope check the number on the postal voting statement matches the number on the ballot paper envelope (envelope 'A') place a mark in the postal voters' list or postal proxy voters' list as appropriate to show that a postal voting statement has been returned Stage 2: checking the personal identifiers 2 check that the elector has signed the statement and given a date of birth check the signature and date of birth on the postal voting statement matches those on the personal identifiers record if you reject a postal voting statement, you must mark the statement 'rejected', attach to it the ballot paper envelope (if there is no such envelope you must attach it to the ballot paper) and place it in the receptacle for rejected votes. Before placing it in the receptacle, you must show it to the agents and, if any of them object to your decision, add the words "rejection objected to". You should also record the reason for the rejection. Stage 3: opening of postal ballot paper envelopes 3 open the ballot paper envelope (envelope 'A') and remove the ballot paper ensuring the ballot paper is kept face down at all times check the number on the ballot paper envelope (envelope 'A') matches the number on the back of the ballot paper place the ballot paper in the postal ballot box Stage 4: sealing the postal ballot boxes 4 Count and record the number of postal ballot papers to be sealed in each postal ballot box. Seal and securely store the postal ballot boxes. A summary of this process is available in the following postal vote opening flowchart: Postal vote opening flowchart (DOC) You should batch ballot papers in such a way as to ensure that you will be able to retrieve and cancel any particular ballot paper (for example, because you have had to re-issue following a procedural error). For this reason, and also because of the need to verify the contents of all postal ballot boxes at the verification, you should consider how many ballot papers you want to store in each box. Matching up postal voting statements with postal ballot papers You must keep two lists of provisionally rejected postal ballot papers: 5 one to record the ballot paper number of any postal ballot paper that has been returned without a postal voting statement one to record the ballot paper number on any postal voting statement that was not returned with the ballot paper The following template spreadsheet is

available that you can use for this purpose: Postal vote matching spreadsheet (XLS)
 You should check these lists regularly to ensure that any mismatched documents can be matched up, enabling those postal ballots to be re-introduced into the process. 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 84, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) 2001 reg 84 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 85A, RPR(S) 2001 reg 85A ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 86, RPR(S) 2001 reg 86 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 89, RPR(S) 2001 reg 89 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. RPR(E&W) 2001 reg 87, RPR(S) 2001 reg 87 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Process for opening postal votes

Marking the postal voters' and postal proxy voters' lists

Checking the personal identifiers

Checking the personal identifiers

You must check the identifiers on all returned postal voting statements.

1 Cross-boundary constituencies

Cross-boundary constituencies

If you are the (A)RO for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you will need to consider what impact this will have on your processes for checking personal identifiers on returned postal voting statements, and whether you need to delegate some of your functions to a senior officer at the other local authority/authorities. You will need to consider how you will obtain the data from the other local authority/authorities as well as considering the proportion of the constituency that is contained in the other local authority area(s). You should liaise closely at an early stage in the election planning process with the ERO(s) and electoral services staff at the relevant local authority/authorities in order to identify any possible issues and how these will be addressed.

Checking the personal identifiers

If you have delegated authority to another person to make decisions on postal voting statements at the verification of postal vote identifiers, you should provide them with a copy of the following Commission and Forensic Science Service guidance on signature checking, and instruct them to follow it.

Forensic Science Service guidance on signature checking (PDF)

These tables are a guide to making decisions on whether to accept or reject a returned postal voting statement.

When to accept a returned postal vote statement:

Signature provided?	DoB provided?	Signature waiver granted?	Blank	Yes	Yes	Yes	Provided but in a different format – e.g. day and month are transposed – and you are satisfied that the DoB given is the same as the one held on postal voters record	N/A
When to reject a returned postal vote statement:	Signature provided?	DoB provided?	Signature waiver granted?	Blank	Yes	No	Blank	Blank
Yes	Yes	Blank	No	Yes	Does not match postal voters record	No	Does not match postal voters record	Yes
No	Yes	Date postal vote completed	provided in error	N/A	Your decision on determining a postal voting statement does not have to be based only on the information on the postal voting statement and personal identifiers record. When making your decision, you may refer to other sources, for example, the signature provided on a registration form, or consider any additional information you have. For example, an elector may contact you to say that they have broken their arm since supplying their identifiers to the ERO and are unable to replicate their normal signature. You may decide to accept their postal voting statement as valid if you are satisfied that this is the case, even if it has a signature that looks different to the one on the personal identifiers record. Every decision on a postal voting statement should be taken on an individual basis. Complete absence of a signature (where the elector has not been granted a waiver) or a date of birth must always lead to a rejection. In determining the validity of the postal voting statement, neither the signature nor the date of birth is more important than the other – both must be provided (unless the signature has not been provided and the elector has been granted			

a waiver), and both must match . Candidates, election agents and postal voting agents may object to the rejection of a postal voting statement. If they object to a rejection, you must mark the postal voting statement 'rejection objected to' 2 before attaching it to the ballot paper envelope and placing it in the receptacle for rejected votes. Accredited observers and representatives of the Commission have no right to object to the rejection of a postal voting statement. 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 85A(2), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) reg 85A(2) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR(E&W) 2001, reg 85A(4), RPR(S) 2001, reg 85A(4) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Checking the personal identifiers Process for opening postal votes Dealing with cut or torn postal ballot papers Dealing with cut or torn postal ballot papers Sometimes, you may find that electors have cut or torn their completed postal ballot paper. You will need to decide whether the returned extract is a valid ballot paper. There are various scenarios that may arise: Scenario Accept at postal vote verification stage? Accept at count? The extract has the ballot paper number and the official mark on it Yes - The 'ballot paper' will pass through the postal vote verification process (as it contains the ballot paper number) and go forward to the count. Yes - This could be accepted as a valid vote at the count, provided the intention of the voter was clear. The extract has only the ballot paper number and no official mark Yes - The 'ballot paper' will pass through the postal vote verification process and go forward to the count. No - It must be rejected at the count as it does not contain the official mark. The extract has only the official mark and no ballot paper number No - The 'ballot paper' must be rejected at the postal vote verification stage as it will not be matched on the opening of the 'A' envelope or against the postal vote statement. N/A The extract has neither an official mark nor a ballot paper number No - The 'ballot paper' must be rejected at the postal vote verification stage as, again, it will not be matched on the opening of the 'A' envelope or against the postal vote statement. N/A Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Dealing with cut or torn postal ballot papers Checking the personal identifiers The final opening of postal votes The final opening of postal votes In order to avoid any potential delay to the verification and count process(es), you should keep to a minimum the number of postal votes that have to be opened during the verification and count. This is particularly important as you must take reasonable steps to begin counting the votes as soon as practicable and within four hours of the close of poll. You must ensure that the opening of postal votes, whether taking place at the verification and count or somewhere else, is carried out in full view of any candidates, agents and observers present. 1 As with all other opening sessions, you are required to provide notice of the time and place of the final postal vote opening session. 2 Following the completion of the final opening of postal votes, you are required to securely seal and store various receptacles and documents. You can find further information on this in our guidance: Ensuring the security of ballot papers and other materials . Keeping a record of incomplete postal ballot packs returned You will have kept two lists of provisionally rejected postal ballot papers throughout the opening process: 3 one to record the ballot paper number of any postal ballot paper that has been returned without a postal voting statement a second to record the ballot paper number on any postal voting statement that was not returned with the postal ballot paper After the last opening session, these will become: the final list of ballot papers with no valid postal voting statement received, and the final list of valid postal voting statements received without some or all of the ballot papers

1. Regulations 67 and 68 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)), regs 67 and 68 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 80 RPR(E&W) 2001, reg 80 RPR(S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 87 RPR(E&W) 2001, reg 87 RPR(S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for The final opening of postal votes Dealing with cut or torn postal ballot papers Preparing a record of those postal votes that have failed the identifier checks Preparing a record of those postal votes that have failed the identifier checks After an election, EROs are required to notify postal voters if their postal vote has been rejected as a result of failing the personal identifier checks and to inform them of the specific reason for the rejection. You must keep a record of the categories under which you are rejecting individual postal voting statements to enable this. Every rejected postal voting statement must be accounted for. You must keep a list of those postal votes that have failed the personal identifier checks. The list must contain, for each such rejected postal vote: 1 the elector's name and address (and the name and address of the proxy if the elector has a proxy) the elector's number on the register of electors (and that of the proxy if the elector has a proxy) the specified reason(s) for the rejection of the postal voting statement, and any other information relating to the rejection that you consider appropriate, but not the ballot paper number(s) The specified reasons for rejection of a postal voting statement are that: the signature does not match the example held on the personal identifiers record the date of birth does not match the one held on the personal identifiers record the signature field is blank the date of birth field is blank Where a postal voter appears on the list of postal votes that have failed the personal identifier checks, the ERO is required to notify the postal voter of the rejection within three months of the date of the poll. Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies If, as (A)RO, you are responsible for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries you must forward the relevant parts of this list to the ERO(s) at the other local authority/authorities. This must be done at the same time as you forward all other relevant election documents to the ERO(s). Preparing a record of those postal votes that have failed the identifier checks The ERO's requirement to send a notification is suspended if you suspect that an offence may have been committed in relation to a particular postal vote. 2 You should therefore keep a record of any instances where you suspect an offence may have been committed and forward it to the ERO so that they know in which cases they should not send out a postal vote identifier rejection notice. This should be done at the same time as you forward all other election documents to the ERO. Where fraud is suspected, you should package the contents of the postal ballot pack separately and inform your local police Single Point of Contact (SPOC). You should handle the postal ballot pack as little as possible and, where you can, make a note of each person who has handled the postal ballot pack. For further information, see our Guidance for EROs on issuing postal vote identifier rejection notices . 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)) regulation 91, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) reg 91 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR (E&W) 2001 reg 61C(2)(b), RPR(S) 2001 reg 61C(2)(b) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Preparing a record of those postal votes that have failed the identifier checks The final opening of postal votes Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Absent voting Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Absent voting Forensic Science Service guidance on signature checking (PDF) UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX) UKPE By election timetable

generic (DOCX) Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary elections 2023 (PDF) Postal voting ballot paper account (DOC) Postal vote opening flowchart (DOC) Postal vote matching spreadsheet (XLS) Secrecy requirements - postal voting (DOC) Last updated: 26 September 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Absent voting Preparing a record of those postal votes that have failed the identifier checks Polling station voting Polling station voting This part of the guidance focuses on the preparations you will need to make in advance of polling day and some of the issues that you, as RO, may need to consider on the day. It covers what equipment and materials you will need to provide for polling stations, information on polling station set-up and managing the close of poll. Our polling station handbook covers in detail the voting procedures and what polling station staff can expect on polling day. Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. You can find our guidance on the identification of suitable polling stations in our section on booking suitable polling stations . Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Polling station voting Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Absent voting Equipment and materials to be provided for the polling station Equipment and materials to be provided for the polling station You are required to provide certain equipment and materials to polling stations, and will need to plan this in advance to ensure that everything is in place for the delivery of polling station voting. Summary of items to be provided to polling stations You must provide polling stations with: 1 ballot box(es) ballot papers (including tendered ballot papers) pens or pencils to enable voters to mark their ballot papers polling screens the relevant part of the electoral register absent voters lists – postal voters, proxy voters and postal proxies forms to record the details of electors who have been issued ballot papers after the correction of a clerical error (which may be appended to the polling station register) the corresponding number list ballot paper accounts ballot paper refusal list (BPRL) voter identification evaluation form (VIDEF) and VIDEF notes form a large-print version of the ballot paper, for display inside the polling station an enlarged hand-held sample copy of the ballot paper to give to electors to take to a polling booth with them for reference a voting device for use by blind or partially sighted voters. guidance for voters ('How to vote at these elections') notices (for display both inside and outside the polling station) instructions for voters notices (to be displayed inside the polling booth) large notice showing the accepted forms of photographic ID to be produced when applying for a ballot paper and a statement that further proof of identity may be required to resolve any discrepancy between the voter's name on the electoral register and the name on the identification used (for display inside the polling station) a separate area for the checking of photographic ID in private declaration by companions of voters with disabilities forms a list of tendered votes a list of votes marked by the Presiding Officer a statement of number of votes marked by the Presiding Officer a list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions packets, with seals, in which to place the items to be returned to you, such as postal ballot papers returned to the polling station, and for packaging the

election documentation at close of poll any additional equipment you have determined necessary to make voting easier and more accessible for disabled voters In addition, you should provide: mirrors, so that voters who removed their face coverings for identification purposes can ensure their face covering is in place correctly before leaving the private area privacy screens, ■where a separate room is not available for checking photographic ID in private. ROs should take into account the safety of staff and the risk of allegations of undue influence envelopes, with seals, in which to place any ballot papers that have been issued but which the elector has not placed in the ballot box form or list to record electors marked as postal voters but who claim not to have applied for one notepaper for use by polling station staff stationery items as required, e.g. paper clips, drawing pins, adhesive tack, adhesive tape plastic sacks for returning stationery and equipment to the verification venue envelopes for making up assorted packets You are legally required to make such arrangements as you think fit to ensure that staff, candidates and agents appointed to attend the station are provided with the following relevant secrecy requirements: Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) We have also produced a template survey for polling station voters who required additional assistance when voting, which you may want to provide in polling stations. More information can be found in our guidance for Returning Officers on assistance with voting for disabled voters on Reviewing the election . You should check that all polling station equipment is fit for purpose and that you have a sufficient quantity, particularly in the event of a high turnout. This should include considering if you should supply additional ballot boxes to Presiding Officers as one box may not be sufficient should there be a high turnout. You should prepare your polling station equipment and materials in good time before polling day, either for delivery to polling stations or collection by Presiding Officers. You should ensure that any additional equipment you have identified to make the polling station accessible is delivered and set up in good time for the opening of the poll. Our guidance on providing equipment that makes voting easier for disabled voters provides further information to support your planning. Where a polling station has an induction loop installed, it should be used wherever possible to support the accessibility of the electoral process to voters with hearing loss. Polling station staff should be trained on how to use these at the briefing session.

1. Schedule 1 Rules 25 and 29 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Equipment and materials to be provided for the polling station Polling station voting Allocation of ballot papers Allocation of ballot papers You must provide each polling station with the number of ballot papers that you think may be necessary. 1 As part of your consideration, you should estimate expected turnout levels. You should assume that the turnout will not be less than the turnout at the last equivalent poll, and you should take into account the potential for late engagement and interest in the election, and any local or national issues which may affect turnout. If you decide for any reason that you are not allocating ballot papers for 100% of electors entitled to vote in person at a polling station, you should give careful consideration to the number that will be required in each case and have plans in place to ensure that additional ballot papers can be provided in a timely manner to any polling station that may require them. You should also ensure that Presiding Officers understand how to complete the ballot paper accounts to take account of any additional allocation. When allocating ballot papers to polling stations, you must ensure that the numbers on the ballot papers allocated to each polling station run consecutively in order to avoid any problems with completing the corresponding number

list or ballot paper account. Guidance on the printing of ballot papers is provided in Production of ballot papers and checking ballot papers before allocation . You must also supply tendered ballot papers to Presiding Officers. To avoid tendered ballot papers being issued in error, it is good practice to supply them in a sealed envelope with: instructions stating that the envelope should only be opened and the ballot papers within it issued in limited, prescribed circumstances after consultation with the elections office a brief description of those circumstances 2 instructions to consult the polling station handbook for further information Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 29(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 Rule 40 RPA1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Allocation of ballot papers Equipment and materials to be provided for the polling station Polling station registers and absent voting lists Polling station registers and absent voting lists You must provide each Presiding Officer with the appropriate part of the electoral register for their polling station and the appropriate absent voting lists. Polling station staff should be trained on the various franchise markers that will appear on the register. 1 They need to be aware of the importance of the security of voters' personal details on the electoral register and absent voting lists. Polling station registers can be printed once the final election notice of alteration has been published, five working days before polling day. You should ensure that all printed polling station registers: are checked to ensure that they are complete reflect any recent additions or deletions to the register have the appropriate franchise markers in place You should instruct your Presiding Officers to check that: they have been provided with the correct register for their polling station the register includes the expected number of electors allocated to their polling station Alterations to the register You should have procedures in place to deal with any necessary amendments made before polling day or on polling day itself. These procedures should cover your method: to amend the polling station registers and proxy lists after they have been printed, as a result of clerical errors or granting emergency proxy applications for communicating the relevant information to Presiding Officers, which may be done orally or in writing More information about clerical errors can be found in our guidance for EROs in England , Scotland and Wales . Cross-boundary constituencies Cross-boundary constituencies You should liaise and agree with the other ERO(s) in your constituency a method for communicating to Presiding Officers changes to the register as a result of a clerical error, court decisions or the granting of an emergency proxy. Polling station registers and absent voting lists If a person makes a complaint to polling station staff that suggests that they should be on the electoral register, the Presiding Officer must communicate that representation to the Electoral Registration Officer as soon as is practicable. For this to work effectively you will need to ensure that you have suitable communication systems in place between Presiding Officers and the Electoral Registration Officer. For more information on training staff see our guidance on training presiding officers, poll clerks and polling station inspectors . 1. Schedule 1 Rule 29 (3)(c) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Polling station registers and absent voting lists Allocation of ballot papers Corresponding number lists Corresponding number lists You must prepare and provide a

corresponding number list for each polling station. 1 The corresponding number list is a prescribed document that can be found in the appendix to the election rules. There is no provision for a form 'to like effect' to be used. 2 There are two types of corresponding number list: one list to be used in polling stations, containing the ballot paper numbers and a column to add the elector numbers of voters to whom those ballot papers are issued. 3 The other list is to be used at postal vote issuing sessions, containing the number and unique identifying mark of every ballot paper produced, as well as the elector numbers of postal voters. For more information on the postal vote opening process please see our guidance on Receiving and opening postal votes . Combination Combination Where two or more polls are combined, you must prepare and provide a combined corresponding number list for each polling station. 4 You will need to consider how you will produce the combined corresponding number lists for use at combined polls in practice. One possible solution could be to use a separate sheet of paper for each poll, but which are then joined together in some way (for example, by staple) at the end of the process. If the issue of postal votes has been combined, a combined corresponding number list must also be used at the issue of postal votes. 5 1. Schedule 1 Rule 19A(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) and Regulations 63A(3) and (4) Representation of the People Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 Rule 19A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sch 1 Rule 19A(1) RPA 1983 and Regs 63A(3) and (4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Sch 1 Rule 19A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Sch 1 Rule 19A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Corresponding number lists Polling station registers and absent voting lists Ballot paper refusal list and voter identification evaluation form Ballot paper refusal list and voter identification evaluation form You must provide each polling station with documents that capture information relating to the voter identification requirements. Ballot paper refusal list (BPRL) evaluation form (VIDEF) VIDEF notes sheet ■■■■The BPRL and VIDEF notes sheet are used throughout the day to capture and record information in relation to the voter ID requirement: Document Information collected BPRL Number of ballot papers refused on grounds of: the photographic ID was not a good likeness the PO believed the photographic ID was a forgery the elector failed to answer the prescribed questions satisfactorily The BPRL would be updated if an elector later returns with an acceptable form of photographic ID VIDEF notes sheet Number of Voter Authority Certificates used by electors (or proxies) as their acceptable photographic ID Number of Elector's Documents used by anonymous electors as their acceptable photographic ID Number of photographic ID checked in private Details of electors who were not issued with a ballot paper and the number of these electors who later returned and were issued with a ballot paper At the close of poll the PO will complete the VIDEF with the information from the BPRL and VIDEF notes sheet. BPRL (Ballot paper refusal list) (DOCX) Voter identification notes and VIDEF The polling station handbook provides further information how to complete these forms. Last updated: 30 March 2023 Book traversal links for Ballot paper refusal list and voter identification evaluation form Corresponding number lists Packets for postal ballot papers delivered to the polling station Packets for postal ballot papers delivered to the polling station Postal voters can return their postal vote by hand to any polling station in their electoral area . 1 You should brief polling station staff to identify which postal votes can be returned to their polling station. For more information on training staff please see our guidance on Training Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and polling station inspectors . You should provide polling stations with packets for received postal votes. The number and style of

packets should be based on returns to polling stations at the last equivalent polls, but you should keep in mind the potential for late engagement and interest in the election which may affect turn out. Records of all such packets should be kept so that each one can be accounted for. The packets should be clearly labelled and state: that they contain postal votes the name of the polling station the polling station identifier Security of returned postal votes You should ensure that the packets are capable of being securely sealed. Polling agents are entitled to attach their seal to sealed packets before they are removed from the polling station and must therefore be permitted to do so. 2 As part of your training you should emphasise to Presiding Officers the importance of maintaining the security of postal votes returned to polling stations. The postal votes should be immediately placed in the packets provided and you should ensure that the packets are stored securely throughout the day. You should arrange for postal votes to be collected from polling stations throughout the day as this will help to reduce the number that will have to be dealt with after the close of poll. Polling station inspectors can perform this duty. You should ensure that processes are in place to maintain a clear audit trail and to ensure the security of collected postal vote packets while in transit. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 31A Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 Rule 43(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Packets for postal ballot papers delivered to the polling station Ballot paper refusal list and voter identification evaluation form Polling station log Polling station log You should prepare a polling station log for polling station staff to use to record any problems or anomalies. You should instruct polling station staff to record in the polling station log: any instances where they are required to ask the prescribed questions as a result of suspected personation, making notes of as much information as possible, for example, any distinguishing characteristics, which may help any future investigation. Appendix 7 of the polling station handbook sets out the procedure for dealing with personation, which involves asking the prescribed questions. the name and address of any voter who is unable to vote for any administrative reason anything that may help to explain any issues with the ballot paper account at the verification – for example, if a voter has been seen leaving the polling station with a ballot paper. You should consider instructing Presiding Officers to keep the log and ballot paper account together when delivering the ballot papers to the count. If you are concerned that personation may have taken place at a polling station you should contact your police single point of contact (SPOC) and you can also contact your local Commission team for additional support. You can find further information in our guidance on maintaining the integrity of the election . Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Polling station log Packets for postal ballot papers delivered to the polling station Setting up polling stations Setting up polling stations Polling stations should be laid out with the voter in mind. In particular, you should take into account the needs of voters with a range of disabilities. You should consider the positioning of all of the furniture and equipment, as well as where the notices should be displayed, and the placement of signage both within and outside of the polling station. You should develop plans for the layout of each of your polling stations which can be used to assist those setting up the polling stations. You should consider the voter

experience and flow, including how the voter will move through the voting process from entering to exiting the polling station. You will need to ensure that whoever is in charge of setting up polling stations knows how to do so and what the layout should be capable of achieving. If someone other than polling station staff is setting up the polling station, your polling station staff should check that it has been set up properly. They should have reference to any layout plans you have produced and the polling station set-up checklist in the Commission's polling station handbook when doing so. The polling station handbook also covers the positioning of equipment and display of notices, and provides examples of layouts for both a room where there is one polling station and a room where there is more than one polling station. Polling station inspector visits can be used to check polling station set-up and to ensure that all notices remain properly displayed throughout polling day. We have developed the following checklist to support their visits: Checklist for polling station inspectors (DOC) You can find more information and resources for staff training on the set up of polling stations in our guidance on training presiding officers, poll clerks and polling station inspectors . Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Setting up polling stations Polling station log Polling station notices You must produce and display the 'Guidance for voters' notice and the 'Instructions for voters' notice. The contents and display requirements of these notices are prescribed in legislation. 1 The 'Guidance for voters' notice is required by law to be printed in conspicuous characters and exhibited inside and outside of the polling station. 2 The 'Instructions for voters' notice is required by law to be exhibited in every polling booth. 3 Use of or Welsh in polling stations When you brief polling station staff, you should make clear that only (or in Wales, or Welsh) should be used when assisting or giving instructions to electors in polling stations. This ensures transparency in proceedings, and enables any observers or polling agents present in the polling station to monitor the voting process. Some voters may need assistance in another language because of their limited (or or Welsh) language skills. You should consider what support you are able to provide to those voters in your area, such as providing translations of the polling station notices. In some exceptional cases the translated notices may not be sufficient or appropriate. For example, a voter may have low levels of literacy or may have a question that falls outside of what is covered by the notices. In those circumstances, polling station staff may provide assistance in a language other than or Welsh if they can. Where assistance is given in another language, polling station staff should explain to other staff and any polling agents or observers present what question has been asked and the response given. 1. Schedule 1 Rules 29 (4) and (5) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA). The content and design of the notices is different for a standalone UK Parliamentary election than it is for those to be used at other polls. This is a consequence of the fact that the 'Guidance for voters' and 'Instructions for voters' notices contained in Schedule 1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006) have not been updated to bring them into line with the notices for use at other elections. ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 Rule 29(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sch 1 Rule 29(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Setting up polling stations Taking selfies in polling stations Taking selfies in polling stations You need to decide when to allow the use of mobile phones in polling stations and make this clear to polling station staff in your staff training . Our advice is that you should not allow photos to be taken inside polling stations. The law relating to obtaining information in polling

stations and disclosing such information is complex and there is a risk that someone taking a photo inside a polling station may be in breach of the law, 1 whether intentionally or not. You could decide to display a notice inside polling stations to make clear that photography of any kind (including photos taken on mobile phones) is not permitted. While you should ensure that all polling station staff are aware of this guidance, they should also understand that some voters with sight loss may need to use apps on their mobile phone or other devices to help them to read documents, and they should allow them to do so. 1. Section 66 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Taking selfies in polling stations Providing information about the number of ballot papers issued Providing information about the number of ballot papers issued An election agent or polling agent might ask polling station staff for information on the number of ballot papers issued. It is for you to decide whether to release this information. A request for the number of ballot papers that have been issued can only be made by those who are entitled to be inside the polling station. If you decide to provide this information, you must be careful not to release any information that may risk breaching the secrecy of the ballot. We have produced guidance on how polling station staff can calculate the number of ballot papers issued. This can be found in our briefing for polling station staff. Polling station staff briefing - UK Parliamentary general election (PPT) Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Providing information about the number of ballot papers issued Taking selfies in polling stations Close of poll Close of poll Voters who at 10pm are in their polling station, or in a queue outside their polling station, for the purpose of voting, may apply for a ballot paper. 1 You should consider as part of your planning where queues may arise and ensure that you have arrangements in place to be able to respond as necessary You should ensure that polling station staff are monitoring turnout throughout the day and providing progress reports to polling station inspectors, and that they alert you to any intelligence that indicates a risk of there being a queue at close of poll at any polling station. You should also consider involving your police SPOC in planning arrangements to deal with possible queues at the close of poll, so they can assist you with queue management if necessary. The Commission's polling station handbook sets out in detail the processes to be followed at the close of poll, including how to deal with voters held in a queue at 10pm. 1. Schedule 1 Rule 37(7) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Close of poll Providing information about the number of ballot papers issued Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Polling station voting Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Polling station voting Checklist for polling station inspectors (DOC) Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary elections 2023 (PDF) Polling station handbook quick guide - UK Parliamentary elections 2023 (PDF) Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) Last updated: 11 July 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Polling station voting Close of poll Verification and Count Verification and Count This section is intended to help you make decisions about some of the key aspects of delivering the verification and the counting of the votes, such as managing attendance and observation, ensuring security of ballot papers, audit processes and dealing with doubtful ballot papers. It provides guidance to support

the key decisions you need to make, and highlights recommended approaches to assist you in understanding and discharging your duties, ensuring that there is transparency in the process and enabling you to deliver an accurate result in which voters, candidates and political parties have confidence. Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Verification and Count Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers

- Polling station voting Planning for the verification and count Planning for the verification and count

There are a variety of methods for arranging verification and count processes at an election, and there is no one size fits all approach which can be applied. Every electoral area has its own set of local circumstances that will influence the decisions that you must make as part of your planning for how you will deliver the verification and count processes. When planning for the delivery of the verification and count you should keep your general planning assumptions under review to ensure they continue to be realistic and robust. This should include assumptions on turnout, the number of candidates, speed and capability of count staff and expected timing for completing the various count stages. Such a review will help inform a realistic assessment of whether you will be able to deliver the overall plan for the count, and whether and when it may be necessary to implement contingency plans. In all cases, your plan should be flexible enough to allow you to respond if any of your assumptions change, covering what contingency actions you will take in such circumstances. Your plan should also identify key points during the count process at which you will review progress against the expected schedule. This progress review should be used to keep candidates, agents and the media informed of the progress of the count.

Decision-making

You should keep a record of all steps taken in order to be able to provide an audit trail demonstrating your decision-making process. You should be able to explain your decisions, and you should be prepared to do so in response to enquiries. To help build confidence in your plan for the verification and count, you should share information and consult and engage on your plan with stakeholders. You should communicate throughout your planning process and be prepared to explain the reasons for the decisions you are taking. For key decisions, you should provide your reasons to stakeholders in writing. You should also identify in advance those decisions about the management of the count that must be taken in consultation and agreement with candidates and agents, and make clear to them on what basis you will be making decisions. This includes, for example, decisions on re-counts and the suspension of the count. While you should seek input from those affected or interested to inform your decision-making, ultimately the responsibility for making decisions remains with you as (A)RO. You will need to decide the best way to communicate these decisions once taken.

Documentation

You should produce templates for all the documents to be used at the verification and count in advance and ensure staff are familiar with them. Colour coding the documentation can be an effective way of quickly locating the relevant documents.

Equipment and set up

You will need to decide what equipment you will require to administer the verification and count (as appropriate) and to communicate with the candidates and agents and anybody else attending the count, including: public announcement systems phone lines mobile phones and mobile signals general IT equipment and spreadsheets for recording verification and count figures equipment for verifying the personal identifiers on returned postal votes (if the final opening of postal votes is to take place at the verification venue) screens for displaying any relevant information throughout the count

We have prepared a checklist to help relevant staff ensure that all materials, including stationery and equipment required at the verification and count venue are present. Example checklist of materials

required at the verification and count (DOC) We have also developed guidance to support you should you need to procure any equipment. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Planning for the verification and count Verification and Count Principles of an effective verification and count Principles of an effective verification and count You should ensure that your verification and count arrangements can deliver the following key principles for an effective verification and count: All processes are transparent, with a clear and unambiguous audit trail. For example: everything is carried out in clear view of all those entitled to attend sufficient information is provided to attendees on the processes to be followed communication of information is consistent and open The verification produces an accurate result. This means that the number of ballot papers in each box either matches the number of ballot papers issued as stated on the ballot paper account or, if it does not: the source of the variance has been identified and can be explained, and/or the box has been recounted at least twice, until the same number of ballot papers is counted on two consecutive occasions The count produces an accurate result, where: the total number of votes cast for each candidate and rejected votes matches the total number of ballot papers given on the verification statement for the constituency the verification and count are timely the secrecy of the vote is maintained at all times the security of ballot papers and other stationery is maintained at all times the communication of information at the verification and count is clear and timely In addition to considering how to ensure that your processes will enable you to meet the key principles, you will need to consider other practical factors that will affect the organisation and timing of the verification and count, such as: the size of the constituency the geography of the constituency the size and capacity of the venue the ability to ensure transparency for candidates, agents and observers at the venue the cost of using the venue In all cases, you should keep a record of your decisions and you should keep your verification and count plans under regular review as circumstances may change. More guidance on choosing and managing your venue can be found in Verification and count venues and layouts. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Principles of an effective verification and count Planning for the verification and count Timing of the verification and count Timing of the verification and count As prescribed in legislation, you are required to make arrangements for the verification and counting of the votes at the election as soon as practicable after the close of poll. 1 The legislation also specifies that you must take reasonable steps to begin counting the votes as soon as practicable and within four hours of the close of poll. 2 This duty relates to the actual counting of the votes and not to the verification process. Guidance on what you need to do if you do not commence the count within four hours of the close of poll is provided in our guidance on the count. You should take decisions on the timing of the count before the notice of election is published and inform those with an interest, including local political parties and broadcasters, at an early stage. There will be an expectation among candidates, parties and the media that the results will be declared as soon as possible after the close of poll. You will therefore need to plan carefully how to manage the expectations of candidates, parties and the media. Methodology The way that you organise and manage the verification and count will have an impact on timing. You should consider using a mini-count approach when planning your verification and count. It is widely accepted that breaking down the verification and count, into areas smaller than the relevant electoral area, is particularly effective in achieving an accurate, timely result with clear audit trails. The results from those areas are then aggregated to achieve

an overall result for the relevant electoral area. Any counting issues that may arise will be limited to a more manageable area and any re-counts that may happen as a result, may be limited. You will need to decide whether you will take the opportunity to start counting votes before the verification is completed. You should allow sufficient time to conduct a well-run count process and ensure an accurate result in which voters, candidates and agents can have confidence.

Combination For combined polls, you will need to consider: Whether you need to liaise with any other relevant ROs to ensure that your plans fit in with overarching plans? You will also need to decide if: Whether you will hold your counts at different times and on different days in order to manage numbers of attendees? Whether the legislative requirements for when candidates should take up office will impact your plans?

1. Rule 44(1) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Rule 45(3A) Sch. 1 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Timing of the verification and count

Principles of an effective verification and count

Estimating the duration of your verification and count

There are several things that you can think about at an early stage to help estimate the timings of each stage of your verification and count. This should include: the number of staff and any staffing formulas you have in place e.g. number of ballot papers counted per hour per count assistant whether you have a stand-alone election or combination of polls the number of ballot papers that were processed at a previous equivalent election the methodology used at previous elections e.g. mini-counts the timings at previous equivalent elections for completion of the various stages of the verification and count. You should share these timings with stakeholders together with the assumptions that underpin them. However, you should also warn stakeholders that these timings are indicative only and may change on the night - for example, if turnout was significantly higher or lower than expected. Some stakeholders may hold expectations as to how quickly the processes can be completed which cannot be met in practice and this can lead to tension and frustration at the verification and count. To manage expectations, you should explain in some detail the processes involved, how long each stage is likely to take and the resources you have put in place.

Combination For a UK Parliamentary election you should make stakeholders aware that you do not have to wait until you have completed the verification of all polls for which you are taking on the combined function as the RO, before you can start counting the votes.

1. Paragraph 22(1AB) The Representation of the People (Combination of Polls) (E&W) Regulations 2004 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Estimating the duration of your verification and count

Timing of the verification and count

Estimating the number of ballot papers

Estimating the number of ballot papers. Understanding the number of ballot papers that will need to be dealt with is a crucial factor in your planning, and will help determine the resources that you need for the verification and count. You need to think about the estimated: size of the electorate number of used and unused ballot papers number of returned postal ballot papers number of doubtful ballot papers to be adjudicated.

Electorate You will be able to estimate the eligible electorate by using the figure after publication of the revised register as a baseline, but accounting for likely increases in registration ahead of the polls. An analysis of the increases in the electorate ahead of the last scheduled polls can provide you with an idea of the percentage increase in electorate you can expect at the polls. You should also factor in any increases that may result from registration activity that EROs will be carrying out. You should be able to keep that estimate

under review by monitoring the monthly updates to the register. If you are not also the ERO, you will need to liaise with the relevant ERO to obtain the registration data. Similarly, if you are an (A)RO in a cross-boundary constituency you will need to liaise with the EROs across the constituency to obtain the relevant data.

Used and unused polling station ballot papers You will be able to develop an estimate of the number of used ballot papers you may have to process from polling stations by multiplying the estimated electorate by the expected turnout. You can then identify the volume of unused papers that will also need to be verified, as set out in the following example table:

Eligible electorate (polling station voters)	Expected Turnout (e.g. 69.1%)	Number of unused ballot papers (e.g. 30.9%)
68,175	47,108	21,067

The above calculation will give you a robust estimate of the number of polling station ballot papers you will need to manage at the verification and count, but you should build in some contingency to ensure you are prepared to deal with a greater than expected turnout and/or electorate. Whilst the number of tendered ballot papers to verify will likely be relatively small, you should also consider the number of tendered ballot papers you will need to manage and plan on how you will do this.

Volume and management of returned postal votes The publication of the revised register will provide a baseline for the number of postal voters in your area, and you should consider the percentage increase ahead of previous similar polls too. You should also factor in any registration activity being carried out by EROs ahead of the poll. Regular monitoring of the absent voting list will allow you to keep your estimate under review. In cross-boundary constituencies you will need to liaise with the ROs across the constituency to ensure your estimates for the whole of the constituency are robust. Using your assumption on postal voter turnout for the electoral area, you can then calculate the total number of postal ballot papers you might have to process. You can then keep this under review by monitoring the progress of postal vote returns in the period leading up to polling day and include an analysis of the pattern of postal vote returns from previous equivalent polls in your planning.

Planning for processing postal votes handed in on polling day The time taken to verify postal votes handed in at polling stations can lead to delays at the verification and count. You will need to plan how you will ensure that there are no delays due to awaiting the arrival and processing of the last postal votes. Regular collections of postal votes during the day should help to minimise any delay. You need to decide on the arrangements to enable the efficient verification of returned postal voting statements after the close of poll including whether: postal vote identifier checks will take place at the verification venue or elsewhere? If the process takes place at the verification venue this is likely to be more convenient for candidates and agents to observe and it will be more straightforward from a transportation point of view, but there are risks involved in moving an established operation and equipment to a different venue. equipment needs to be moved or additional equipment needs to be put in place to facilitate verification? If so, you should ensure that it is tested in advance you have the appropriate staffing levels to ensure any delay in verifying the final postal votes is minimised? You will need to decide how to manage the verification of identifiers on returned postal votes where you are not also the ERO or where, as a result of the relevant electoral area crossing boundaries, more than one ERO will hold the personal identifiers record containing the specimen signatures and dates of birth for some of the electorate. You will need to ensure that your plans for the checking of personal identifiers on returned postal voting statements received on polling day does not lead to a delay at the verification and count.

Managing doubtful ballot papers The number of doubtful

ballot papers that may require adjudication because the voter has not marked the ballot paper in accordance with the instructions will also affect the resources that might be required at the verification and count. By analysing the results of previous comparable elections you should be able to estimate how many doubtful ballot papers they may need to process at the count. Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Estimating the number of ballot papers](#) [Estimating the duration of your verification and count](#) [Attendance at the verification and count](#) [Attendance at the verification and count](#) As (A)RO, it is part of your role to ensure that everyone who wants to observe the verification and count has access to the information they need to enable them to do so. This section contains information on who can attend the verification and count, and guidance for your plans for communicating throughout the verification and count processes. Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Attendance at the verification and count](#) [Estimating the number of ballot papers](#) [Who can attend? Who can attend?](#) The following people are entitled by law to attend the verification and count: 1 you and your staff candidates one guest per candidate election agents (or a sub-agent on their behalf) counting agents Commission representatives accredited observers any other person permitted by you, as (A)RO, to attend You need to be satisfied that it will not impede the verification or efficient counting of votes and that you have either consulted the election agents or thought it impracticable to do so. 2 You should take all necessary steps to ensure that anyone attending does not interfere with or compromise the secrecy of the vote. You are legally required to make such arrangements as you think fit to ensure that all attendees are provided with a copy of the relevant secrecy requirements. 3 Secrecy requirements - verification and count (DOC) You have a legal duty to give counting agents reasonable facilities for overseeing the verification and counting of the votes. You should ensure that anyone who is entitled to attend has an unrestricted view of the proceedings, without being able to interfere with the work of your staff. 4 There is no requirement for those attending to arrive by a certain time. You should have a process in place to ensure that, those entitled to attend can be admitted whenever they arrive. This process should also allow any attendee who wishes to leave and return later to do so. 1. Schedule 1 rule 44(2) and (3) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Sch 1 rule 44(3) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. S.66 and sch 1 rule 31(b) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Sch 1 rule 44(4) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Who can attend?](#) [Attendance at the verification and count](#) [Counting agents](#) [Counting agents](#) You must give counting agents reasonable facilities for overseeing the verification and counting of the votes, and provide them with relevant information. In particular, the law requires that where votes are counted by sorting the ballot papers according to candidate and then counting each set of ballot papers, the counting agents are entitled to satisfy themselves that the ballot papers are correctly sorted. 1 You must also give notice in writing to counting agents of the time and place at which the verification and counting of votes will start. 2 Further information can be found in our guidance on the appointment of counting agents. 1. Schedule 1 rule 44(5) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Sch 1 rule 44(1) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Counting agents](#) [Who can attend?](#) [Accredited observers and Commission representatives](#) [Accredited observers and Commission representatives](#) [Accredited observers](#) Electoral observation is a legitimate and valuable part of the electoral process, and care should be taken not to hinder or obstruct the conduct of any

observers. While you are permitted to remove an observer for misconduct, and/or limit the number of observers who may be present at any one time during the verification and count, you should exercise caution in doing so. You are not entitled to bar all observers from the verification and count; only to limit the number of observers present at any one time, and you should apply this discretion reasonably. If you suspend access, or remove an accredited observer from the verification or count, you should ensure there is an audit trail to support your decision. A template observer access restrictions log is available for this purpose. Observer access restrictions log (DOC) When managing the attendance of observers you must have regard to the Commission's Code of practice for observers.

2 Should you experience any issues with observers attending the count, contact your local Commission team at the earliest opportunity. Observers at UK elections booklet - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Commission representatives Commission representatives are entitled to attend the verification and count and to observe your working practices.

3 They can ask questions of your staff and of agents, but will not do so if this would obstruct or disturb the conduct of proceedings. You are not allowed to limit the number of Commission representatives at the verification and count.

4 Further information can be found in our guidance on the appointment of accredited observers and Commissions representatives.

1. Section 6E(1) Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 ("PPERA 2000") ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. S. 6F PERA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Sections 6A and 6B PERA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. S.6E(2) PERA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Accredited observers and Commission representatives

Counting agents

The media

The media

You should include space and opportunity for the media to report on the result of the election. You have discretion to decide which representatives of the media you allow to attend.

1 As with all attendees, you must ensure that media representatives do not interfere with the process or compromise the secrecy of the vote.

2 In preparation for representatives of the media attending your verification and count you should consider: contacting principal broadcast organisations in advance outlining the press facilities available arranging for sound systems to be used for the announcements and for any live feeds providing an opportunity for media representatives to inspect the verification and count venue to see what space and facilities are available, and give them the opportunity to raise any issues or requirements with you, including any technical requirements to avoid problems on the night and allow provision to be made in the layout of the venue how you will ensure that the media are aware of any restricted areas and procedures; e.g. that camera operators are aware they must not overview sensitive information (such as close-ups of ballot papers) or obstruct count staff

Throughout the proceedings you should ensure that the media representatives are aware of: the arrangements for the declaration of results, such as alerting them shortly before the results are to be declared so they can move into position and providing them with written copies of the results. the arrangements for sound systems to be used for the announcements and for any live feeds and who to approach if they are asked any technical electoral questions the expected finish and declaration times for each poll, including arrangements where you are counting votes for more than one contest that there is a nominated media spokesperson for the count who will be available to deal with media enquiries

If media representatives are accredited by the Commission as observers and are attending in such a capacity, they have the same rights and obligations as any other accredited observer. Like any other observers,

they are required to have regard to the Commission's Code of practice for observers and must abide by any decision that you make on the use of cameras and other recording equipment. 1 Observers at UK elections booklet - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. To assist you and your public relations team we have produced, jointly with the national TV news broadcasters, some tips for managing the media at the count. Tips on managing the media at the count (DOC) The Commission will produce a media handbook that you can include with any information pack you are producing for the media attending the verification and count. 1. Rule 44(2) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 a b 2. Rule 44(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for The media Accredited observers and Commission representatives Controlling admission and managing attendees Controlling admission and managing attendees Controlling admission You should provide lists of those persons entitled to attend at the entrance to the verification and count, and instruct security staff to check the tickets or passes of anyone arriving to attend. However, you should also brief security staff that Commission representatives and accredited observers do not need to provide advance notification of where they intend to observe and therefore may not appear on their list but are nevertheless entitled to access the verification and count venue on production of their observer or Commission representative identification badge. You should, for health, safety and security reasons, record the names of everyone who actually attends the verification and count. Further information can be found in our guidance on accredited observers and Commission representatives. You should liaise with the Police to check that their plans for managing the public space outside the count venue will enable people entitled to attend the count to enter and leave the venue freely and without obstruction. Managing attendees All attendees need to know what to expect and to understand their role at the verification and count. To support this, your plans should include mechanisms for communicating with and managing the expectations of those attending. The plans should also cover how you will maintain the secrecy of the vote throughout the verification and count. You should ensure that all attendees at the count, including candidates, their guests, election agents, counting agents and the media, are briefed on and fully understand the process for conducting the count and the standards of behaviour which are expected of them at all times. Your written and face-to-face briefings should make it clear that you will be excluding attendees from the count venue if their behaviour interferes with the effective conduct of the count. This should help count staff to carry out verification and count activities without interference from counting agents and other observers. You should also decide on a policy for the use of mobile phones and photography or filming in the verification and count venue and provide this information in advance to those who are entitled to attend. Tickets or entrance passes should be issued to everyone entitled to attend the count, except accredited observers and Commission representatives who will be wearing silver or pink accreditation badges. You should consider issuing different-coloured tickets or passes to identify the different categories of attendees. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Controlling admission and managing attendees The media Communication during the verification and count Communication during the verification and count Good communication, both at candidate and agent briefings in advance of the count and at the event itself, allows those present to properly scrutinise all of the processes and will help to build confidence in the administration of the verification

and count. Providing information on the process can also help to lower the number of queries raised by candidates and agents – in particular from new or inexperienced candidates – helping to reduce the pressure on staff. You should also ensure that there is always a way for agents or observers to make direct representations to you should they be concerned or dissatisfied in any way with the manner in which the proceedings are being carried out. Enabling such representations to be able to be made at the earliest opportunity is important so that any concerns may be considered, explanations and reassurances given, and any corrective action taken if necessary.

Verbal announcements You should use a public address system to make announcements about what is happening where and when throughout the verification and count process. These should be timely and co-ordinated to ensure that information is communicated in a way that allows candidates, agents and observers to fully understand the progress of the count. You could make announcements: when you have received all the ballot boxes from polling stations when you have received all the boxes of postal votes when you have completed verification to confirm the turnout figure and how many ballot papers are going through to the count when you are about to start the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers, setting out where this will take place when you are ready to announce the results so attendees can make their way to the declaration area to notify attendees of any delays At standalone elections, if you have decided to start counting the votes while the verification is still taking place, you should ensure you inform those attending of this. It is helpful to also have a dedicated member of staff available to brief any attendees who arrive after the verification or count has commenced as they may have missed your announcements. Signage throughout the venue You should have adequate signage in the venue so that attendees can find their way to the various areas. In particular, if the public address system can only be heard in certain parts of the venue, you should let attendees know where announcements can be heard, through clear signage and by including this information in packs for attendees. You should consider displaying copies of the layout plan at various locations throughout the venue, indicating key areas of interest for counting agents and observers. You could also provide a description of the roles of counting agents and an explanation of what other guests are permitted to do, as well as photographs of yourself and your key staff to help attendees identify you at the count.

Information pack for attendees You should provide an information pack for attendees which could include information on: the key roles of those conducting the verification and count (including names and photographs of you and your key team) the local verification and count processes all ballot box numbers and the name of the polling stations they relate to the security arrangements for the ballot papers and boxes the relationship, where applicable, between the count in your electoral area and the election as a whole the template verification and count paperwork, including a copy of it, that will be used to communicate the outcome of the verification and count how agents can observe and participate in the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers the venue facilities and general rules including that smoking is not allowed within the building, and any policy regarding refreshments, use of mobile phones and taking photographs any other health and safety issues e.g. evacuation procedures and fire drills where attendees can get further information The information pack should also make clear to those attending the count that they should communicate any questions via count supervisors rather than counting assistants. This will help to ensure transparency of communication between counting staff and other attendees at the count (including counting agents). You should brief senior staff on how to respond to queries from attendees. Communicating the results You will need to

announce the declaration of the final results verbally. You are also required to give public notice of the results and the relevant election rules will set out what should be included in that notice. You should provide copies of the results for candidates, agents and the media. Additionally, you should make arrangements for the results to be published on the local authority's web site as soon as possible. You can also share the results link through your council's social media accounts. Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Communication during the verification and count

Controlling admission and managing attendees

Verification

Verification

The verification process has two main purposes which are: to ensure and demonstrate that all ballot papers issued at polling stations and all returned postal ballot papers have been brought to the count, and to provide the figure with which the count outcome must reconcile. You should keep both of these purposes in mind when conducting the verification process. Ensuring accuracy at the verification stage is crucial to ensuring a timely count. If the verification figures are wrong there will be a variance against the count figures which will need to be resolved and which risks significantly slowing the overall process. Last updated: 30 March 2023

Book traversal links for Verification

Communication during the verification and count

Receipt of ballot boxes and other materials

Receipt of ballot boxes and other materials

The correct and orderly receipt of ballot boxes and materials from polling stations is a key component of an accurate verification process. You need to decide the most effective arrangements for receiving ballot boxes and other materials. Making assumptions on the timings for the delivery of ballot boxes will help you to ensure that: staff receiving ballot boxes from polling stations will be able to alert ROs if any box(es) are overdue as this may indicate a problem either for an individual Presiding Officer or a wider problem affecting a number of Presiding Officers. Your estimated timings for the completion of the verification stage are informed by your estimated timing of when the last ballot boxes for the poll are likely to arrive. You should be able to estimate when each ballot box is expected to arrive at the verification venue, while recognising the potential for delays as a result of possible queues at the polling station at the close of poll or other factors such as adverse weather etc. Your analysis of previous polls will provide valuable information to assist and there are also many websites and apps that will calculate the time it takes to travel between a polling station and the verification venue. You can also establish the average time it takes for a Presiding Officer to complete the relevant forms and package up materials following the close of poll by considering experience at previous polls or by carrying out an exercise to time the process in practice. You will need to ensure that Presiding Officers can get ballot boxes securely and efficiently to the verification venue so that the verification and counting processes can be commenced as quickly as possible. You will need to consider the geography and transport links of the electoral area and the particular characteristics of the chosen venue (for example, car parking, access roads, etc.).

Using collection points

One option may be to receive polling station materials from Presiding Officers at one or more locations ('collection points') and then transport the materials in bulk to the verification venue. You will need to decide if the use of collection points may speed up overall receipt of the polling station materials at the verification venue. If you adopt this approach, you will need to put in place robust arrangements to ensure the correct and orderly receipt of ballot boxes and materials from polling stations at the collection points. If possible, staff receiving the ballot boxes should also undertake a cursory check of the ballot paper accounts, including the basic arithmetic, before the Presiding Officers are allowed

to depart. The ballot boxes and other materials from polling stations would then need to be securely transported to the verification venue. See ensuring the security of ballot papers and other materials for further guidance on this. If you decide to use collection points, a further check that everything delivered to the collection points by Presiding Officers has also been received at the verification and count venue would be advisable. You will need to include the time it would take to complete these checks when calculating the potential efficiencies of using collection points and weigh up these factors in reaching any decision.

Number of ballot boxes You will need to plan for how many ballot boxes you will receive at the verification and count. This will be determined by your calculation of how many ballot papers a ballot box can hold depending on the size of the ballot paper or ballot papers and therefore how many ballot boxes will be supplied to polling stations. For more information see our section on equipment and materials to be provided for the polling station.

Combination If permitted by the relevant election rules, you will need to decide whether to use a single ballot box at the polling station or separate ballot boxes for each of the polls. The use of a single box means that the various ballot papers for the different elections will need to be separated at the verification. In the case of separate boxes the ballot papers will arrive at the verification already separated, save for any papers mistakenly posted in the 'wrong' box at polling stations. There is nothing to suggest that either approach results in a significantly quicker verification, but you may wish to undertake a practical exercise to test this locally in order to provide an evidence base for any decision. There are, however, some other advantages to using a single box, for example: it may be more straightforward for the voter in the polling station it requires less management by staff in the polling station it can mean fewer ballot boxes to be transported to the verification venue

Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Receipt of ballot boxes and other materials](#)

Verification [Contingency planning for delays](#)

Contingency planning for delays You should be aware of any live issues which may affect the transportation of ballot boxes to the verification venue, for example severe weather or road closures, and will need to decide what contingency measures are appropriate. You will need to monitor the situation on polling day and be able to take operational decisions to deal with situations as they may arise, such as vehicle breakdown. You will also need to decide what communication protocols will be for drivers to alert you to any delays.

Queues at the close of poll The provision to allow those in queues at the close of poll to cast a vote could potentially cause delays if polling stations are operating beyond 10pm. You need to decide what mechanisms you are going to put in place to minimise any delays should this situation occur. You should also have in place communication protocols so that you can be immediately alerted in the event of queues arising. This will enable you to make an early assessment of the likely delay and adjust the verification as necessary, for example by re-allocating resources.

Last updated: 31 May 2023 [Book traversal links for Contingency planning for delays](#)

Receipt of ballot boxes and other materials [The Presiding Officer handover of ballot boxes](#)

The Presiding Officer handover of ballot boxes Whether Presiding Officers transport the ballot boxes to the verification and count venue or hand them over at a drop off point, you should make clear to the staff receiving the ballot boxes that no Presiding Officer should be allowed to leave until their ballot box(es) and all of the documents and packets have been received and checked off by the designated staff member and, wherever possible, a cursory check of the ballot paper account has been made. You should instruct staff receiving ballot boxes to ensure that they have the ballot paper account for each ballot box. If

Presiding Officers are bringing multiple ballot boxes to the verification venue/or collection point, you should provide staff to assist the Presiding Officer in transporting all ballot boxes and accompanying materials into the verification venue or collection point in one trip. You should also record the time of arrival of each ballot box, so you can use this information for future reference. Your process should ensure that anything missing can be quickly identified and action can be taken to locate the missing items. You will also need to ensure that you have processes in place to ensure the security of any personal data included on the ballot papers and other paperwork from the polling station. You should collate the details of all the polling stations in advance, together with the names and mobile phone numbers of each Presiding Officer so that you can easily contact Presiding Officers in the event of any problems. Presiding Officers should record any issues for you to consider, if required, at the verification and count. Your team of staff receiving materials from polling stations should use a checklist to ensure that you accurately account for all ballot boxes and ballot paper accounts, as well as any packets containing postal votes handed in at polling stations. We have prepared a checklist for you to print out and use during the verification: Checklist of items the Presiding Officer should hand in at the verification venue (or collection point) (DOC) Combination Combination Where polls have been combined and separate ballot boxes have been used for each poll, you will need to produce further checklists to track the boxes and their accompanying paperwork for the other poll(s). Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for The Presiding Officer handover of ballot boxes Contingency planning for delays Receipt and management of ballot papers and election material at the verification Receipt and management of ballot papers and election material at the verification You should have a team of trained staff responsible for registering receipt of every ballot box, the postal votes and the other materials that have been delivered from polling stations. You should organise the packets and parcels from polling stations so that you can easily locate any packet. The sacks containing the documents that need to be stored, such as sealed corresponding number lists, need to be separated from those containing items that will be reused, such as general stationery items. You can then release the various materials received back from polling stations to the receiving staff in the relevant teams, to enable verification of the unused ballot papers and the opening of postal votes to commence. These processes can run simultaneously to the verification of used votes. The following table summarises the action you should take for each type of sealed packet received:

Sealed packets received	Action to take
Ballot paper accounts	Take the ballot paper accounts to staff dealing with the ballot box verification process to enter onto the statement as to the result of verification
Spoilt and unused ballot papers	Open, count and reseal all packets
1 Supply the number counted to the verification staff	
Tendered ballot papers and tendered votes list	Do not open the sealed packets of tendered ballot papers
2 Open and reseal the packet containing the tendered votes list and check it against the ballot paper accounts	
3 Corresponding number lists	
Certificates of employment	Marked copies of the register
Lists of proxies	Do not open these packets
4 Keep them sealed and placed in a designated and secure area for the duration of the verification and count	
Postal ballots handed in at the polling station	You will need to undertake the final opening of postal votes handed in at polling stations
	You may do this either at the verification venue or at some other premises. In either case, you need to have a mechanism to record the number of postal votes received
	In line with your document retention policy, you should ensure that: the materials that you must keep sealed are placed in a designated and secure area

for the duration of the verification and count any personal data is destroyed at the appropriate time 1. Schedule 1 rule 45(5) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 rule 54(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sch 1 rule 45(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Sch 1 rule 54(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Receipt and management of ballot papers and election material at the verification The Presiding Officer handover of ballot boxes Receipt of sealed boxes of postal ballot papers at the verification Receipt of sealed boxes of postal ballot papers at the verification You should bring any postal ballot papers previously received, opened and processed to the verification and count venue in sealed ballot boxes, with an accompanying ballot paper account for each postal ballot box. You need to decide on the most effective arrangements for the delivery and receipt of sealed boxes of postal ballot papers from all of the postal vote opening sessions. Staff receiving the postal ballot boxes should use a checklist to ensure that all postal ballot boxes and postal ballot paper accounts are accurately accounted for. You must verify all packets and ballot boxes containing postal ballot papers in the same way as any ballot box from a polling station. As these will often be some of the first boxes being verified, they present an opportunity to create confidence in the process and in the count as a whole. 1 1. Schedule 1 rule 45(1) and (5)Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Receipt of sealed boxes of postal ballot papers at the verification Receipt and management of ballot papers and election material at the verification Ensuring the security of ballot papers and other materials Ensuring the security of ballot papers and other materials You should take all necessary steps to ensure the security of ballot papers and relevant stationery from close of poll through to the declaration of the result, particularly where ballot papers need to be transported from the verification to the count or where a break in proceedings will require the ballots to be stored between the conclusion of the verification and the commencement of the count. 1 If you need to store ballot papers, you must store them in sealed ballot boxes in a secure place, allowing agents to attach their seals to the ballot boxes. 2 You should always open the sealed ballot boxes in clear view of any candidates and agents present, so they can satisfy themselves that nobody has interfered with the ballot papers and the ballot boxes. You can liaise with your local police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) when deciding on the most appropriate method for ensuring secure storage, and should ensure you brief candidates and agents about your arrangements, so that they can have confidence in the integrity of the count. You will also need to ensure any personal data is destroyed at the appropriate time, in accordance with your document retention policy . Risk assessments You need to ensure you have processes appropriate to the risk in place to ensure a level of security of personal data included on the ballot papers and other paperwork from the polling station. As part of your contingency planning you have considered security risks and included them on your risk register. Security risks may vary within the electoral area and you may need to take a different approach in particular instances. Further information can be found in the guidance on planning for the verification and count. 1. Schedule 1 rule 45(7) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 rule 43(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Ensuring the security of ballot papers and other materials Receipt of sealed boxes of postal ballot papers at the verification Secure transport of the ballot boxes and other materials Secure transport of the ballot boxes and

other materials In conjunction with your police SPOC, you should decide how you will ensure that ballot boxes and other materials are transported securely to the verification and count. As part of this, you will need to assess if you have any areas of high risk which may, for example, require a police escort, security van or additional personnel to transfer the ballot boxes from the polling station to the verification venue/collection point following the close of poll. Security in transit You should ensure that Presiding Officers are clear about the rules and processes following the close of poll, including in relation to sealing the ballot boxes.

Guidance on this is contained in the Commission's polling station handbook. You should make clear to Presiding Officers that they should never leave the ballot boxes or other materials unattended and that, if they themselves are delivering the ballot boxes and materials to a collection point or the verification venue, that they should take steps to ensure their security throughout the journey, for example by locking their car doors and following any specific police advice. If the venue for counting the votes is different from the verification venue you must seal the relevant ballot papers into ballot boxes or another suitable container, and allow agents to attach their seals. You must comply with any requirements in the election rules such as endorsing a description of the area to which the ballot papers relate on the ballot boxes and ensuring that all the required materials and paperwork are delivered to the count venue along with the ballot papers. At the count venue, you should have robust arrangements to check in all the materials and paperwork delivered to ensure that nothing is missing. Security at verification venue You should make arrangements for how the ballot papers and other materials will be kept secure once they arrive at the verification and count venue(s), for example, by ensuring they are never left unattended. These plans should also include the security of those materials that you must keep sealed (such as the corresponding numbers list), either by staff watching the materials or by securing them in a locked room. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Secure transport of the ballot boxes and other materials

Ensuring the security of ballot papers and other materials Securing ballot papers during breaks in proceedings Securing ballot papers during breaks in proceedings Where there is a break in proceedings, you will need to seal ballot papers in ballot boxes or another suitable container and store them securely during the break. On completion of the verification, you should place the ballot papers for any contests which are not being counted immediately after verification into ballot boxes which are then sealed. You must allow any agents present to attach their seals. In order to ensure the security of the ballot papers you could consider: storing them in sealed ballot boxes in a locked room, ensuring that you have control of all the keys to that facility arranging for security staff to guard the ballot boxes at all times until the verification/count resumes You should liaise with your police SPOC when deciding on the most appropriate method for ensuring secure storage. Once the verification/count has resumed, you should open the sealed ballot boxes in clear view of any candidates and agents present, so they can satisfy themselves that nobody has interfered with the ballot boxes or ballot papers. Combination Combination Where polls are combined it is likely that there will be a break in proceedings between the conclusion of the verification and the commencement of the count for one or more of the elections/contests. During that break, you will need to store the ballot papers securely. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Securing ballot papers during breaks in proceedings Secure transport of the ballot boxes and other materials Securing ballot papers in the event of evacuation from the venue Securing ballot papers in the event of evacuation from the venue Occasionally incidents occur

during verification and count which may require the evacuation of the venue, either permanently or until the situation has been resolved. Obviously, in these circumstances, the safety of attendees is paramount but certain situations may not pose an immediate risk to the safety of staff. Having pre-prepared evacuation plans in place can help to maintain the integrity of the verification and count processes and the security of the ballot papers. In the case of an urgent evacuation it may be possible to secure the ballot papers which are still on the tables by locking up the venue or storing them within a locked room in the venue. In that case, you will need to have control of all the keys to that room or to the venue. If you have more time it may be possible to place the ballot papers in ballot boxes and then seal the ballot boxes (inviting agents to affix their seals if possible) and then securing the sealed boxes within the venue. Sometimes the situation will mean that if the ballot papers are left in the venue they are likely to be damaged. In these situations it may be possible for the ballot papers to be secured within ballot boxes and removed from the venue by staff and taken to a place of safety until the verification and count can resume. In these circumstances, you will benefit from having a clear protocol for sealing the ballot papers within ballot boxes and clear labelling of those boxes. You should also consider how you would ensure the secure transportation of ballot boxes and their subsequent storage in these circumstances. Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Securing ballot papers in the event of evacuation from the venue

Securing ballot papers during breaks in proceedings

The verification process

The verification process

The verification of the used, unused and spoilt ballot papers is a legal requirement, and is central to the declaration of accurate results.

- 1 You must verify each ballot paper account and draw up a statement as to the result of the verification.
- 2 This is a record of the number of ballot papers expected and the number of ballot papers counted, along with an explanation for any variances. Any agent may make a copy of this, and you should make copies available for the agents present once verification has been completed.
- 3 The verification statement is a key communication tool that will help to ensure that candidates and agents are confident that the processes at the verification and count are transparent and that they will produce an accurate result. As with all aspects of the verification and count process, transparency is key and the process followed should be clear to all present. The key stages of the verification process are described in the following table:

Stage	Action to follow
Opening the packets of unused ballot papers	Staff must open the packets of unused ballot papers and ascertain the number of ballot papers that were not issued by noting the number of books and number of ballot papers remaining in any part book of ballot papers inside the packet
The packets of spoilt ballot papers must also be opened and counted	Both unused and spoilt ballot papers must be resealed after they have been counted
4 Opening the ballot boxes	Staff must break the seals and open the ballot boxes in the presence of any counting agents and observers that are present.
5 If candidates and agents are not present, you do not have to wait for them to arrive in order to break the seals	When a box has had a seal attached by an agent at the close of the poll, particular care should be taken to show to any agents and observers present that this seal is still intact prior to it being broken
The ballot papers should be carefully tipped onto the table, ensuring that none have fallen onto the floor and that the box is empty	6 You have a legal duty to keep the ballot papers face up at all times during the verification and count
7 You should show the empty box to the agents and observers so that they can be satisfied that it is indeed empty	Organising the ballot papers
The counting assistants should then unfold the ballot papers and count them	

into bundles Accuracy at this stage is vital, so bundles should be passed to another assistant for rechecking Any tendered ballot papers that have been mistakenly placed in the ballot box during the day should be removed and handed to the supervisor

Reconciling the papers The totals given on the ballot paper account must be compared against the number of ballot papers counted and recorded as being present inside the ballot box You must compare the unused and spoilt ballot papers, as well as the tendered votes list, against the figures on each ballot paper account The total number of ballot papers in the ballot box should agree with the total on the ballot paper account, and reconcile with the total number of unused ballot papers

8 Cross-checking processes It is easy for simple arithmetic or transposition errors to be made, particularly when people become tired. You therefore need to put in place processes to mitigate this risk, such as ensuring that the recording of figures and every calculation is checked by more than one person. The ballot papers are placed into bundles at various stages of the verification and it is important that procedures are put in place to double-check that the bundles have the correct number of ballot papers in them and, at the count stage, that they contain no more votes than the maximum allowed. This will be crucial to the accuracy of the verification and count. You should make staff aware of this during briefings/training and senior staff should be alert to this at all times and intervene immediately if this is not being done.

1. Schedule 1 rule 45 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Sch 1 rule 45(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Sch 1 rule 45(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Sch 1 rule 45(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. Sch 1 rule 45(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

6. Sch 1 rule 45(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6

7. Sch 1 rule 45(6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 7

8. Sch 1 rule 45(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 8

Last updated: 29 September 2023

Book traversal links for The verification process

Securing ballot papers in the event of evacuation from the venue

If the ballot paper account does not reconcile

If the ballot paper account does not reconcile

If a ballot paper account does not reconcile, you should undertake the procedure as outlined in the following table and document the outcome on the verification statement:

Step	Action to take
Preliminary checks	Make a full check of the arithmetic on the ballot paper account and the number of unused ballot papers
	Check the other packets of returned materials and any polling station logbook to try to identify any reason for missing or additional ballot papers
	Ensure that returned postal ballots have not been added to the number of votes cast in the polling station
	You should consider contacting the Presiding Officer to ask them to try to explain any discrepancies
Check number of ballot boxes issued	Check the record of issued ballot boxes to see if more than one ballot box was issued to the polling station and ensure that all boxes allocated to the station are opened and accounted for
Check for compensating errors	Check the ballot boxes for all polling stations within the same polling place
	The verification of the ballot paper accounts for the other polling stations within that location may indicate a compensating error due to electors placing their ballot paper in the 'wrong' box or in a box from the wrong polling station
	If the compensating errors all balance, the verification can be deemed to have been successful
Recount the ballot papers	If the ballot box is from a single polling station or if there is no compensating error in the figures from the other polling station(s) in that polling place, recount the ballot papers in the box at least twice or until the same figure is achieved on two consecutive occasions
Re-verify the totals	If, after following the procedures outlined above, any discrepancy still remains, use the number of ballot papers counted and recounted by the count

staff as the verified figure and make an appropriate note on the ballot paper account. Confirm any variance on your records. Add the verified total and the variance between that and the number on the ballot paper account to the statement as to the result of the verification, if possible with an explanation of why that variance has occurred, and discuss this with any agents and observers present. We have produced a check list for the steps to take when dealing with ballot box variances. Checklist when dealing with ballot box variances (DOC) Combination Combination Check the ballot boxes for all election types for all polling stations within the same polling place. The verification of the ballot paper accounts for the other polling stations within that location may indicate a compensating error due to electors placing their ballot paper in the wrong box or in a box from the wrong polling station. If the compensating errors all balance, the verification can be deemed to have been successful. Wherever possible you should verify all of the boxes from the same polling place location simultaneously at adjacent tables, or one immediately after the other. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for If the ballot paper account does not reconcile The verification process Completion of verification Completion of verification Verification can only be completed once all postal ballot papers, including those received at polling stations, have been opened and processed, and have been through the verification process. Verification statement You must ensure that the verification statement containing the result of the verification of each ballot box is completed. The statement must in each case include the total number of postal ballot papers and the total number of ballot papers verified for the poll. You should sign the statements. Any agent may make a copy of the statement as to the result of the verification and, to promote confidence in the result, you should make copies available for the agents present once verification has been completed. 1 If, on completion of verification, you do not proceed immediately to the counting of the votes, you should place the ballot papers and other documents in secure packets under your own seal and the seals of any agents present who wish to affix their own seals. 2 You should take all necessary steps to ensure the security of the ballot papers and the relevant stationery during any break in the verification and count proceedings. Further information can be found in our guidance on ensuring the security of ballot boxes. 1. Schedule 1 rule 45(5) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 rule 45(7) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Completion of verification If the ballot paper account does not reconcile The count The count Count staff should arrive at the times agreed by you in advance and should check the count stationery and equipment is present, using our checklist to assist. You should ensure that staff are checked in and that you brief them as necessary to ensure smooth delivery of the count. You must have taken reasonable steps to begin counting the votes as soon as practicable within four hours of the close of poll. The fact that there may be voters waiting in a queue to cast their vote does not alter the fact that close of poll continues to be 10pm. This means that you will need to have taken all reasonable steps to start the count by 2am, even if voters are waiting in a queue at 10pm. 1 At stand-alone polls, you do not have to wait until you have completed the verification, before you can start counting the votes. 2 What to do if you are unable to start the count within four hours of the close of poll If you do not commence counting the votes within four hours of the close of poll you must publish and deliver to the Commission a statement setting out the time at which counting did begin, the steps you had taken to comply with the duty and the reasons why the counting of votes had not commenced by 2am. You must also publish the statement,

which should include making it available on the local authority's website. We have produced a template statement for those (A)ROs who do not commence counting within four hours of the close of poll and you can access this from our resources page for this section. 3 It is important that you keep a record of all steps taken in order to provide an audit trail demonstrating your decision making processes. If you consider that all reasonable steps have been taken and that a further step is not reasonable, you should keep a record of your consideration and why you have decided it would not be reasonable. You should be able to explain your decisions, and should be prepared to do so in response to enquiries. The statement should include the: name of constituency name of (Acting) Returning Officer date and time (in 24 hour format, e.g. 03:45) at which the counting of the votes given on the ballot papers began description of the steps taken to ensure the counting of votes commenced within 4 hours of the close of poll (Acting) Returning Officer's explanation for why the counting of the votes did not commence by 2am You should send statements to your local Commission team, preferably by e-mail, and must send them by not later than 30 calendar days of the declaration of result. We are legally required to publish in our statutory report on the election a list of all constituencies where counting did not begin within the prescribed timescale. 1. Schedule 1 rule 45(3A) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Paragraph 22(1AB) The Representation of the People (Combination of Polls) (England and Wales) Regulations 2004 (Combination of Polls Rules) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sch 1 rule 45(8) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for The count Completion of verification Counting the votes Counting the votes You should open all boxes in full view of any agents that are present. When a box has had a seal attached by an agent, you should take particular care to show to any agents present that this seal is still intact prior to it being broken. All count processes should be transparent. You should also provide appropriate opportunities for those who are entitled to observe and to object to doubtful ballot paper adjudication decisions. This should include ensuring that you store bundles of counted ballot papers in full sight of counting agents to allow them to monitor progress throughout the count. Mixing You must mix the ballot papers so that ballot papers from each ballot box are mixed with ballot papers from at least one other ballot box, and mix the postal ballot papers with ballot papers from at least one other ballot box before sorting and counting the votes. 1 Sorting and counting Ballot papers must be kept face upwards throughout the counting process in order to prevent the number and other unique identifying mark on the back of the ballot paper being seen. The ballot papers should be visible at all times to any candidates, agents and observers present. 2 Counting assistants should sort the ballot papers into votes for each candidate. Any doubtful ballot papers should be placed aside for adjudication. The number of votes given for each candidate should then be counted and placed into bundles of a predetermined number, e.g., bundles of 20, 25, 50 or 100. They should attach a slip bearing the candidate's name, together with the number of ballot papers in the bundle, to the front. It may be helpful to colour-code the slips. The bundles should then be recounted by another counting assistant in order to ensure the accuracy of the bundle. Supervisors should flick through the bundles in order to ensure that all of the votes in the bundle are marked in the same way before removing them from the counting staff. It is unlikely that the number of votes in the final bundle will equal the predetermined bundle number, and so you should make a note of the number of votes in those incomplete bundles and attached to the front of the bundle. You should set aside any doubtful ballot papers for adjudication. 1. Schedule

1 rule 45(1A) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 rule 45(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Counting the votes The count Doubtful ballot papers Doubtful ballot papers You should adjudicate doubtful ballot papers regularly as the count proceeds: you should not leave this until the end of the count. You should have regard to the Commission's booklet on doubtful ballot papers, provided below, throughout the adjudication process. The booklet contains examples of allowed and rejected votes and the key principles to be followed in the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers and can be accessed from our resources page for this section. You can also find examples of allowed and rejected ballot papers on the doubtful ballot paper placemat , which you should have on display at the count for candidates, agents and observers to refer to. Adjudicating doubtful ballot papers When adjudicating doubtful ballot papers, you should: always be clear and consistent take time to ensure that a considered decision is given in every case determine whether the intention of the voter clearly appears on the ballot paper As part of this, you will need to: consider the whole of the ballot paper consider whether the way a ballot paper has been marked means that a vote for one candidate is clearly apparent The legislation provides that you must reject a ballot paper: 1 that does not bear the official mark (not the unique identifying mark) on which votes are given for more than one candidate on which anything is written or marked by which the voter can be identified (except the printed ballot paper number or other unique identifying mark) that is unmarked or void for uncertainty However, the legislation states that unless the way the ballot paper is marked identifies the voter, a ballot paper must not be rejected if the voter's intention is clear if the vote is marked: 2 elsewhere than in the proper place otherwise than by means of a cross, or by more than one mark In addition, ballot papers may require further consideration where there is: anything unusual about it (for example, any ballot paper that appears to have been altered, either with a clearly different writing instrument or with correction fluid) any tears or damage to the ballot paper Ballot papers that are torn or damaged are able to be accepted as a valid vote as long as the paper still contains the official mark and the intention of the voter is clear and none of the other grounds for rejection apply. You can find further information in our guidance on how to deal with cut ballot papers at postal vote openings. You must decide on the validity of all doubtful ballot papers in the presence of candidates, agents and observers. Those that are subsequently declared as valid must be counted and included in the total number of votes cast for the appropriate candidate(s) or party (as applicable) at the election. Recording rejected ballot papers Your decision on any question arising in respect of a ballot paper is final and can only be challenged by way of an election petition. 3 You must draw up a statement showing the number of ballot papers rejected and for what reason. You should therefore have a system in place throughout the adjudication process for sorting the rejected ballot papers into the following headings: 4 want of official mark voting for more than one candidate writing or mark by which voter could be identified unmarked or void for uncertainty You should have regard to the Commission's guidance to ensure accurate and consistent categorisation of rejection for reporting on the statement. You must ensure that you mark each rejected ballot paper with the word 'rejected' and must add the words 'rejection objected to' if a counting agent objects to your decision. Although observers should be able to observe this process, unlike agents, they do not have the legal right to object to the rejection of a ballot paper. 5 You should place a copy of the rejection statement in the package for rejected ballot papers. 1. Schedule 1 rule 47(1)

Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 rule 47(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sch 1 rule 48 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Sch 1 rule 47(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Sch 1 rule 47(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Doubtful ballot papers Counting the votes Reconciliation of count totals Reconciliation of count totals Once all of the ballot papers have been sorted and any doubtful ballots adjudicated, the key task of reconciliation can begin. You must count all of the bundles and part bundles of ballot papers showing a valid vote for each candidate. You must then add the total for each candidate to the total number of rejected ballot papers. This total figure should match exactly the figure giving the total number of ballot papers obtained at the end of the verification process. If the two figures agree you should proceed to the process of consulting the candidates and agents on the provisional result . 1 Procedure for unreconciled results You should be satisfied that the results or totals (as appropriate) reflect the ballots received. If the figures do not reconcile, you should take steps in order to identify and rectify the discrepancy such as: checking the storage area and check to ensure that all ballot boxes have been opened and are empty checking all floors and surfaces for ballot papers that may have been dropped in the count venue re-checking the verification figures and reconciliation for calculation mistakes ensuring that all rejected ballot papers have been accounted for checking that all bundles and part bundles have been counted consider recounting the ballot papers in the bundles You should also carry out any other checks you deem necessary. 1. Schedule 1 rule 45(5) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Reconciliation of count totals Doubtful ballot papers Provisional results and recounts Provisional results and recounts You should be satisfied that the number of votes for each candidate is accurate before proceeding to a provisional result. All processes should be undertaken within the framework of maximum openness and transparency implemented throughout the various stages of the count so that all candidates and agents can have confidence in the processes and the provisional result you provide. Once you are satisfied, you must advise candidates and election agents of the provisional result and seek their agreement on the announcement of the result. 1 You should make clear that the candidates and agents are entitled to request a recount. You must give the candidates and agents sufficient time to digest the provisional result before proceeding with the declaration. It is at this point that any candidate or election agent may request to have the votes recounted or, following a recount, recounted again. 2 You must consider any recount request but by law may refuse if, in your opinion, the request is unreasonable. 3 You may, however, consider offering the candidates and agents the opportunity to inspect the bundles of ballot papers as a means of reassuring them that the result is accurate. Recount procedures If you agree to recount the votes, you should inform the candidates and agents present at the count before the recount commences and brief them on the processes you are going to follow. As with the original count, you should carry out any recount in full view of those present. You are entitled to reconsider which ballot papers should be rejected during the recount (or any further recount). You must consult candidates and agents on the revised provisional result in the same way as they were consulted on the provisional result at the conclusion of the first count. 4 It is possible to have more than one recount. Again, it is for you to consider any request, and you may refuse if in your opinion the request is unreasonable. 1. Schedule 1 rule 46 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2.

Sch 1 rule 46(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sch 1 rule 46(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Sch 1 rule 46 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Provisional results and recounts Reconciliation of count totals Equality of votes Equality of votes When two or more candidates have the same number of votes, and the addition of a vote would entitle any of those candidates to be declared elected, you must decide between the candidates by lot. 1 Whichever candidate wins the lot is treated as though they had received an additional vote that enables them to be declared elected. If a candidate is already elected with a majority, you do not need to draw lots to reconcile an equality of votes between other candidates further down the list of results. The method of drawing lots is for you to decide. Examples of types of lot include: ballot papers, each marked with a vote for one of the candidates with the same number of votes, placed in a container, such as an empty ballot box, mixed around, and then one drawn by you slips of paper with the candidates' names on them, placed in sealed envelopes, shuffled and then drawn by you You should make an announcement that you intend to proceed with the drawing of lots between the candidates having an equal number of votes, explaining precisely what is about to happen and the method to be used. Candidates, agents, Commission representatives and accredited observers should be present during any preparation and the actual drawing of lots. For example, if you use the first method described above, you should, in full view of any candidates and agents, and in the presence of Commission representatives and accredited observers, fold and place a previously counted ballot paper for each of the candidates with the same number of votes in an empty ballot box. An assistant should raise the box to a height where you are unable to see the papers inside the box, but are still able to reach inside to pick one. After mixing, you should draw one of the ballot papers from the box, open it, and read the name of the candidate with the vote marked against their name out loud. That candidate is then adjudged to have been allotted an additional vote. Similar preparations should be made should you decide to use any other method of drawing lots. A statement should be added to the result sheet to the effect that: Following an equality of votes, lots were drawn and, as a consequence, an additional vote was allotted to candidate [insert candidates name]' 1. Schedule 1 rule 49 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Equality of votes Provisional results and recounts Declaring the results Declaring the results You must prepare a statement setting out the name of each candidate, the total number of votes given for each candidate and the number of rejected ballot papers given under each heading. 1 Once you have prepared the statement, you must declare the result of the election. When planning for the declaration of result you should: decide on the exact location in the count venue where public announcements and the declaration will take place and who will be on the platform at this time ensure that the platform is accessible for all those who need to get up on it consider if you can make use of the display boards to provide a suitable backdrop for the announcement of results check any equipment that you will use for the announcement before the proceedings begin double-check that the result is accurate, and that it is written in the form of words for oral delivery in order to avoid any errors - you may need to repeat the declaration so that those in attendance are able to hear the detail clearly, particularly where there is noise from those attending consider how you will provide media representatives in attendance with a written copy of the results at the time the announcement is made as this will help them to ensure that their transmission of figures is accurate make sure that you follow the requirement to provide public

notice of the name of the candidate elected, the total number of votes given to each candidate and the number of rejected ballot papers under each heading 2 When a candidate has used their commonly used name to stand in an election, you should use both their full name and their commonly used name when declaring the result. Once you have declared the result at the count, it is final and cannot be amended. You should therefore take care to ensure that the result you declare is accurate. However, if you make an error in your oral announcement you can correct this, provided it is done immediately. Further information can be found in our guidance on providing notice of the result. 1. Schedule 1 rule 50 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sch 1 rule 50 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Declaring the results Equality of votes Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Verification and Count Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Verification and Count Checklist when dealing with ballot box variances (DOC) Doubtful ballot paper placemat (UK Parliamentary elections) Doubtful ballot paper booklet (UK Parliamentary elections) Example checklist of materials required at the verification and count (DOC) Observer access restrictions log (DOC) Observers at UK elections booklet - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Secrecy requirements - count - S66 Tips on managing the media at the count (DOC) Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Verification and Count Declaring the results After the election After the election This guidance is designed to support you with the activities you are required to complete after the declaration of the result. You will find guidance on the immediate actions you need to take with regard to giving formal notice of the result and return of the writ, guidance to support you in managing the storage and retention of election documents as well as information on access and supply. We have included contact information in relation to accounting for the election, details about the collection of candidates' election spending returns, and the actions required with that process. Finally this guidance includes information about challenges to the election result and the petition process. As there are some differences in the role of the RO and ERO between England, Scotland and Wales, these are highlighted as appropriate throughout this section of the guidance. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for After the election Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - Verification and Count Providing notice of the result Providing notice of the result You must give public notice of the name of the candidate elected, the total number of votes given to each candidate and the number of rejected ballot papers under each heading. 1 When a candidate has used their commonly used name to stand in the election, you should use both their full name and the commonly used name when declaring the result. You should ensure that the notice of results is made available to all interested parties as soon as possible, including by publishing it on your local authority's website. Return of the writ After the declaration of the result, you must return the writ to the Clerk of the Crown as soon as possible. The writ must be endorsed with the name of the successful candidate. 2 You should ensure that, to the best of your knowledge, the member's full name, any title and their address are given in the full endorsement of the writ. You, or the person you have delegated this to, must sign the writ and state the capacity in which you are acting. A photocopy of the endorsed writ should be made in case it is lost in transmission to the Clerk of the Crown. The endorsed and signed writ should then be returned to the Clerk of the Crown via the relevant Royal Mail Regional Operations Director through whom the writ was delivered (or by other agreed

arrangements). For more information about the issue, delivery and receipt of the writ see our guidance on the issue and receipt of the writ . 1. Schedule 1, rule 53, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.1, rule 51, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Providing notice of the result After the election Deposits

Deposits Returning deposits You must return the £500 deposit made by or on behalf of a candidate if the candidate is found to have polled more than 5% of the total number of valid votes cast in the constituency. You must return the deposit to the person who made it by no later than the next working day after the result of the election is declared. If you are returning a deposit by cheque, it is treated as being returned on the day on which the cheque is posted. Forfeited deposits You must not return the deposit if the candidate is found to have polled equal to or less than 5% of the total number of valid votes cast. 1 In this case their deposit will be forfeited. You must send any forfeited deposits to His Majesty. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will provide further information on this process. 2 1. Schedule 1, Rule 53, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.1, Rule 53(1), RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Deposits Providing notice of the result

Retention and disposal of election documents Retention and disposal of election documents You should maintain a document retention policy. You should ensure that you do not retain documents for longer than the period specified in your document retention policy and that they are securely destroyed at the appropriate point. Your document retention policy should set out the following for all documents you receive and hold: whether the document contains personal data the lawful basis on which any personal data was collected (see 'Lawful basis for processing' in our data protection guidance) your retention period your rationale for the retention period You can find more information in our data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers . In some cases this will be straightforward since electoral legislation will require a set period for which documents are retained, you can find a list of these documents here . In other cases, you will need to make a local decision and justify this in your document retention policy. Our data protection guidance contains further information on the storage of personal data and on document retention.

Election documents in England and Wales Election documents in England and Wales You must forward the required election documents to the relevant registration officer, who is legally responsible for keeping them. The relevant registration officer is the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) of the local authority in whose area the constituency is situated. If the constituency crosses local authority boundaries, the relevant registration officer is the ERO of the local authority with the highest number of registered electors in the constituency. 1 If you are not also the relevant registration officer, you must securely forward the documents to them. The one year period that the documents must be stored for starts from the date the ERO receives them. 2 You should liaise with them at an early stage to put in place arrangements for the forwarding of the prescribed documents after the declaration of results. You should ensure that all of the documentation is kept secure and accounted for during the process of being forwarded to the ERO.

Election documents in Scotland The Returning Officer must retain the election documents for the constituency, or constituencies, they are responsible for.

Election notices published on your website Election notices published on your website You will need to consider whether it is appropriate or necessary for the various election notices published on your website to remain there

beyond the expiry of the petition period for the election. Where each notice serves a specific purpose, i.e. advising who will be a candidate at the election, once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, they serve no further purpose. You should either remove such notices published on your website, or remove the personal data contained in these notices, once the petition deadline for that election has passed. Data protection legislation does permit personal data to be stored for longer periods if the data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for scientific, historical, or statistical purposes and subject to the implementation of appropriate safeguards. For election results, for example, you should retain these on your website as they are for public interest and historical and statistical purposes. Home address forms must be kept securely stored for a period of 21 calendar days after you have returned the writ. They must be securely destroyed on the next working day after the 21 day period. If an election petition relating to the election is presented within the 21 calendar days, the home address forms must be kept securely until the conclusion of the petition proceedings (including any appeal from such proceedings). They must then be securely destroyed on the next working day following the conclusion of the proceedings or appeal.

3 Return of equipment

You should make arrangements to return any equipment, such as the empty ballot boxes, to storage. During this process you should conduct an audit of your equipment, identifying any damaged items for repair or disposal. This will enable you to plan for any replacements you may need to purchase for future polls.

1. Schedule 1, Rule 55(1A) and s8, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. S.1, Rule 57(1), RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. S.1, Rule 53A, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 12 July 2023

Book traversal links for Retention and disposal of election documents

Deposits

Responsibility for sealing and retaining election documents

You have a legal duty to seal up the election documents listed below and, on the completion of the counting of ballot papers, must forward these to the relevant registration officer in England and Wales, or retain them in Scotland.

1 If you are not also the ERO, the ERO will need to ensure that they have a mechanism in place to record the date of receipt, so they know when to destroy the documents that have been forwarded. The following lists contain the documents you must forward to the ERO in England and Wales, or retain as RO in Scotland. Documents from polling stations:

2 The packets containing:

- list of tendered votes
- list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions
- declarations made by companions of voters with disabilities
- list of votes marked by the Presiding Officer
- statements relating to votes marked by the Presiding Officer
- list of persons to whom ballot papers are delivered after the correction of a clerical error or as a result of a decision on an appeal to the county court

BPRL VIDEF and VIDEF notes sheet ■ marked copies of the register of electors, the marked list of proxies and any marked copy notices issued as a result of the correction of a clerical error or a decision on an appeal to the relevant court

the packets containing the completed polling station corresponding number lists

- certificates of employment on duty on polling day

Documents from the postal vote issues and openings:

3 marked copies of the postal voters' list and postal proxy voters' list

the packets containing the completed postal vote corresponding number lists

the packets of postal voting statements accepted as valid

the packets of rejected postal votes

the packets of rejected postal ballot paper envelopes

the lists of cancelled, lost and spoilt postal ballot papers

the packet of spoilt postal ballot papers and accompanying documents

the packet of lost postal ballot papers containing any part of the postal

ballot pack that was not lost and which was returned to you before you issued a replacement the packet of postal ballot papers, statements and envelopes that have been cancelled unopened postal ballot packs received after the close of poll or returned as undelivered (these can be forwarded at a subsequent date) All ROs must forward the statement as to postal ballot papers, the relevant parts of the list of postal votes that have failed the identifier checks to the relevant ERO. The ERO will use this information to enable them to send postal vote identifier rejection notices to those electors. You can find further information on this process within our ERO guidance for England , Scotland and Wales . You should also forward at the same time your record of any instances where you suspect an offence may have been committed, so that the EROs know in which cases they should not send out a postal vote identifier rejection notice.

4 For further information on the contents of the various lists relating to postal voting, see our guidance on Keeping records of the receipt and opening of postal votes Documents from the count: 5 all ballot papers separately stored as: counted ballot papers rejected ballot papers unused ballot papers (both ordinary and tendered) and spoilt ballot papers (placed together) used tendered ballot papers ballot paper accounts, the result of the verification of the ballot paper accounts and the statement of rejected ballot papers

1. Schedule 1, Rule 57, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.1, Rule 55(1), RPA 1983, ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 91, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001); Regulation 91 and 91A, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 91 and 91A, RPR (E&W) 2001; Reg 91 and 91A, RPR (S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. S.1, Rule 55, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Responsibility for sealing and retaining election documents Retention and disposal of election documents Preparing election documents for storage Preparing election documents for storage A full list of the documents you have a duty to forward to the relevant ERO in England and Wales, or in Scotland retain as RO, can be found here in our guidance on Forwarding or retaining election documents. You should make sure that the packaging process is as transparent as possible. You should maintain a clear audit trail when packaging and (if required) forwarding the documents as this will help facilitate the retrieval of documents should anyone wish to inspect the public documents. The packaging and labelling system you use should both provide secure storage and support timely retrieval. A clear audit trail and transparent process can be achieved by: producing clear labels for each packet you must seal all of the relevant documentation in separate packets 1 and mark each packet with a description of its contents, the date of the election and the election to which it relates 2 the label must also include the name of the constituency and should state how long the packet is to be kept and when it is to be destroyed (unless otherwise directed by order of the House of Commons, the High Court (Court of Session in Scotland), the Crown Court or a magistrates' court) the labels for documents open to public inspection and for documents that are not open to public inspection should be different. As a minimum, the packets containing documents not open to public inspection should clearly state this fact 3 ensuring that you have factored the parcelling up of documents into your verification and count planning. You can find more information in our guidance on planning for the verification. covering packing instructions as part of your training for polling station staff and when training postal voting and count supervisors. Providing written instructions should also help to reduce the risk of documents being packaged wrongly. A template graphical guide to

packaging materials at the close of poll is available, which you could adapt and provide to polling station staff. Staff should also refer to our polling station handbook. creating a list of all documents to be forwarded (where this is required). You should keep a record of all of the materials that you have a duty to send to the relevant registration officer, and ensure that all of the items are accounted for and delivered securely in accordance with data protection requirements. Close of poll packing instructions (DOC) Polling station handbook – UK Parliamentary election (PDF)

- We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. If you are running a UK Parliamentary by-election you should contact your local Commission team for support and advice. In England and Wales where you have forwarded documents to the relevant ERO, you should also: record the number of parcels you have despatched record the details of the ERO to whom they have been sent obtain a receipt from the ERO confirming that the parcels have been safely received It is important to ensure that all packets and receptacles containing election documents will be stored securely before being transferred to the ERO so that no unauthorised persons can tamper with them. 1. Schedule 1, Rule 54, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.1, Rule 55(1), RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. S.1 Rules 43 and 54, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Preparing election documents for storage Responsibility for sealing and retaining election documents Post election data collection Post election data collection Data collection and feedback at a general election At a general election, we will request that you send information and data to us relating to the election. Forms for collecting information and data, and accompanying guidance notes for completion, as well as a Commission feedback form, will be circulated separately and will also be available on our website. Statement as to postal ballot papers You must complete a statement as to postal ballot papers for the constituency. 1 This document is vital for the accounting of postal votes and for ensuring that voters have confidence that their vote will be counted in the way they intended. The statement should form part of the arrangements that you have in place to maintain a clear audit trail of the postal voting and count processes. You should complete the statement accurately using the figures recorded at the issue, receipt, opening and verification of postal votes. You can find further information on record-keeping during the postal voting process in our guidance on Keeping records of the receipt and opening of postal votes . We will provide a template statement as to postal ballot papers, which should be used. The accompanying guidance notes should support you in completing these. Postal voting ballot paper account (DOC) Where to send the statement as to ballot papers You must provide a copy of the completed statement at the same time and to the same person as you forward the other election documents listed in our guidance: Forwarding or retaining election documents You must also provide a copy of the statement to us at the Commission and to the Secretary of State. The statement must not be provided before the tenth calendar day after polling day but must arrive no later than the twenty-fifth calendar day after the polling day. 2 If either of these dates is not a working day, the time is extended to the next working day. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities are administering returns on behalf of the Secretary of State, and statements should be sent to elections@cabinetoffice.gov.uk using a subject title of '[authority name] – Form K return for the Secretary of State'. Details for how to provide this information to us will be provided in a Commission EA Bulletin . Voter Identification evaluation form (VIDEF) In England and Wales, the Electoral Registration Officer is

responsible for forwarding the collated data from the VIDEF to the Secretary of State and to the Electoral Commission, if requested. 3 More information is available in the guidance for EROs in England and Wales . In Scotland, the Returning Officer is responsible for forward the collated data from the VIDEF to the Secretary of State and to the Electoral Commission, if requested. For more information see our guidance on the Public inspection of election documentation in Scotland . 1. Regulation 91, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001); Regulation 91A, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 91, RPR (E&W) 2001; Reg 91, RPR (S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Rule 40B (6) and (7) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Post election data collection Preparing election documents for storage Access, supply and inspection of documents after an election Access, supply and inspection of documents after an election In England and Wales responsibility for administering the inspection and supply of elections documentation, including the marked registers, rests with the Electoral Registration Officer, not the RO. In Scotland the responsibility for administering the inspection and supply of marked registers and marked absent voter lists rests with the Returning Officer, not the ERO. Guidance specific to Scotland only can be found in the pages that follow. The following pages identify: the types of elections documents available for inspection or supply the types of elections documents not open for inspection We have produced an access and supply checklist, which should be used alongside this guidance. Access and Supply Checklist - All Election Types You should ensure that you have processes in place to retrieve data and securely destroy it at the appropriate time in accordance with electoral law and with your document retention policy, which should include the data protection principles. Disclosure of personal information If you receive a request to inspect any documents that contain personal data, for example the postal voting statement, you must also take into consideration whether inspection of the completed statement by that individual, falls within the remit of their basis for lawful processing. As a data protection safeguarding measure, it may also be proportionate to redact some personal data, for example the date of birth or signature, before providing the inspection of such documents. Further detailed guidance on data protection legislation is contained in our data protection guidance . For details on the retention and inspection of candidates' election spending, see our guidance on What you need to do with spending returns . Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Access, supply and inspection of documents after an election Post election data collection Election documents available for inspection or supply Election documents available for inspection or supply In England and Wales the responsibility for administering inspection and supply of marked registers and marked absent voter lists rests with the Electoral Registration Officer, not the RO. Further guidance on this can be found in: our ERO guidance for England our ERO guidance for Wales In Scotland the RO retains responsibility for: public inspection of election documentation supply of copies of the marked register of electors and absent voters' lists election documentation available to police and security organisations The following pages identify: the types of election documents available for inspection or supply who can have access to these documents how requests for accessing these documents must be made any applicable fees (where relevant) You should ensure you have processes in place to retrieve data and securely destroy it at the appropriate time in accordance with electoral law and with your document retention policy which should include the data protection principles. If you receive a request to inspect

any documents that contain personal data, for example the postal voting statement, you must also take into consideration whether inspection of the completed statement by that individual, falls within the remit of their basis for lawful processing. As a data protection safeguarding measure, it may also be proportionate to redact some personal data, for example the date of birth or signature, before providing the inspection of such documents. Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Election documents available for inspection or supply

Access, supply and inspection of documents after an election

Public inspection of election documentation in Scotland

Public inspection of election documentation in Scotland

Any person may inspect the marked register and any notices amending it, plus the marked copies of the list of postal voters, the list of proxies, and the list of postal proxy voters and such other documents relating to an election as you are required to retain, except ballot papers, completed corresponding number lists, certificates as to employment on the day of the election, and the list of ballot papers rejected under the verification procedure.

1 Any person wanting to inspect the marked register or absent voters list must apply in writing and must state:

2 which register or document they wish to inspect whether they wish to inspect a printed or data copy (where appropriate) the purposes for which any information will be used where the request concerns the marked register or lists, why inspection of the full register or unmarked lists would not be sufficient to achieve the purpose who will be inspecting the documents, and the date on which they wish to make the inspection

You may refuse to allow inspection of these documents if you are satisfied that the purposes of the requestor can be met by inspection of the full register, in which case you must inform the requestor of this decision and provide information concerning the availability of the full register for inspection.

3 Otherwise, the documents must be made available within 10 days of receipt of the application. You must arrange for them to be inspected under supervision.

4 Inspection can take place anywhere you choose. Those inspecting the documents can make copies of the registers and lists using handwritten notes only.

5 Laptop computers and other recording equipment may not be used except by police and security organisations listed in our guidance on Election documentation available to police and security organisations in Scotland .

Copies of the other election documentation open to inspection may not be made in any form. The same safeguards apply regarding the supervision and protection of the information as apply with the inspection of the full register .

any article 89 GDPR purposes electoral purposes

Ballot paper refusal lists (BPRLs)

In Scotland, the Returning Officer is responsible for dealing with requests for disclosure of information from BPRLs. You may only disclose information from the BPRL to the elector, whose ballot paper was refused, or in the case of a proxy being refused a ballot paper, the person acting as proxy or the elector on whose behalf they were acting as a proxy.

6 **Voter identification evaluation form (VIDEF)**

In Scotland, the Returning Officer is responsible for the VIDEFs and VIDEF notes sheets. After taking receipt of the polling station VIDEFs, you must, as soon as practicable, anonymise the data contained on them (for example, by destroying any related VIDEF notes sheets, or by removing any elector details recorded on the VIDEF for the purpose of capturing any of the required data).

7 You must also collate the data from the VIDEFs into two separate groups: one group providing total figures for all polling stations where voters were given an explanation of the photographic ID requirement before they applied for a ballot paper (e.g. where staff were appointed to greet voters and explain the requirements as they entered the polling station) one group providing total figures for all polling stations where voters were not given an explanation of

the photographic ID requirement You must submit the data to the Secretary of State and the Electoral Commission (if requested to do so). 8 The anonymised, collated data from the polling station VIDEFs is not open for inspection, and you must not disclose this information to anyone apart from the statutory duty to share information with the Secretary of State and the Electoral Commission (if requested to do so). 9 The polling station VIDEFs must be retained for 10 years, in an anonymised format. 10 To achieve this, you must ensure that any related VIDEF notes sheets are destroyed, or that you have removed any elector details recorded on the VIDEF for the purpose of capturing any of the required data. Data will be collected using the VIDEF and VIDEF notes sheets for the first two parliamentary general elections. 11 Following a scheduled election we will update you on the process for providing the required anonymised and collated information to the Electoral Commission through our Bulletin.

■ 1. Regulation 118(1), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001), ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 118(2), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 118(4), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 118(3), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 118(7), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Reg 35(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Rule 40B(5) and (6) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Rule 40B(7) Sch 1 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 9 10. Rule 40B(8) Sch 1 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 10 11. S.59A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 11

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Public inspection of election documentation in Scotland

Election documents available for inspection or supply

Supply of copies of the marked register of electors and absent voters' lists in Scotland

Supply of copies of the marked register of electors and absent voters' lists in Scotland

If requested, the relevant parts of the marked copy of the register of electors and any notices amending it, plus the marked copies of the list of postal voters, the list of proxies, and the list of postal proxy voters, must be supplied to specified persons on payment of a prescribed fee.

1 The request must be made in writing and must specify:

2 which of the marked register or lists (or relevant parts of them) are requested; whether printed or data copies are requested; and the purpose for which the data will be used and why the supply of the full data would not be sufficient to achieve that purpose

The marked register of electors and lists may only be used for:

article 89 GDPR purposes

electoral purposes

purposes that are applicable under the regulation entitling the individual or body to the use of the full register of electors

The cost of a marked document is prescribed. The charge for data copies is £10 plus £1 per 1,000 entries or part thereof, and for printed copies it is £10 plus £2 per 1,000 entries or part thereof.

3 You must supply the requested copies provided the relevant fee is paid and you are satisfied that the requestor needs to see the marks on the marked register or lists in order to achieve the purpose for which it is requested.

4 If you are not satisfied that the requestor needs to see the marks on the marked register or list(s) for the purpose for which it is requested, you may treat the request as one for information in unmarked lists or for a copy of the full register, or both. When you supply the marked register, you should remind the recipient that the data should be securely destroyed once the purpose for which it has been supplied has finished.

1. Regulation 117(1), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 117(3), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 120(2), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 117(4), RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 31 May 2023

Book traversal links for Supply of copies of the marked register of electors and absent voters' lists in Scotland Public inspection of election documentation in Scotland Election documentation available to police and security organisations in Scotland Election documentation available to police and security organisations in Scotland The Security Service, Government Communications Headquarters, and Secret Intelligence Service are entitled to a free copy of any election document open to inspection, and any other document related to the election on request. The police (including the National Crime Agency) are also entitled to free copies on request of any of these if they have inspected them. 1 This is except for: ballot papers completed corresponding number lists certificates of employment on duty on polling day A request for access to these documents must be accompanied by reference to the relevant regulation which gives them the right of supply. Supply of a copy of the documents and access for inspection is free of charge. Information supplied may only be used for the purposes set out in the regulation under which the body can obtain the full register. 1. Regulation 118(8), Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Election documentation available to police and security organisations in Scotland Supply of copies of the marked register of electors and absent voters' lists in Scotland Documents not available for inspection Documents not available for inspection The following documentation is not available for public inspection, except by court order: ballot papers completed corresponding number lists certificates of employment on duty on polling day These documents can only be accessed if the High Court or a county court in England and Wales, or the Court of Session or a sheriff in Scotland, is satisfied by evidence on oath that access is required for one of the following reasons: for instituting or maintaining a prosecution for an offence in relation to ballot papers for the purpose of an election petition Access can also be ordered by the House of Commons or by an election court. Applications do not have to be made in open court: they can be made by a judge from the relevant court either in open court or otherwise. Nomination papers Nomination papers can only be inspected by certain people until the deadline for objections has passed, as described in our guidance on Attendance at the delivery of nomination papers . Nomination papers cannot be inspected by anybody else at any time. Nomination papers may only be viewed and supplied to those who have a legal power to obtain documents. This may be a police officer using any powers they may have to take documents into their custody, or a court order. With the exception of the home address form, you should store the nomination papers securely for one year after the election due to the time limit for prosecution in case of an election petition. If such legal proceedings are or are liable to take place, you should retain the nomination papers until the court has completed its process. Home address forms You must keep home address forms securely stored for a period of 21 calendar days after you have returned the writ and securely destroyed on the next working day after the 21-day period. If an election petition relating to the election is presented within the 21 calendar days, the home address forms must be kept securely until the conclusion of the petition proceedings (including any appeal from such proceedings). You must then securely destroy them on the next working day following the conclusion of the proceedings or appeal. Ballot paper refusal lists (BPRLs) In England and Wales, the Electoral Registration Officer is responsible for dealing with requests for disclosure of information from the BPRLs. More information can be found in our guidance for EROs in England and Wales . In Scotland, the Returning Officer is responsible for dealing with requests for disclosure of information from the BPRLs.

You may only disclose information from the BPRL to the elector, whose ballot paper was refused, or in the case of a proxy being refused a ballot paper, the person acting as proxy or the elector on whose behalf they were acting as a proxy. 1 Voter identification evaluation form (VIDEF) In England and Wales, the Electoral Registration Officer is responsible for of VIDEFs and the VIDEF notes sheets. Information regarding the VIDEF and the VIDEF notes sheet can be read in the guidance for EROs in England and Wales . In Scotland, the Returning Officer is responsible for the VIDEFs and VIDEF notes sheets.■ For more information see our guidance on the Public inspection of election documentation in Scotland . 1. Regulation 32 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Documents not available for inspection Election documentation available to police and security organisations in Scotland FOI requests FOI requests Following the election you may receive requests under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. ROs and EROs are not a public authority under this Act and, as such, are exempt from the disclosure requirements imposed by it. 1 However, where possible, ROs and EROs should disclose the requested information, provided this information is already in the public domain, or the information requested does not include personal data. An example of non-personal data would be statistical data providing the total number of electors registered in your area or the turnout of postal voters. 1. Section 3, Freedom of Information Act 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for FOI requests Documents not available for inspection Accounting for the election Accounting for the election UK Parliamentary elections are funded by the UK Government and claims for fees and charges for the election are administered through the Elections Claims Unit, which is part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Detailed guidance and instructions for accounting for the election will be provided by DLUHC. Contact details for the Elections Claims Unit are as follows: Electoral Claims Unit, DLUHC Second Floor, Rosebery Court St Andrews Business Park Central Avenue Norwich NR7 0HS Please contact returningofficers.expenses@levellingup.gov.uk for more information. Payment of creditors You should keep receipts, purchase orders and invoices received before and throughout the election period for all services/work provided, and pay all creditors as soon as possible after the election. Payment of fees to staff Income tax Under tax rules a standard starter checklist, which is issued at the time of appointment, must be completed by all staff working directly for the (Acting) Returning Officer. It needs to be completed only once rather than reviewed every year. You will need to issue a P60 form to the employee at the end of the tax year. If you terminate the employment of any of your casual staff following the election and issue them with a P45, then any returning casual staff who work at future elections will need to complete a new standard starter checklist at each new election. HMRC real-time information All election payments made will be subject to HMRC's real-time information tax payment system. You should ensure that you liaise with your local authority's finance and HR departments to ensure that you can comply with the tax rules for all your employees, including any temporary and short-term contract staff. Further guidance is available from HMRC . Automatic enrolment into a workplace pension All employers with staff working in the UK must comply with automatic enrolment requirements. Further guidance is available from the Pensions Regulator . Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Accounting for the election FOI requests Candidates' election spending Candidates' election spending The Electoral Commission is, by law, required to monitor compliance with candidate election spending and donations. Legislation imposes limits on candidates' spending

and sets specific deadlines for the submission of spending information. All election agents must submit a candidate's spending return to you, together with relevant invoices and receipts, within 35 calendar days of the day of the declaration of result of the election (unless the last day of the period falls on a weekend or bank holiday, in which case the last day moves to the next working day). 1 This means that if you declared a result on Friday 6 May, for example, the deadline for the submission of the spending return would be Friday 10 June. A spending return must be submitted even when an election is uncontested. 2 The legislation also requires election agents and candidates to submit separate declarations confirming the candidate's election spending return is complete and correct. The election agent's declaration must be submitted alongside the full spending return. The candidate's declaration must be submitted within seven working days of the election agent submitting the full spending return. However, if the candidate is out of the UK when the return is submitted to you, they must make the declaration within 14 calendar days of coming back to the UK (unless the last day of the period falls on a weekend or bank holiday, in which case the last day moves to the next working day). In order to maintain a clear audit trail, you should ensure that any documentation relating to a candidate's spending return, including the election agent's declaration, is date-stamped on receipt. 1. Section 81, Representation of the People Acts 1983 (RPA 1983)

■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.82, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2
Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Candidates' election spending Accounting for the election What you need to do with spending returns What you need to do with spending returns You must send copies of election spending returns and declarations to the Electoral Commission as soon as reasonably practicable after the return or declaration is received. 1 Please also provide copies of the relevant invoices and receipts. Could you please also provide, to enable us to carry out our compliance duties: electorate figures for each constituency (used to calculate the candidates' spending limit) the spending limit provided to candidates, if applicable confirmation of any candidates who did not submit a return statement of persons nominated, notice of agents, and declaration of result for each election Our preferred method of receipt is secure document transfer, which will make the process of delivering these returns easier for you. The Commission can provide access to a secure document transfer system on request. Please contact us at candidates@electoralcommission.org.uk to arrange this. If for any reason you prefer to email the returns, please email scanned PDF copies to candidates@electoralcommission.org.uk. It will be of significant help to us in processing emailed returns, and prevent queries from us to you, if you: scan each candidate's spending return, with the relevant invoices and receipts, separately send each return by separate email, as very large attachments will be rejected by our server identify the constituency and the candidate name in the subject line of the email do not password protect emails or provide passwords or secure websites – a normal email is fine If neither of the above options are viable, you can forward paper copies of the returns to the following address: Party and Election Finance The Electoral Commission 3 Bunhill Row London EC1Y 8YZ 1. Section 87A(1), Representation of the Peoples Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for What you need to do with spending returns Candidates' election spending Retention, inspection and supply of spending returns Retention, inspection and supply of spending returns You must retain a copy of each candidate's election spending return and declaration, along with any accompanying documents, for a period of two years beginning with the date when the return is received. During

that period, you must make copies available for public inspection without charge. You should make copies of the spending returns, declarations, and other accompanying documents available to anybody who requests them for a fee of £0.20 per side of paper. You must supply copies of the spending returns or declaration upon receipt of payment. The addresses of individuals who have made donations to candidates must be redacted from all inspection copies and copies supplied on request. At the end of the two-year period, if the candidate or the relevant election agent requests them, they must be returned to the candidate. Otherwise the returns, declaration and accompanying documents may be destroyed. 1 No later than 10 calendar days after the deadline for spending returns to be submitted, you must publish, in at least two newspapers circulating in the constituency, a notice of the time and place at which the spending returns and declarations (including the accompanying documents) can be inspected. This notice must also be sent to each election agent. 2 If there are outstanding returns or declarations by the time the notice is dispatched for publication, you must state this in the notice. If the returns/declarations are received subsequently, you must also publish a revised notice in the two newspapers. We have produced guidance for candidates and agents on election spending and the required returns; in addition, candidates and agents can also download the return of candidate election spending form with integrated explanatory notes, the declaration by the election agent as to election spending and the declaration by the candidate as to their election spending. You can download all these documents from our website: for a UK Parliamentary General election , or for a UK Parliamentary by-election . 1. S.89, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.88, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Retention, inspection and supply of spending returns What you need to do with spending returns Expenses returns from non-party campaigners Expenses returns from non-party campaigners You have the power to request a spending return from local non-party campaigners who campaign for or against individual candidates at a UK Parliamentary general election and who are not otherwise required to submit a return. It is important to note that this is a power and not a duty. If you require further information about this power, you should contact your local Commission team . You can request a spending return during the period of six months beginning with polling day, and the request must be complied with within 21 calendar days beginning with the day on which the request is received. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Expenses returns from non-party campaigners Retention, inspection and supply of spending returns Challenges to the election result Challenges to the election result Election results may be challenged either by way of an election petition or by a judicial determination of disqualification of a duly elected candidate. Your role as (Acting) Returning Officer for both of these processes is limited. You should keep a robust audit trail of your decisions throughout the election period to be able to provide any necessary evidence as a result of an election petition. Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Challenges to the election result Expenses returns from non-party campaigners Election petitions Election petitions An election petition can be used to challenge the result of elections. A petition for a UK Parliamentary election can be presented by: 1 a person who claims that they were a candidate at the election, or a person claiming to have had a right to be elected or returned at the election, or a person who either voted at, or who had the right to vote at, the election An election petition may not be presented by an elector who has registered anonymously. What is the basis for an election petition? The allowable grounds for a UK Parliamentary election petition are

that there has been an: undue election, or undue return 2 Who is made a respondent? The duly elected candidate whose election is questioned by the petition will be the respondent to the petition. If the petition relates to the conduct of the election, you may also be a respondent to the petition as (Acting) Returning Officer. Deadlines and locations for bringing petitions In England and Wales, the appropriate court for dealing with petitions is the High Court. In Scotland, it is the Court of Session. A petition at a UK Parliamentary election must normally be presented within 21 calendar days after the date of the return of the writ to the Clerk of the Crown (which in most cases will be the day after the election). 3 Any person who is considering presenting an election petition should be advised to take their own legal advice. For any questions in England and Wales relating to election petitions and the process for submitting petitions, including to confirm the deadlines, you should contact the Elections Petitions Office: The Election Petitions Office Room E113 Royal Courts of Justice Strand London WC2A 2LL Email: Election_Petitions@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk Phone: 020 7947 6877 Fax: 0870 324 0024 In Scotland, you should contact The Petitions Department: The Petitions Department Court of Session Parliament Square Edinburgh EH1 1RQ Email: supreme.courts@scotcourts.gov.uk Tel: 0131 240 6747 Fax: 0131 240 6711 1. S.121, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.120, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. s.122, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Election petitions Challenges to the election result Challenging the result on the grounds of disqualification Challenging the result on the grounds of disqualification There is a separate judicial process for challenging the election of an MP on the grounds that they were or are disqualified under the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 (as amended). In that case, an application may be made to the Privy Council for a declaration to that effect (provided that a petition is not pending or has been tried in which the alleged disqualification is or was in issue (and where the grounds for the disqualification applied at the time of the election) or an Order of the House of Commons to disregard the disqualification has not been made). 1 Any person may apply to the High Court for a declaration that a Member of Parliament is, or at any time since being elected has been, disqualified from being a Member of Parliament. 2 Any person considering applying for a judicial declaration of disqualification should seek their own legal advice. 1. S.7, House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. S.7, House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 31 May 2023 Book traversal links for Challenging the result on the grounds of disqualification Election petitions Reviewing the election Reviewing the election After the poll you should carry out a thorough evaluation of all processes outlined in your project plan seeking feedback from appropriate stakeholders, and produce a lessons learnt document which will be used to inform the project plan and risk register for future electoral events. The scope of the review should cover all aspects of the election and each process that was planned for and carried out should be reviewed. A key part of the review will be the consideration of the aims and objectives set out in your project plan and measuring your performance against these. You should pay particular attention to reviewing: your project planning whether you were able to secure adequate resources if your constituency crosses local authority boundaries, what worked well and what could be improved when working with elections staff from the other local authority/authorities how contractors have been managed and whether they delivered work to the required specification the equipment and stationery used the recruitment and training of staff the suitability of venues used the management of nominations,

polling stations, the absent voting process, and the verification and count the processing and handling of queries your public engagement activity any issues affecting the security/integrity of the election your interactions with candidates and agents As part of the review you should seek feedback from appropriate stakeholders including: your staff and, if your constituency crosses local authority boundaries, elections staff from the other local authority/authorities electors candidates, agents and political parties local organisations of disabled people, older people and minority ethnic groups, and the council's access officers You should consider inviting a number of members of staff, including polling station staff, to a discussion in order to address all aspects of the polling station process, from training and briefing sessions through to dealing with difficult situations on polling day. You should also take into account any feedback provided in reports returned by Presiding Officers and polling station inspectors. Once you have reviewed all aspects of the election and sought feedback from appropriate stakeholders you should produce a lessons learnt document. The lessons learnt document should include an analysis of what practices were successful and where these could be used elsewhere, what you would do again or do differently, and key recommendations. The lessons learnt report should then be used to inform the project plan and risk register for future electoral events. Last updated: 31 May 2023

[Book traversal links for Reviewing the election](#)
[Challenging the result on the grounds of disqualification](#)
[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - After the election](#)
[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - After the election](#)
[Access and Supply Checklist - All Election Types](#)
[Close of poll packing instructions \(DOC\)](#)
[Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary election](#) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed.
[Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary elections 2023 \(PDF\)](#)
[Postal voting ballot paper account \(DOC\)](#) Last updated: 28 June 2023

[Book traversal links for Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers - After the election](#)
[Reviewing the election](#)
[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers](#)
[Resources for \(Acting\) Returning Officers](#)
[Planning for the election](#)
[Absent voters' list request form \(DOC\)](#)
[Ballot paper account exercise \(DOC\)](#)
[Briefing for candidates and agents - UK Parliamentary election \(PPTX\)](#)
[Checklist for polling station inspectors \(DOCX\)](#)
[Close of poll packing instructions \(DOCX\)](#)
[Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023](#)
[FAQs for frontline staff](#) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed.
[Forensic Science Service guidance UKPGE Election timetable generic \(DOCX\)](#)
[UKPE By election timetable generic \(DOCX\)](#)
[2017 Guidance on preventing and detecting electoral fraud in Scotland](#)
[Making your mark - design guidance for EAs](#)
[Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election \(DOC\)](#)
[Observers at UK elections booklet](#) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed.
[Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary election](#) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed.
[Polling station quick guide - UK Parliamentary election](#) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed.
[Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary elections 2023 \(PDF\)](#)
[Polling station handbook quick guide - UK Parliamentary elections 2023 \(PDF\)](#)
[Polling station staff briefing - UK Parliamentary election \(PPTX\)](#)
[Polling station scenarios for polling station staff - UKPGE \(DOCX\)](#)

Polling station quiz - UKPGE (DOCX) Project plan UKPGE EA (docx) Register request form (DOC) Risk register Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) Tips on managing the media at the count (DOC) Starting the election timetable UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX) UKPE By election timetable generic (DOCX) Notice of election - UK Parliamentary elections (DOCX) Nominations Emblem_UK-V2 Nomination checklist for UK Parliamentary elections (DOC) Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) Notice of poll - UKPE (DOCX) Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) Withdrawal form - must be printed off (DOC) Agents Counting agent appointment form (DOC) Nomination pack - UK Parliamentary general election (DOC) Polling agent appointment form (DOC) Postal voting agent appointment form (DOC) Secrecy requirements - postal voting (DOC) Secrecy requirements - the count Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) Absent voting Forensic Science Service guidance on signature checking (PDF) UKPGE Election timetable generic (DOCX) UKPE By election timetable generic (DOCX) Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary election - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Postal voting ballot paper account generic (DOCX) Postal vote opening flowchart (DOC) Postal vote matching spreadsheet (XLS) Secrecy requirements - postal voting (DOC) Polling station voting Checklist for polling station inspectors (DOCX) Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary election - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Secrecy requirements - the poll (DOC) Verification and count Checklist when dealing with ballot box variances (DOC) Doubtful ballot paper placemat (UK Parliamentary elections) Doubtful ballot paper booklet (UK Parliamentary elections) Example checklist of materials required at the verification and count (DOC) Observer access restrictions log (DOC) Observers at UK elections booklet - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Secrecy requirements - count - S66 Tips on managing the media at the count (DOC) After the election Access and Supply Checklist - All Election Types Close of poll packing instructions (DOCX) Polling station handbook - UK Parliamentary election - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. Postal voting ballot paper account (DOC) Last updated: 28 September 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers Resources for (Acting) Returning Officers - After the election

How to register your political party

How to register your political party This guidance tells you what you will need to know and do to register a political party or a minor party for the first time. We highly recommend you submit your application via our PEF Online system . We also have paper forms you can download from our website. The Electoral Commission maintains the registers of political parties for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. These are separate registers. Registered political parties and their officers must comply with the law, in particular as set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). These rules include continuous controls on donations, loans, campaign spending, annual accounts, keeping your registered details up to date and annual renewal of your registration. Before deciding to apply, it is important that you read all our published guidance on registering a political party and our guidance for party treasurers to get an understanding of the registration process and the financial reporting obligations. If you fail to comply with the law, you may be subject to civil or criminal sanctions. It is therefore an important part of the registration process that your party demonstrates that it has suitable arrangements and processes to enable the party to comply with the legal framework. In this guidance, we use 'must' when we refer to a specific legal or regulatory requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be minimum good practice, but which are not legal requirements. You do not have to follow this guidance, but if you do, you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law.

Minor parties You can choose to register either a political party or a minor party. A political party can field candidates in all elections in the area they are registered - some or all parts of Great Britain, or in all of Northern Ireland. A minor party can only contest parish council elections in England and/or community council elections in Wales. Minor parties cannot contest elections in Scotland or Northern Ireland. Independent candidates at parish and community council elections can, at the discretion of the Returning Officer, use a description not registered with us provided that the description does not exceed six words in length and cannot be confused with a registered political party. Minor parties are not subject to the same financial reporting obligations that political parties are.

Book traversal links for How to register your political party

Before you register Before you register Before you register, you need to set up your political party. You should make sure you have a constitution , and that your financial processes are in place. You also need to think about where your party intends to stand candidates. This will affect which register you will need to apply to be included on. Your intention to stand candidates Your party must intend to field at least one candidate in at least one election in the UK. If you intend to contest elections in both Great Britain and Northern Ireland, you will need to register two separate political parties, one on each register. They are two separate parties for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). You can register parties on both registers in a single application. You must ensure the financial affairs of both parties are conducted separately and this must also be reflected in each party's financial scheme. The reason the registered parties must be legally separate is that your NI and GB parties will have separate financial reporting requirements. If you register on the GB register, you must specify if you wish to contest elections in England, Scotland and/or Wales. Please remember you will only be able to field candidates as a party in those parts of the UK your register entry specifies. As part of the application process we may ask you what the party has done or will do to realise its intention to contest elections. One way of doing this is to outline what specific elections your party intends to contest in your party's constitution. Minor

parties Minor parties can only register in Great Britain and must also specify if they intend to field candidates at parish council elections, Welsh community elections or both. Making changes If your party is registered and later wishes to change where it intends to field candidates, you can make an application to amend these details. An application to change your registration from a minor party to a political party requires a £150 application fee. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Before you register How to register your political party What you need to do to register What you need to do to register Registration of a political party is not automatic upon submission of an application to us. We will assess your application against certain tests and criteria set out in law. If the party's application does not meet the statutory tests then it will be refused. You must ensure that all the information you provide is accurate. It may be a criminal offence if you include information which you know (or reasonably ought to have known) is false. Your application must include: your completed application form your party's constitution your party's financial scheme a non-refundable fee of £150 It is quick and easy to apply online. To get started, you will need to set up a PEF Online account. You can pay your fee electronically when you apply online. There are also paper forms available. PEF Online - getting started Form RP1 GB - Register a political party in Great Britain (PDF) Form RP1 NI - Register a political party in Northern Ireland (PDF) Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for What you need to do to register Before you register Party details Party details Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), you must provide certain details as part of your application to register a political party. This includes: The party's headquarters (or correspondence address) Whether you do not wish to field candidates at UK Parliamentary general elections – this will impact on which financial returns you may have to submit to the Commission ahead of those elections. You must provide your party's headquarters address. If you do not have a party headquarters, you must provide an address where the party can receive correspondence. This must be a physical address, and not an email address. It is important to note that this address will be available on our public register. You should avoid using any home addresses if you do not want them to be publicly available. You may therefore wish to consider using a PO Box address instead of a home address. You should also provide the Commission with your email address and a contact number to enable us to be able to contact with you about important information about your application and in future about important statutory deadlines. Making changes If later your party is registered and wishes to change any of its registered details, you can make an application to amend your register entry at any time. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Party details What you need to do to register Are you intending to contest UK Parliamentary general elections? Are you intending to contest UK Parliamentary general elections? Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), registered political parties are required to report (including nil reports) donations they receive or loans they enter into in the run up to a general election, unless they are exempt. We call these reports pre-poll reports. These reporting requirements are in addition to the quarterly reporting requirements for political parties. If you do not intend to contest UK Parliamentary general elections (UKPGEs), you are able to exempt yourself from pre-poll reporting. You can do this by declaring your intention not to field candidates at a UKPGE on your application to register a political party. Form RP6: Declaration of exemption of a registered political party - integrated notes You must re-confirm the declaration every time the party delivers its annual renewal

notification in order to maintain the exemption. By making this declaration, you will not be required to submit weekly pre-poll donation and loan reports for a general election. If your party subsequently fields candidates at a general election, this exemption will not apply for that election. This means the party will be required to submit pre-poll donation and loan reports in the run-up to that general election. This does not apply to minor parties, who are unable to contest UKPGEs. If later your party is registered and wishes to amend a declaration you have previously made, you can make an application to amend this at any time. Form RP7: Withdrawal of declaration of exemption made by a registered political party - integrated notes Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Are you intending to contest UK Parliamentary general elections? Party details Your party's officers Your party's officers Political parties must have people registered in certain official roles. These roles are: party leader party treasurer (not applicable for minor parties) nominating officer You must provide the names and home addresses for your officers. You do not need to have three separate individuals in each role, but you must have at least two people as officers for the party. If one person fills all of the official roles you must register someone as an additional officer. The additional officer must hold a specified office or role within the party. If your party has a campaigns officer then they may be registered as the additional officer. The treasurer and nominating officer cannot be the same person unless they are also the leader. Please be aware that these are statutory roles that carry legal responsibilities. Optional officer roles Campaigns officer – who will be responsible for your party's compliance with the financial laws for campaign expenditure instead of the treasurer. They cannot also be the treasurer Additional officer – you must apply to have an additional officer if the party leader is also the treasurer and nominating officer and your party does not have a campaigns officer. Minor parties If you are a minor party, you must register a party leader and nominating officer. You must have at least two people in officer roles. If one person fills both roles, you must register someone as an additional officer. Minor parties cannot be registered with a treasurer or campaigns officer. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Your party's officers Are you intending to contest UK Parliamentary general elections? Officer responsibilities Officer responsibilities Registered officers of political parties will have a particular role within a party. Their roles will also carry certain statutory responsibilities. Party leader A party leader must be the overall leader of the party. If your party does not have an overall leader (if you have co-leaders, for example), you must register a person who is the leader for a particular purpose within the party. For example a final decision maker on internal party matters. In the event that the party treasurer is no longer in post, the party leader will become the interim treasurer until the party notifies us of a replacement treasurer. Party treasurer The registered treasurer of a political party has significant legal responsibilities. They must ensure the party complies with the political finance rules set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). It is therefore important that an appropriate person is registered as the party's treasurer. The treasurer must not have been convicted of any election offences in the 5 years before their appointment. Nominating officer The nominating officer for the party has overall responsibility for arranging the nomination of candidates and approving the party identity marks used on nomination forms and ballot papers at elections. There is no provision under PERA to register a deputy nominating officer. However, the registered nominating officer can authorise in writing someone to act on their behalf. Additional officer If you register an

additional officer, they will have an official role of some kind in the party. You must register an additional officer with us if the party's leader, treasurer, and nominating officer are the same person, and you do not have a campaigns officer. If this is not the case, then you cannot register an additional officer with us.

Campaigns officer The campaigns officer will have responsibility for compliance with the financial reporting rules for campaign expenditure at particular elections. They will take these responsibilities from the treasurer of the party. The campaigns officer must not have been convicted of any election offences within 5 years of their appointment and cannot be the same person as the treasurer.

Deputy treasurer and deputy campaigns officer The registered treasurer or campaigns officer of the party can appoint up to 12 deputy officers to assist with authorising campaign expenditure. You may find this useful if your party is contesting a lot of seats. Use Form RP5 to register deputy officers.

Form RP5: Notification of details of deputy treasurer or campaigns officer - integrated notes Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Officer responsibilities](#)

Your party's officers Identity marks on ballot papers Identity marks on ballot papers "Identity Marks" are how we refer collectively to your party name, descriptions and emblems. These are how a party may be identified on a ballot paper at elections. Some identity marks are mandatory whilst others are optional. You must register a party name. This is a mandatory identity mark. You may register up to three emblems and 12 descriptions. These are optional identity marks. You do not need to register any party identity marks that you intend to use on campaign materials, unless you also intend to use them on a ballot paper. There are certain statutory tests and requirements which identity marks must meet in order to be registered. We will assess your application to register identify marks against these tests. From time to time, the Commission will also carry out reviews of identity marks on our registers. This is part of our duty to ensure we are maintaining the register of political parties. You can apply to change your party name, descriptions, and emblems and add joint descriptions at a later date if you wish for an additional non-refundable fee of £25 per application. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Identity marks on ballot papers](#)

Officer responsibilities Party name Party name A party must register a party name with us. It can use this name on ballot papers. Parties that are applying to be registered in Great Britain and intend to contest elections in Wales may apply with a name in and a name in Welsh to be the party's registered names. Parties that are applying to be registered in Northern Ireland may apply with a name in and a name in Irish to be the party's registered names. We do not regulate how a party wishes to brand itself or which campaign phrases it uses with its name when that message does not appear on ballot papers. If a party name is not registered with us, candidates will not be able to contest an election using that party's name on ballot papers. If your party is not registered with us a candidate can only apply to the Returning Officer to stand as an independent. In this case the candidate can choose to use either: the word 'Independent' (or 'Annibynnol' if standing in Wales) appearing next to their name on the ballot paper no identity mark on the ballot paper. This is along with any other details required by the relevant election rules. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Party name](#)

Identity marks on ballot papers Party emblems on ballot papers Party emblems on ballot papers An emblem is an optional visual representation (or logo) of a party. Along with other identity marks, an emblem can help voters identify the party on ballot papers. Parties are able to register up to three emblems. In order for the party or your candidate to use an emblem on a ballot paper, the party must register it with Electoral Commission. You do not need to

register an emblem if you only wish to use it on campaign material and not on ballot papers. An emblem is intended to primarily comprise a pictorial or symbolic representation, and so must include this element. It may contain some text. If it comprises mostly of text then it is unlikely that we will register it as an emblem. An emblem that contains text which cannot be read at the size emblems appear on ballot papers (2cm square) is also highly likely to be refused. We suggest that any text in an emblem is at least 1.2mm in height. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Party emblems on ballot papers](#)

[Party name](#) [Party descriptions on ballot papers](#)

[Party descriptions on ballot papers](#)

A party description is an optional identity mark that you can register in addition to the party name which can appear on a ballot paper. A party is permitted to register up to 12 descriptions at any one time. On most ballot papers, a party description can be used as an alternative to a party name. The description must therefore identify your party to a voter, in case it is used on a ballot paper rather than the party name. For example, a way to do that may be to include the party name in the description. If in the Commission's opinion a voter cannot identify the party from the description, it is not a description under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) and cannot be registered. A description cannot be exactly the same as the party name. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Party descriptions on ballot papers](#)

[Party emblems on ballot papers](#)

[Joint party descriptions](#)

[Joint party descriptions](#)

Two or more registered political parties can choose to share a party description which can then be used on a ballot paper. This is called a 'joint description' and can be used by all the parties that have registered one with other parties. There are certain rules regarding the registration of joint descriptions. These are that: you can only share and jointly register one joint description per group of parties - however, you may register a joint description with more than one group of parties the wording of the joint description must identify all of the applicant parties to be capable of being a joint description joint descriptions do not count towards the maximum of 12 descriptions that you can register with us - this means you can register up to 12 descriptions, in addition to joint descriptions When using a joint description the candidate will need to choose which of the party emblems that they wish to use on ballot papers. You cannot register a joint emblem and instead can only use an emblem registered to any of the parties who have registered the joint description. If you are thinking of registering a joint description, please contact us for advice in the first instance. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Joint party descriptions](#)

[Party descriptions on ballot papers](#)

[How we assess your identity marks](#)

[How we assess your identity marks](#)

The law says that we will register your identity mark unless in our opinion it does not meet certain tests. We therefore have to assess your identity marks against those tests. We look at how the proposed identity marks can be used on ballot papers, including the different ways in which they can be used on the ballot paper at different elections, and the need for every voter to be able to cast their vote with confidence. We will register your identity mark unless in the Commission's opinion it: is the same as another registered or protected identity mark which is on the same register is likely to result in voters confusing it with another party identity mark that is already registered or protected is likely to mislead voters as to the effect of their vote is likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting is obscene or offensive contains certain prohibited words contains more than six words is not in Roman script is likely to amount to an offence if published As a guide, we are unlikely to register your identity mark if it: is, or contains an acronym or abbreviation that is not well

known and widely used and not spelt out is a description that does not identify your party links in any way to online material or contains reference to online content, such as a Twitter hashtag or a QR code in most cases, if it contains a reference to a person's name is an emblem that contains text which cannot be read at the size emblems appear on ballot papers (2cm square) – at this size, we suggest that any text in an emblem is at least 1.2mm in height We cannot confirm whether your application will be successful in advance of you submitting it. It is your responsibility to determine the details of your application and to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). If your application is refused, we will notify you of our reasons in writing. Last updated: 2 June 2023 Book traversal links for How we assess your identity marks Joint party descriptions What we mean by “likely to confuse” What we mean by “likely to confuse” We are required to make sure that a voter can be confident that they do not confuse one party with another on the ballot paper, and so potentially cast a vote incorrectly. This test looks at whether, in our opinion, a voter would confuse the identity mark of a party with another party's identity mark which is already registered. Our assessment of whether an identity mark is confusing will normally take into account whether the identity mark is visually the same (e.g. the words ‘stationary’ or ‘stationery’, similar images of boats) or contextually the same (e.g. ‘Party of the Oak’ and ‘The Oak Party’). For emblems, we will consider whether the designed elements and text are different from other emblems. Last updated: 2 June 2023 Book traversal links for What we mean by “likely to confuse” How we assess your identity marks What we mean by “likely to mislead a voter” What we mean by “likely to mislead a voter” This test looks at whether in our opinion a party identity mark would be likely to lead a voter either to vote in a way they did not intend (e.g. for a party other than their preferred party) or to otherwise mark the ballot paper in a way which was not their intention. We cannot register an identity mark if, in the Commission's opinion, it is likely to result in a voter believing they are voting for an organisation that is not the party they intend to vote for. We therefore recommend that prior to your application you undertake a search of the internet to see if there are any existing groups or organisations which have a name or logo which is the same as, or similar to, the identity marks that you want to apply to register. These groups may be campaigning groups, registered charities or other well-known organisations. Last updated: 2 June 2023 Book traversal links for What we mean by “likely to mislead a voter” What we mean by “likely to confuse” What we mean by ‘likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting’ What we mean by ‘likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting’ We are required to consider whether an identity mark would contradict instructions or guidance for voting (e.g. ‘tick here’, or an emblem with a cross in it). We will also reject an identity mark if, in our opinion, we believe a voter would likely make a mistake on the ballot which would invalidate their vote, for example by voting for too many candidates. Last updated: 2 June 2023 Book traversal links for What we mean by ‘likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting’ What we mean by “likely to mislead a voter” What we mean by “offensive” What we mean by “offensive” We are likely to reject a name, description or emblem on grounds of offensiveness if, in our opinion, it: contains offensive language, phrase or terminology links something generally accepted to be offensive with a particular group of people In assessing your proposed identity marks, we will have regard to the fact that parties must be able to express their political views and a voter must use a ballot paper in order to exercise their right to vote. We also consider the wider

external context and circumstances in which a name, description or emblem can or is likely to be used. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for What we mean by “offensive”](#) What we mean by ‘likely to contradict or hinder instructions or guidance given for voting’ What is a “protected” identity mark? What is a “protected” identity mark? When a party deregisters, its identity marks remain protected until a certain time. This is usually the end of the financial year in which the party is deregistered. Until that time, other parties may not register identity marks that are the same as or, in our opinion, are likely to be confused with those protected identity marks. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for What is a “protected” identity mark?](#) What we mean by “offensive” Copyright and trade marks Copyright and trade marks As it is not covered by electoral law, we do not make any checks for infringement of intellectual property rights when we register a party’s identity marks. So, before you apply, you should make sure that your identity marks are not breaching any copyright and trade mark laws. If you register your party’s identity marks and then discover that they are infringing copyright or trademark, you could be subject to legal challenge by the registered owner. For more information, please visit the Government’s Intellectual Property Office website . Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Copyright and trade marks](#) What is a “protected” identity mark? Can acronyms or abbreviations be used? Can acronyms or abbreviations be used? If an acronym or abbreviation is not well-known or widely-used in everyday language, it will not normally be permitted for you to use as your party identity mark. This is because in our opinion, most voters will not know the meaning, and are therefore likely to be misled. Examples of well-known acronyms used in common language include ‘UK’, ‘GB’ and ‘NHS’. We will consider certain well-known and widely-used acronyms such as these as one word. If in our opinion an acronym is not well-known and widely-used, the words it is intended to represent must be spelled out and written in lower case or in sentence case. The acronym can then be added next to this, and each word, including the acronym will count towards the overall six-word limit. Words within a party identity mark can have initial capital letters. Words that are not acronyms should not be in all capital letters. If you apply to register an identity mark containing fully capitalised words that are not acronyms, we will consider that identity mark instead as though those words had initial capital letters instead (e.g. ‘PARTY OF THE OAK’ would be considered as ‘Party Of The Oak’). Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Can acronyms or abbreviations be used?](#) Copyright and trade marks What languages can I use in party identity marks? What languages can I use in party identity marks? You can apply to use a language other than in your identity marks for use on ballot papers. However, the party name and any descriptions must be in Roman script, even if it is registered in a language other than . It is likely to be acceptable if you can use a UK based keyboard to produce the identity mark without using special characters. Parties that are applying to be registered in Great Britain and intend to contest elections in Wales may apply with a name in and a name in Welsh to be the party’s registered names. These parties can also apply to register descriptions expressed in or Welsh (or both). You can choose to display both of these on ballot papers. Parties that are applying to be registered in Northern Ireland may apply with a name in and a name in Irish to be the party’s registered names. The proposed identity mark in each language cannot be longer than six words. For elections in other parts of the UK the party name or description can only appear in one language on the ballot paper. If a party applies to register a name in a language other than , Welsh (if in Wales), or Irish (if in Northern Ireland), the application must include an accurate translation as part of

your application. All translations are verified for accuracy. This means that you will be able to choose the most appropriate language for your party's identity mark to appear on ballot papers. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for What languages can I use in party identity marks? Can acronyms or abbreviations be used?](#)

Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales As a public body operating in Wales, we are required to carry out our functions in line with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards. We treat the Welsh language with equal favour to in performing our functions in Wales, including when taking decisions on party applications. This means that if you intend to contest elections in Wales, and have applied with either -only or Welsh-only identity marks, then we will translate your identity marks (either from to Welsh, or Welsh to) and consider the relevance that those translations have with regards to the statutory tests. It is possible, therefore, that a proposed identity mark in or Welsh may be refused based on how it is expressed in the other language, even if you have not applied to register a translation for that identity mark. It is important for us to undertake these steps to make sure that voters in Wales can mark their ballot paper with confidence. You should take this into account if you are applying to register in Wales and, where possible, consider how your party's identity marks would be interpreted by a voter in Wales. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales What languages can I use in party identity marks? Can numerals be used? Can numerals be used?](#)

If your party identity mark either starts or ends with a numeral, we are unlikely to approve it for registration in that form. Instead, we will ask you to spell it out as a word rather than use a numeral. This is because at some elections voters are asked to rank candidates by order of preference using digits. Party identity marks that start or end with a numeral are likely to be misleading with the numbers on the ballot paper and the instructions on how to vote. We may register a party identity mark that uses numerals in the middle, depending on how they are used and whether it is likely to mislead voters. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Can numerals be used? Other things to consider if you intend to contest elections in Wales Can links to online material be used? Can links to online material be used?](#)

Your party may use a website or social media to communicate with voters. However, websites or social media links (e.g., Twitter hashtags or Facebook pages) should not be used as part of your identity marks. In assessing your identity mark, we must determine whether it meets the statutory tests. If your identity mark links to online material we are likely to refuse it as we are unable to assess material that has potential to change over time against the statutory tests. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Can links to online material be used? Can numerals be used? Can an individual's name be used? Can an individual's name be used?](#)

Generally we will not accept the use of an individual's name in an identity mark. This is because instructions on ballot papers often state that the ballot paper is for the election of a candidate to a specific constituency, ward or other area. If a person's name, other than one of the candidates', appears on ballot papers for any given area it is likely to contradict the instructions for voting. We will need to form an opinion as to whether in the particular identity mark we are assessing, the inclusion of the name is likely to contradict or hinder an elector's understanding of directions given for their guidance in voting, on the ballot paper or elsewhere. Last updated: 2 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Can an individual's name be used? Can links to online material be used? What are prohibited words? What are prohibited words?](#)

Some words

cannot be used on ballot papers without being qualified by other words. This applies to the plural or singular of the prohibited words, as well as the prohibited words written in another language. These words are split into four categories (see below). In addition to the rules below, you cannot register 'None of the above' either in isolation or in conjunction with other words or expressions.

Category 1 Category 1 prohibited words are: Duke, Duchess, Her Majesty, His Majesty, King, Prince, Princess, Queen, Royal, Royalty. These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 1 words in conjunction with the name of a place, institution or local government area. For example you cannot use 'Royal Forever Party' because 'Royal' is not being used with the name of a place, institution or local government area. You could use 'Royal Tunbridge Wells Party' because 'Royal' is being used in conjunction with a place.

Category 2 Category 2 prohibited words are: Britain, British, England, , National, Scotland, Scots, Scottish, United Kingdom, Wales, Welsh. These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 2 words if you use them with another word or expression other than the name or description of a party already registered in the relevant part of the UK. For example you cannot register 'One Big Party' if there was an already registered 'One Big Party', because 'One Big Party' is being used with the name of an existing registered party.

Category 3 Category 3 prohibited words are: Independent, Official, Unofficial. These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 3 words if the word is used with another word or expression, but not with any of: an existing registered name or description only with the word 'party' another category 3 word. For example you cannot use the 'Independent Stop the Bypass Party' if there was an already registered 'Stop the Bypass Party' because 'Independent' is being used with the name of an existing registered party. You cannot register the 'Independent Party'.

Category 4 Category 4 prohibited words are: Ratepayers, Residents, Tenants. These words cannot be used in identity marks on their own. You can only use category 4 words in conjunction with the name of a local government or geographical area. For example you can register 'Residents of York Party' because 'Residents' has been used in conjunction with 'York', a geographical area. You cannot register 'Residents Action Group' or 'Residents Unite' because 'Residents' is not being used in conjunction with the name of a local government or geographical area.

Last updated: 2 June 2023

[Book traversal links for What are prohibited words?](#)

[Can an individual's name be used?](#)

[Your financial scheme](#)

Your party must submit a financial scheme as part of your application to register which sets out how the party will comply with the legal controls of the political finance rules under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act (PPERA). The financial scheme you provide must have been adopted by the party. We produce a template scheme that you can use to create your party's own financial scheme. You do not have to use this template scheme. It is a template only and the scheme that the party submits with its application must accurately reflect how the party actually operates in practice.

Model financial scheme (DOC) If you use our template scheme, you should check carefully that it accurately reflects the party's own procedures. For example, if the party has a campaigns officer, you should include their name at the appropriate places in the scheme in addition to the party treasurer. If your financial year will not run from 1 January to 31 December then you should amend this within the template scheme as well. We must be satisfied that your financial scheme sets out the arrangements for regulating the financial affairs of the party for the purposes of PERA, and that it has been adopted by the party, for your application to be approved. One way you can demonstrate that the scheme has been adopted is to have all

of the proposed registered officers of the party sign the scheme. Minor parties are not required to adopt a financial scheme or submit one as part of their application. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Your financial scheme](#) What are prohibited words? What must your financial scheme include? What must your financial scheme include? Your scheme must include procedures for: recording and reporting your accounts handling donations and loans maintaining your registered details with us authorising and reporting on campaign spending As part of the assessment process, we may ask you to evidence how the party has adopted its financial scheme. For example, you may be asked about what procedures the party has in place to deliver the obligations set out in its financial scheme. A party registered in both the Great Britain and the Northern Ireland registers are two separate registered parties for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). If you register on both the Great Britain and Northern Ireland registers, your financial scheme must show that the financial affairs of the party in Great Britain will be conducted entirely separately from those of the party in Northern Ireland. This is important because the rules about where a party can obtain its funding from differ depending on which register the party is registered. If you are, or are intending to be, registered as a party with accounting units then each unit must be named within the party's financial scheme. Our template scheme is not suitable if this is what you intend. We can provide further advice on what is required, so please contact us in the first instance if you intend to have accounting units. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for What must your financial scheme include?](#) Your financial scheme Your party's constitution Your party's constitution You must submit your party's constitution as part of your application to register a political party. Political parties must have a written constitution that sets out the structure and organisation of their party. This should set out the arrangements for your party's governance and the rules for carrying out its business. The constitution must show that the party can comply with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) – i.e., nothing in it can contradict legal requirements. It is possible that your party's constitution will comprise more than one document. For example, your party may have a set of Rules and Standing Orders for meetings. Any document which determines the party's structure and organisation will be part of the party's constitution under PERA and must also, therefore, be provided to us as part of the application. It is important your financial scheme and constitution correspond and do not conflict with each other. For example, the two documents should agree on how your accounts are signed off, who is responsible for the accounts and who can authorise campaign expenditure at elections. Your constitution must include sufficient information about the structure and organisation of your party for your application to be approved. A party does not need to be registered as a company so that it can register with us. If your party is structured in this way then the constitution should include details of how the company registration impacts on, or interacts with, the party's structure and organisation. Any relevant information should also be reflected in the processes outlined in the party's financial scheme. Minor parties are not required to have a constitution or submit one as part of their application. Equalities law You must ensure that your constitution and how your party operates complies with equalities law. In particular, you should ensure that your constitution does not unduly discriminate against persons with protected characteristics from becoming party members. Otherwise, your constitution will not be lawful and your application will be refused. You should read the guidance for political parties produced by the Equality

and Human Rights Commission which is available on their website . As with the other requirements for registration, the fact that your application must be compliant with equalities law does not mean that your party cannot campaign on policies to change the law. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Your party's constitution What must your financial scheme include? What should your party's constitution include? What should your party's constitution include? Your constitution must reflect how your party is run and managed. As a guide your constitution should include: details of the register or registers the party is registered in. A party registered in both the Great Britain and Northern Ireland registers are two separate parties for the purposes of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Where a party is registered in both the Great Britain and Northern Ireland registers, the party's financial scheme must show that the financial affairs of the party in Great Britain will be conducted separately from those of the party in Northern Ireland. The constitution should also reflect that. the party's aims and objectives a reference to an intention to contest elections and at what type of elections, for example UK Parliamentary general elections the candidate selection process (or at least a statement that the party will have one). the structure of the party and who is responsible for managing the party, including the responsibility of the party officers, the terms of office and procedure for change of those officers how the party will make and record decisions, as well as any other governance arrangements. For example, the frequency, timing and type of meetings and the quorum for meetings how the party will resolve internal disputes and whether the party has any disciplinary procedures. You should be aware that we cannot resolve internal disputes for your party the processes and rules governing membership of the party that the party have adopted its financial scheme how the constitution can be changed and the process for dissolution of the party. Last updated: 4 January 2023 Book traversal links for What should your party's constitution include? Your party's constitution Your declaration of assets and liabilities Your declaration of assets and liabilities Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), when you make an application to register a political party, the proposed treasurer must also make a declaration regarding the assets and liabilities held by the party. This declaration must state whether your party meets, or does not meet, the assets/liabilities condition. Your party will meet the assets/liabilities condition if both the total value of the party's assets and total amount of the party's liabilities are £500 or less. If you meet the assets/liabilities condition, you are not required to provide us with any further detail. However, if either the total value of the party's assets, or total amount of the party's liabilities, are more than £500, your party will not meet the assets/liabilities condition. Parties that do not meet the assets/liabilities condition must submit a record of assets and liabilities to the Electoral Commission with their application to register a party. For example, Party A has £50 in assets and no liabilities. Party A meets the assets/liabilities condition as it does not hold assets or liabilities that meet the reporting threshold of more than £500. It is not required to submit a record of assets and liabilities. Party B has no assets and no liabilities. Party B also meets the assets/liabilities condition as it does not hold assets or liabilities that meet the reporting threshold of more than £500. It is not required to submit a record of assets and liabilities. Party C has £700 in assets and £600 in liabilities. Party C does not meet the assets/liabilities condition as both the assets and liabilities are more than £500. Party C is therefore required to submit a record of assets and liabilities. Party D has £100 in assets and £600 in

liabilities. Party D does not meet the assets/liabilities condition as it holds more than £500 in liabilities. Party D is also required to submit a record of assets and liabilities. The Commission will include whether your party meets or does not meet the assets and liabilities condition as part of the details published on the public register of political parties. We will also publish a copy of the record on the register. Please see [What is a record of assets and liabilities?](#) for information on how to complete a record of assets and liabilities. Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for Your declaration of assets and liabilities](#)

[What should your party's constitution include?](#) [What is a record of assets and liabilities?](#) [What is a record of assets and liabilities?](#) A record of assets and liabilities acts as a snapshot of your party's overall financial situation at the time of application to register as a political party. It sets out the assets that you control, such as money in the bank or computers, and the amounts you owe, such as loans and money owed to suppliers. We have produced a template to aid you in reporting your assets and liabilities. The following guidance sets out the categories you should report in your record and includes definitions for the terms we use in the template. Using the Commission's templates is a quick and simple way to make sure your record of assets and liabilities gives us all the required information. [Record of assets and liabilities](#) Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for What is a record of assets and liabilities?](#) [Your declaration of assets and liabilities](#) [What should your record of assets and liabilities include?](#) [What should your record of assets and liabilities include?](#) The following categories should be included in your record of assets and liabilities: Fixed assets Current assets Liabilities You should only report assets and liabilities owned by the party in your record. In some cases, this may include assets and liabilities under a party officer's name, such as a bank account used to hold party funds. However, you should not report assets and liabilities that are owned and controlled solely by party officers. You should make an honest assessment, based on the facts, of the assets and liabilities you need to include in the record. If you are unsure whether an asset or liability should be included in your record, please contact us for advice. The following pages provide detail on how to report each category. Last updated: 24 November 2022

[Book traversal links for What should your record of assets and liabilities include?](#) [What is a record of assets and liabilities?](#) [Fixed assets](#)

[Fixed assets](#) Fixed assets are items bought for long-term use by your party. For example, property, office equipment, furniture, plus investments such as stocks, shares and investment property. Under Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in the UK (UK GAAP), fixed assets are also known as non-current assets. The categories recorded under fixed assets are: Property Fixtures and fittings Office equipment Investment property Other investments Property Property is any premises owned by and used for your party's business. You should record the total value of the property. The value of the property should be recorded as the original price. If the property is professionally revalued, you may decide to record the new value. If this is the case, then you should include a sentence in the note box explaining this. Fixtures and fittings Fixtures and fittings are non-structural items within a property. For example, furniture, carpets, white goods and light fittings. The value should be recorded at the original purchase price. You should not carry out revaluations. If you do not know the original purchase price of an asset, you should make a reasonable estimate of its original value. Office equipment Office equipment includes electronic and IT supplies such as computers, printers, photocopiers and telephones. The value should be recorded at the original purchase price. You should not carry out revaluations. If you do not know the original purchase price of an

asset, you should make a reasonable estimate of its original value. Investment property Investment property is any property owned by your party, but not used for party activities. You should record the total value of investment property. The value of the property should be recorded at its original price, or the price given by a professional valuation. If the property is revalued during the year, you should include a sentence in the note explaining this. If the investment property is held by a trust or a holding company, you should only record the value that is attributed to your party. For example, if your party controls 50% of an investment property, only 50% of the value should be recorded. Other investments Other investments include stocks and shares, or other assets that are likely to appreciate or depreciate in value. This includes cryptocurrency and other digital currencies. The total value of all other investments owned by your party should be included on the balance sheet. The value of the investment should be recorded at its original cost, or the price given by a professional valuation. Stocks and shares should be recorded at their market value on the 31 December. For example, if you are submitting a record of assets and liabilities in September, any stocks and shares your party owns should be recorded at the value at 31 December of the previous year. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Fixed assets What should your record of assets and liabilities include? Current assets Current assets Current assets are assets used to fund the day-to-day operations and pay the ongoing expenses of your party. Current assets include 'cash in hand' and 'in the bank', as well as other assets not tied up in long-term investments. In other words, current assets are anything of value that can easily be converted into cash. The categories recorded under current assets are: Cash in hand and in the bank Stock/inventory Debtors and prepayments Cash in hand and in the bank Cash in hand and in the bank includes all petty cash and current and deposit accounts. Deposit accounts are longer-term investment accounts, where money is less accessible. The deposit is held for a fixed term, or where withdrawals can only be made by giving notice or by losing interest on the account. The total value of petty cash and current and deposit accounts held by the party should be included. The accounting note should show petty cash, the types of current and deposit accounts, and the amounts held in each type. Stock/inventory Stock, or inventory, are items of significant value that have been purchased but not yet used by the party. Examples include literature, paper, envelopes and stamps, merchandise and campaign items such as t-shirts, mugs, bags, and items for raffles/prizes. These are valued at the cost of item, or the relevant fraction of the cost if partially used. They may be subject to a different value (usually zero) if the stock is of no further use. Debtors and prepayments Debtors relate to specific definite amounts owed to your party by known organisations or individuals and must be supported by a commitment or obligation to pay. This could include guarantees of future sponsorship payment for events that have already occurred, or payment after the event for office services provided by the party. Prepayments are more common. They occur where the party has paid for something in advance and not yet received the benefit. This could include payment in advance to rent a venue for an event that has not yet occurred or payment for posters and promotional material that you have not yet received. You should include as a note a breakdown of how the totals of these amounts are made up and what they relate to. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Current assets Fixed assets Liabilities Liabilities Liabilities are any obligations you have to pay for something. In other words, things that you owe. Examples of liabilities include loans, credit cards and money owed to suppliers. The categories recorded under liabilities are: Financial institution loans Other loans Trade and other

creditors Financial institution loans Financial institution loans include credit cards, overdraft facilities or loans taken out with a registered bank or building society. Other loans Other loans include amounts owed by your party to individuals or organisations under specific agreements. For example, this could include a loan of money to fund the establishment of your party. Trade and other creditors Creditors are specific, definite amounts owed to known suppliers for which you have been invoiced, but which you have not yet paid. This could include amounts owed to a supplier of merchandise for goods bought by your party. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Liabilities](#)

Current assets Parties registering in Great Britain and Northern Ireland Parties registering in Great Britain and Northern Ireland A party applying to register in Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a single entity until an application has been approved for each respective register. At the point of registration, the single entity will become two separately registered parties under electoral law. The party in Great Britain and the party in Northern Ireland will be subject to different financial controls under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). As one organisation at the time of application, you are only required to submit one record of assets and liabilities when applying to register a party on both registers. Your financial scheme must demonstrate how the financial affairs of the party in Great Britain will be conducted separately from those of the party in Northern Ireland to comply with the respective controls applying to each register. You may be asked to provide additional evidence that the financial affairs are being conducted separately before your application can be approved. Please see [Your financial scheme](#) for more information on producing your financial scheme. We will assess each application on a case-by-case basis. As part of the assessment, we may request further information or evidence from you to ensure we are satisfied your application fulfils the requirements of PERA. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Parties registering in Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#)

Liabilities What happens to the record of assets and liabilities after you submit your party registration application? What happens to the record of assets and liabilities after you submit your party registration application? After you submit the record of assets and liabilities, we will process and assess this as part of your application to register a political party. We will then make a decision on whether your application as a whole satisfies the requirements set out in Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), and can be approved. We will consider your record alongside the evidence provided in your application. In some cases, we may request that you provide us with further information as part of our assessment. It is important that you ensure your declaration and the information you provide in the record is accurate and complete, to the best of your knowledge. It is an offence to make a false statement knowingly or recklessly. It is your responsibility to determine the details of your application, and to ensure that your application and record of assets and liabilities comply with the requirements of PERA. If the record of assets and liabilities does not satisfy the requirements, the party cannot be registered. The Electoral Commission is legally required to make a copy of each registered party's record available for public inspection. Once a party is registered, we will publish the record of assets and liabilities on our public register of political parties alongside the party details. Each record will be available on the register for six years. We will not publish any personal information, such as home addresses, personal email addresses, phone numbers and bank details. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for What happens to the record of assets and liabilities after you submit your party registration](#)

application? Parties registering in Great Britain and Northern Ireland Accounting units Accounting units Most parties operate as a single unit, which means the treasurer of the party has oversight over the finances of the entire party. However, you may wish to register party branches that have financial autonomy. These are called “accounting units” and each unit is responsible for its own finances. Registering accounting units is optional. Your financial scheme must specify if your party will have accounting units. Please note that our standard template scheme is not suitable for parties with accounting units. If you have branches that are not financially autonomous, you do not need to register them as accounting units and they do not need to appear in your financial scheme. However you may still want to refer to them in your constitution. If you choose to register accounting units, each unit must have their own treasurer and Second Officer. You must also register the accounting unit’s headquarters address or a correspondence address if the accounting unit does not have a headquarters. We can provide further advice on what is required, so please contact us in the first instance if you need more advice on accounting units. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Accounting units What happens to the record of assets and liabilities after you submit your party registration application? Submitting your application Submitting your application Before you submit your application, you should review the details of what you are submitting to ensure your application is complete and contains all mandatory and relevant information in accordance with our guidance. If you are applying using PEF Online , once you are satisfied with your application, your system administrator will be able to send your application online to all relevant officers to authorise. Your party’s officers must approve the application and accept their role within the party. If they hold more than one officer role, please ensure they authorise for each position they hold. It must be clear in what capacity they are authorising. Your party’s administrator will be unable to submit your application until all relevant officers of the party have completed their authorisation. If you are applying offline, all relevant officers of the party must sign the application form. Once all officers have authorised the application, your party administrator can submit your application and pay your £150 non-refundable application fee. You can pay your fee online by card payment. You can also make a payment by post via cash, cheque or postal order. If you send the payment by cheque please make the payment to ‘The Electoral Commission’. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Submitting your application Accounting units How we assess your application How we assess your application Once your application is completed and you submit it to us we do the following: Stage 1 We receive, conduct an initial check for completeness and acknowledge receipt of your application. Stage 2 Once your application contains all of the information required by law, we publish your proposed identity marks on our website for public comment. Stage 3 We assess your application against the statutory tests in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Stage 4 We make a decision to approve or refuse your application and notify you of the result. If your application is refused, we will explain our reasoning in writing. If approved, we update the publicly available register of political parties with your details. We also send you information about your financial reporting and other obligations as a registered political party. Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for How we assess your application Submitting your application Stage 1 Stage 1 We will conduct an initial check that your application contains the required information and documents and that your fee has been paid. If we identify any initial issues with your application, we may put it on hold for a reasonable

period of time and contact you in order for you to consider the matters we have raised and make changes to your application if necessary. You should note that ultimately it is your responsibility to determine the details of your application and to ensure that your application complies with the requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Until a final decision is taken on your application, we cannot confirm whether it will be successful. Any changes to your application may need to be authorised by all of the party officers. If we do not hear from you by the advised deadline your application may be refused. Once all of the required information and documents are included, we will formally acknowledge the application. The next stage of the application process will then begin. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Stage 1](#) How we assess your application

[Stage 2](#) [Stage 2](#) Before taking a decision on the application, we will normally publish your proposed identity marks on our website for comment. Your identity marks will remain online until we come to a decision on whether to register them or not. Anyone can comment on your proposed identity marks during this period. We will consider any comments made and take any relevant information into account when considering your application. You can subscribe to an email alert to these notices being published by contacting us via email . Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Stage 2](#) [Stage 1](#) [Stage 3](#) [Stage 3](#) The Commission will assess your application against the statutory tests in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). This includes: Verifying the information provided in your application. This will mean checking, for example, that home addresses have been given for party officers. Reviewing your constitution and financial scheme to check if they meet the requirements of PERA. For constitutions it also means checking that it does not contravene UK equality law. Assessing whether your proposed party name, any descriptions and any emblems meet the statutory tests in PERA. It is possible that we may identify matters with the application that we suggest you consider at this stage. If this is the case, we may put your application on hold for a reasonable period of time to allow you to respond. Any delay in responding to us may delay the processing of your application. If we do not hear from you by the deadline your application may be refused. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Stage 3](#) [Stage 2](#) [Stage 4](#) [Stage 4](#) Once the assessment is complete it will be put, along with any relevant comments from our online publication, to the Commission's internal Approval Board. This Board is made up of senior officers of the Commission. It is chaired by the Director of Regulation, who normally takes the final decision on your application. The Head of the Commission in Scotland takes decisions for applications concerning parties solely in Scotland. Once we have made a decision, we will tell you whether your application has been successful or not. We will also publish our decision online and, if the application has been successful, update the register. If your application, or part of your application, is refused you can submit a fresh application. You won't have to pay a further application fee if you submit an application to us within one calendar month of being contacted with the refusal. You will only get one opportunity to submit a fresh application without a fee. Any further applications after that will require the non-refundable application fee. What happens if we decide your application is not complete? If your application is not complete the party cannot be registered. What happens if your financial scheme or constitution do not meet the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) requirements? If your financial scheme or constitution do not meet the PERA requirements the party cannot be registered. What happens if we cannot register your party name? If, in our opinion, your party name does not meet the statutory tests the

party cannot be registered. What happens if we cannot register your description or emblem? Providing that the rest of your application meets the statutory tests, we will still register your party. But we will refuse the particular description or emblem that does not meet the requirements. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Stage 4](#) [Stage 3](#) [How do you object to our decision?](#) [How do you object to our decision?](#) If we refuse your application as a whole, or we refuse a particular identity mark, you can choose to submit a fresh application. All applications are assessed against the statutory tests in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). We will always explain the reasons why we have rejected an application. If you have questions about the reasons for our refusal, please contact us. There is no statutory right of appeal against our decision. If you disagree with our decision and the reasons for it you can seek a remedy through the courts by applying for a judicial review of our decision. If you believe that we have not adhered to our stated administrative procedures when considering your application you could enquire if the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman would be prepared to consider the matter. Before you do so you would need to first proceed under our complaints process referred to below. This covers: a failure to gather or properly to consider certain information bias in arriving at a decision unreasonable delay You must be explicit about the nature of your complaint, providing evidence where possible, rather than simply making an assertion based on disagreement with the outcome of a decision. Our complaints web page has information about how to make a complaint. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for](#) [How do you object to our decision?](#) [Stage 4](#) [After registration](#) [After registration](#) Once you have registered successfully we will send you information about your obligations as a registered political party. Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), a registered political party must, for example: make sure all donations and loans over £500 come from mainly UK-based sources report donations and loans every quarter, and report weekly during a UK Parliamentary general election keep to campaign spending limits at elections, and report campaign spending to us keep accurate accounts and records send us annual accounts if the party's income or expenditure is over £250,000 a year, also send an auditor's report on your annual accounts operate consistently with your constitution and financial scheme, and keep them current keep the party's details up to date, and confirm them annually These rules are to ensure the integrity and transparency of party political finance. If you don't follow them, you may be subject to fines or other enforcement action by us or the police. You have significant responsibilities as an officer of a political party, so it's important that you understand these fully before you register with us. You should make sure you familiarise yourself with the guidance available for political parties on our website. In addition we also provide guidance to candidates and agents on how to stand for election and their rights and responsibilities. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for](#) [After registration](#) [How do you object to our decision?](#)

donations and loans in Northern Ireland donations and loans in Northern Ireland Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), there are controls on which donations and loans a political party can accept. Certain donations and loans must be recorded and reported to us. We publish these reports in a register on our website. There are separate rules that apply to parties registered in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. This guidance sets out the guidance for parties registered in Northern Ireland. For guidance for Great Britain parties, please see donations and loans in Great Britain . Who receives donations and loans? Donations and loans are made to registered political parties and accounting units (sections of a party whose finances aren't managed directly by a party's headquarters). Parties must appoint someone to be registered with us as their treasurer. The registered treasurer is responsible for making sure that the party follows the rules on donations and loans. This includes maintaining suitable systems within the party to ensure donations and loans are dealt with correctly. Central party and accounting unit treasurers Central party treasurers are responsible for: making sure the party keeps sufficient accounting records to show and explain the transactions it has entered into, including those relating to donations and loans taking all reasonable steps to make sure that these donations and loans can be accepted reporting certain donations and loans to us, the Electoral Commission Accounting unit treasurers are not responsible under PERA for reporting donations and loans, and do not report to us separately. However, accounting unit treasurers should always follow their party's procedures. They must also provide all relevant information to the central party treasurer when requested. Who is this guidance for? This guidance is for registered treasurers. In this guidance we use 'you' when we refer to a party's registered treasurer and their responsibilities. We use 'must' when we refer to a specific legal or regulatory requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be minimum good practice, but which are not legal requirements. You do not have to follow this guidance, but if you do, you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Book traversal links for donations and loans in Northern Ireland Terms we use in this guidance Terms we use in this guidance Accounting unit A section of a party registered with the Electoral Commission that is responsible for its own finances. Each accounting unit has its own registered treasurer and an additional officer. Benefit Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), 'benefit' is used to refer to donations and loans over £500 collectively. Bequest Money or property given to someone through a will. Central party The central organisation, or headquarters, of a party. The central party treasurer is responsible for the party's compliance with the financial controls under PERA. Donation Under PERA, a donation is money, goods or services given to a party without charge or on non-commercial terms, with a value of over £500. Some examples of donations include: a gift of money or property sponsorship of an event or publication subscription or affiliation payments free or specially discounted use of an office See Which donations are covered by the rules? for more information. Impermissible We use the term impermissible to refer to donations and loans that parties cannot accept/enter into under PERA. In our guidance and forms we sometimes use the term 'unauthorised transactions' to refer to impermissible loans, which is what they are called in PERA. Loan Under PERA, the following types of transactions are regulated, if they have a value over £500: loans of money credit facilities, such as credit cards and overdrafts securities or guarantees for a party's obligations to someone else Under PERA, these are called regulated transactions. In this guidance, we use the term 'loans' to refer to all of these types of transactions. See Which loans are covered

by the rules? for more information. Market value The price that might reasonably be expected to be paid for an item, goods or service if the item was on sale in the open market. Overseas elector A British citizen living abroad that is registered to vote in the UK. Permissible We use the term permissible to refer to donations and loans that parties are allowed to accept/enter into under PPERA. In our guidance and forms we sometimes use the term 'authorised transactions' to refer to permissible loans, which is what they are called in PPERA. Public funds These are payments from: the Consolidated Funds of the United Kingdom, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, respectively; money provided by Parliament or appropriated by Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly; any Minister of the Crown, the Scottish Ministers, the Welsh Ministers or any Minister within the meaning of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, any government department (including a Northern Ireland department), the Welsh Assembly Government or any part of the Scottish Administration, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, the Senedd Commission or the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission; and the Electoral Commission. Registered political party A party registered with the Electoral Commission under the PPERA. Parties may be registered under the Great Britain or Northern Ireland register and they must comply with the controls and responsibilities set out under PPERA. Unincorporated association An association of two or more individuals who have come together to carry out a shared purpose. See Unincorporated associations for more information. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Terms we use in this guidance donations and loans in Northern Ireland Which donations are covered by the rules? Which donations are covered by the rules? Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), a donation is money, goods or services given to a party without charge or on non-commercial terms, with a value of over £500. Some examples of donations include: a gift of money or property sponsorship of an event or publication subscription or affiliation payments free or specially discounted use of an office Donations of £500 or less Donations of £500 or less are outside the scope of PPERA and you do not need to record or report them. However, you must be alert to situations where it appears that a donor is attempting to evade PPERA. It is an offence to attempt to evade the controls on donations. For example, if a number of donations of £400 are made from the same source in similar circumstances in an attempt to evade the permissibility rules. If you think this may be happening, you should contact us for advice. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Which donations are covered by the rules? Terms we use in this guidance What do you need to do when you receive a donation? What do you need to do when you receive a donation? Checks on donations Donations can only be accepted from certain sources, which are mainly UK-based. Please see Who can you accept donations and loans from? for details on which sources are permissible. Before your party accepts any donation of more than £500, you must take all reasonable steps to: make sure you know the true identity of the donor check that the donation is from a permissible source How long do you have to check permissibility? When you receive a donation, you have 30 days to decide if you can accept it. Even if you have made a permissibility check in connection with an earlier donation or loan from the same source, you should consider whether to make a fresh check for each subsequent donation. You should keep a record of all your permissibility checks to show that you have followed the rules. If the donation isn't from a permissible donor, or for any reason you can't be sure of the true identity of the source, please read What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? for further guidance on the actions you must take. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What do you need to do

when you receive a donation? Which donations are covered by the rules? Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources Donations on behalf of others If you are given a donation on behalf of someone else, the person giving you the donation (the agent) must tell you: that the donation is on behalf of someone else; and the actual donor's details An example of someone acting as an agent is where an event organiser is handing over the proceeds from a dinner held specifically to raise funds for your party. If you think that someone might be acting as an agent, you must find out the facts so that you can make the right checks. If you are not sure who you should treat as the donor, please contact us for advice. Local party fighting funds During elections, your party may run local fighting funds for candidates. If the fund is managed and controlled by the party and not the candidate, donations to the fund are usually treated as donations to the party, unless a donation is specifically made towards the candidate's election campaign. For example, a party branch collects donations to raise funds for election campaigning in the local area. If the local party makes it clear that these donations are made for the purpose of meeting the candidate's election expenses, or a donor specifies their donation is being made for this purpose, then this is a candidate donation. If instead a donation is not specifically made to meet candidate expenses in this scenario, it should be treated as a donation to the party. Donations from unidentified sources If you are unable to confirm who a donation is from, or that it is from a permissible source, you should record it and return it. If any interest has been gained on the donation your party can keep it, as it is not treated as a donation. Please see What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? for guidance on how to return a donation. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources What do you need to do when you receive a donation? When do you receive and accept a donation? When do you receive and accept a donation? When do you receive a donation? You usually 'receive' a donation on the day you take ownership of it. For example: if you are given free leaflets, you receive the donation when the leaflets are handed over to you if you are given a cheque, you receive the donation on the date that the cheque clears if a donation is transferred directly into your bank account, you receive the donation on the date that it is received into your account When do you accept a donation? You accept a donation on the day you agree to keep the donation. For non-money donations, if you use the donation, you have thereby accepted it. If your party keeps a donation after the 30-day period, you are also deemed to have accepted it. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for When do you receive and accept a donation? Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources How do you work out the value of a donation? How do you work out the value of a donation? If your party receives or sells an item, goods or service, you must work out its market value. The market value means the price that would reasonably be expected to be paid for the item, goods or service, if it was on sale in the open market. Working out the market value is needed to determine whether a donation has been made and what the value is. Any commercial income you gain from these transactions is not a donation. The following section provides guidance on how to assess the market value of goods and services, determine whether a donation has been made to the party, and calculate the value of the donation. Goods and services received by the party As well as receiving donations of money, you may also receive donations of goods and services. If you receive goods or services free of charge, or at a non-commercial discount, you must ensure these are valued at a comparable market rate. Non-commercial discounts are special discounts that your party, specifically,

is given by suppliers. These are different to commercial discounts available to all customers, such as discounts for bulk orders or seasonal reductions. The donation rules only apply to non-commercial discounts. If you are given goods or services this will count as a donation if: the market value of the goods or services, if given free of charge, exceeds £500, or the amount of the non-commercial discount exceeds £500. The value of a donation is the difference between the value of what you receive and the amount (if any) you pay for it. You will need to know the market value of the items or services to calculate the value of the donation. As with all types of donations, you must also ensure any donation you accept over £500 is from a permissible donor. Good and services sold by the party If your party sells goods or services you must ensure these are also valued at a comparable market rate. It is important you are aware of the market value of the goods and services you sell because if someone pays more than the market value, the difference between what they pay you and the market value will be a donation if this amount exceeds £500. This is because any additional payment will be received on non-commercial terms, and the donation rules will apply. The market value, or commercial income, is not a donation. The guiding principle The guiding principle is that, in all cases, you should make an honest and reasonable assessment of the value of the goods or services you are receiving or selling. If the exact or similar options of the item or services are available on the market, you should use the rates charged by other providers to guide you in making a valuation. For example, if the donor is a commercial provider, you should use the rates they charge other similar customers. If there are no exact or similar options of the goods or services available on the market, you should base your assessment on the market rates of a reasonable equivalent. If you are still not sure how to value a particular donation, please contact us for advice. Your party is required to keep records that show and explain the transactions it has entered into. In order to meet this requirement, you should ensure you keep a record of assessments and valuations so that you can explain whether or not a donation has been made. Selling exclusive services When trying to ascertain the market value, you may also wish to consider the appropriate level in the market of what you are selling. For example, in some instances it may be reasonable to use a higher end market valuation. This is especially the case where the services are exclusive and/or where you have a degree of monopoly in the market. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for How do you work out the value of a donation? When do you receive and accept a donation? Valuing goods and services: examples Valuing goods and services: examples Example 1: how to approach valuing services a party is given A party is approached by an individual who offers the party free use of their property as the venue for a dinner and auction event. The party confirms that the individual is a permissible donor before accepting the offer. The party should identify similar venues that are available to hire for comparable events. The party may wish to limit its comparison to other venues in the same area. The party identifies three similar venues that are available to hire and uses the advertised rates to determine the approximate commercial value of the property's use. Example 2: how to approach valuing services a party sells A party is approached by another organisation for advice on how to run effective political campaigns. The registered party decides to charge the organisation for this service. In the first instance, the party should identify exact or similar suppliers of such services in the market. If the party is unable to identify a comparable supplier or service of this kind, it should identify an appropriate alternative available in the market. The party identifies some suppliers who provide consultancy services on running successful political campaigns. The party

identifies three companies who offer these types of services to determine the estimated commercial value for the purposes of PPERA. As the service the party is providing is exclusive, because their experience of election campaigning is not widely available on the market, it may be appropriate for the party to use a higher end market valuation in this instance. The next three sections provides guidance on how to value and report donations received through crowdfunding, auction prizes and sponsorship. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Valuing goods and services: examples How do you work out the value of a donation? Crowdfunding Crowdfunding What is crowdfunding? Crowdfunding is the use of a web based platform to collect donations. The platform is generally managed by a third party provider and each individual fundraising campaign has a page on the site. Campaigns usually run for a set period of time. At the end of that time, the funds raised, minus a fee paid to the provider, are passed to the donee. Transparency You should ensure that it is clear on the crowdfunding web page who the money is being donated to and what the money is being donated for. For example, whether the fund is going towards to your political party or to meet your candidate's election campaign expenditure. This is because there are different recording and reporting thresholds for candidate donations. This guidance explains the rules for crowdfunding donations to the party. You should ensure that the webpage contains information that explains that permissibility checks will be undertaken in compliance with the rules and that information about donations, including donor details may be published. We also recommend that you include an imprint on your crowdfunding page. There is separate imprints guidance for parties standing in Northern Ireland, England and Wales, and for parties standing in Scotland. imprints factsheet: UK Parliamentary elections, and elections in England Wales and Northern Ireland Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Crowdfunding Valuing goods and services: examples Permissibility Permissibility You must only accept donations over £500 from a permissible source. As with all types of donations, you have 30 days to carry out permissibility checks and decide if you can accept the donation. The date of receipt is the date you receive the funds from the crowdfunding site. Money donated via a crowdfunding webpage to a party that is £500 or less is not a donation under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) and is not reportable. However, when accepting donations you must be aware of situations where it appears a donor is attempting to evade the donation rules, for example if someone makes multiple donations of £500 or less in an attempt to evade the permissibility rules. It is an offence to attempt to evade the controls on donations. If you are concerned this may be happening, please contact us for advice. You should ensure that you have sufficient information from the crowdfunding provider and maintain your records in a way that enables you to ascertain if multiple donations have come from the same source. You must collect sufficient information from every donor to ensure that you can properly check that each donation is from a permissible source. You should be clear on the webpage that this is the reason you are collecting any information. If you are uncertain who the actual donor is you must not accept the donation. You cannot accept anonymous donations of over £500. You must also collect sufficient information to comply with reporting requirements. Cryptocurrencies Cryptocurrencies are digital currencies that operate independently of any central bank or authority. The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Sufficient information must be collected to check permissibility. There must be a means of valuing the donation given in any cryptocurrency. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Permissibility Crowdfunding Case study Case study A political party decides

to raise money to spend on regulated campaign activity via a crowdfunding website. The party enters into an agreement with the crowdfunding website that sets a time limit of 5 January and a target of £20,000. The party then produces a webpage including: a proper imprint advice that permissibility checks will be undertaken for donations made over £500 advice that anonymous donations over £500 cannot be accepted advice that it is an offence to attempt to evade the donation rules information that details of donations over the reporting threshold, including the identity of the donor, will be published on the Electoral Commission website (see Which donations and loans do you need to report?) The party has selected a crowdfunding website that collects enough information from donors to ensure they can complete their recording and reporting obligations. Upon achieving the target amount, the party receives the funds on 5 January as well as details of the individual donations given from the crowdfunding provider. The donations include: a donation of £550 received by the crowdfunding webpage on 17 December a donation of £8,000 received by the crowdfunding webpage on 10 December three donations of £3,000 from the same source received by the crowdfunding webpage on 10 December, 17 December and 3 January several other donations from identifiable sources between £500 and £1,000 received by the crowdfunding webpage over the target period The party should commence permissibility checks on 5 January because this is the date of receipt. The donation of £550 is from an anonymous source. The party returns the donation to the financial institution it was received from originally before the end of the 30 day period for checking permissibility. The party accepts the donation of £8,000 after a permissibility check is undertaken. The donor is made aware from the information provided on the webpage that their name will be published on the Electoral Commission website . The party aggregates and accepts the three donations of £3,000 from the same source after they undertake the permissibility checks. The donor is made aware from the information provided on the webpage that their name will be published on the Electoral Commission website. The party accepts the donations of between £500 and £1,000 after they undertake the permissibility checks. The party records these donations but is not required to report these as they do not meet the reporting threshold. The party reports the single donation of £8,000, and the three aggregated donations of £3,000 from the same source, as these meet the over £7,500 reporting threshold. Details of these donations are later published on the Electoral Commission website. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Case study Permissibility Auction prizes Auction prizes What is an auction prize? An auction prize is anything given for sale or sold to raise money. For example, auction prizes can be cars, the use of holiday homes, artwork, or services such as the provision of a chef for an evening. You must put a value on the prize so that you can decide if it counts as a donation. If it is a donation, you must check that you can accept it, record it and in certain cases, report it to us, the Electoral Commission, as a donation. Auction prizes can be either: tangible items, or intangible benefits or services The value of both tangible and intangible auction prizes may be easy to find out. For example, a prize may be an item such as a car which has a stated recommended retail price. The value of a prize such as a picture signed by a prominent political figure may be harder to determine. Raffle prizes Similar principles apply to the receipt of items or services that are later used as prizes at raffles. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Auction prizes Case study The guiding principle The guiding principle This will help you to decide whether you need to treat an auction prize as a donation. The guiding principle is that, in all cases, you should make an honest assessment, based on the facts, of the value of the item or service that is being auctioned or raffled.

This will be straightforward for most items. However, for some it will be more complicated. The examples in the next section will help you understand how you should approach your assessment. When is an auction prize a donation? There are two possible donation “components” to auction prizes: when you receive an item or service for auction when you auction the item or service Receiving the prize You need to report an auction prize when you receive a prize for auction either without charge or at a non-commercial discount. This counts as a donation to you if: the value of the prize, if the item is given free of charge exceeds £500, or, the amount of the discount exceeds £500 If the item is given free of charge, the amount of the donation will be the value of the item. If the item is given at a discount, the amount of the donation will be the value of the discount. At the auction A further donation is made to you if the buyer pays more than the prize is worth, and if the difference between the item’s worth and what the buyer pays is more than £500. If you pay the full value of the item when acquiring an auction prize, no donation has been received at that point. If the successful bid for the auction prize is at or below the value of the prize, no donation has been made. If the successful bid for the auction prize is more than £500 above the value of the prize, then a donation has been made. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for The guiding principle Auction prizes Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment Calculating value Where you are given an auction prize before it is auctioned, you must calculate its value so that you know whether or not to treat it as a donation. A common way to determine the value of an auction prize is to check its price (or the price of a reasonable equivalent). Where there is doubt as to the exact value of an item or service, you should obtain three commercial quotes and use the average of the three. At auction Any subsequent donation is made if the successful bidder pays more than the market price of the item or service; the donation element is the difference between the price paid by the buyer and the value of the prize. Winning bids that are donations are always categorised as money donations. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment The guiding principle Valuing prizes: examples Valuing prizes: examples The examples below illustrate how to apply the guiding principle in some common circumstances. They are intended to help you to consider how you can assess the value of an auction prize. They are not exhaustive. In each case, you must consider the particular facts in order to reach an honest assessment of how to value the auction prize(s). If you’re not sure how to value a particular prize, you can contact us for advice. We are happy to talk through how you propose to assess the value of a particular prize. As your party is required to keep records that show and explain the transactions it has entered into, you should ensure you keep a record of assessments and valuations so that you can explain whether or not a donation has been made. Example 1: a new car A permissible donor donates a new car to a political party as an auction prize. The donor requests a nominal fee of £1,000 for the car. Upon checking the manufacturer’s website you determine that the car has a recommended retail price – a value – of £12,000. In this scenario, the donor has made a non-money donation to the party of the value of the car minus the fee they have charged. This is £12,000 (value of the car) – £1,000 (fee) = a non-money donation of £11,000. There is a non-money donation to the party of £11,000 which must be reported in a quarterly donation report covering the date when the car was accepted. At auction the car sells for £18,000. To determine whether a donation has been made, subtract the value of the car from the winning bid: £18,000 (winning bid) – £12,000 (value of the car) = a money donation of £6,000. A money donation of £6,000 has been made to the party at

the auction. The party must check the permissibility of the donor before accepting the donation.

Example 2: artwork An artist donates, free of charge, one of their works to an accounting unit of a political party for auction. The threshold for declaring donations accepted by an accounting unit to the Commission is £1,500. The artist values their work at approximately £1,500 based on the sale of earlier works. You should check that this valuation is accurate based on the sale prices of the artist's other works in order to make a reasonable and honest assessment of the value of the work. If the artist has not sold similar works before, you should obtain a second and third opinion in order to determine whether the donation needs to be reported to the Commission or not. Two appraisers independently value the artwork at £1,400 and £1,350. To arrive at a market value of the piece, obtain an average of the three figures: $(£1,500 + £1,400 + £1,350) \div 3 = £1,420$ As the item was donated free of charge, you should conclude that a non-money donation of £1,420 has been made to the party. Occasionally, you may be unable to determine the value of an item or service before an auction. For example if the artwork has been done by a prominent public figure who is not an artist or has not sold artwork before. In such a case you may have to wait until the item or service is bought at auction before assigning value to it, and then reporting it as a donation, if necessary. We are happy to offer advice in such cases, so do contact us.

Example 3: use of a holiday home A donor, Mr Smith, has offered to your party, at no charge, the use of his Spanish holiday home for a week during the summer for the next five years. If Mr Smith rents out his holiday home, you should use the price he usually charges and report this as a non-money donation to the party. Alternatively, if the holiday home is not usually available to rent, you should identify similar rentals in the area and use the advertised rates to work out the market value of the use of Mr Smith's home. In this case, you have calculated that the value of this service is £10,000 based on an internet search for prices of holiday rentals in that area of Spain at that time of year (£2,000 a year x 5 years). You must check that Mr Smith is a permissible donor and report to the Commission in the next quarterly report a non-money donation of £10,000 from Mr Smith. At auction this prize attracts a winning bid of £20,000 from Ms Brown. To calculate the donation element of this transaction, subtract the market value of the prize from the winning bid: £20,000 (winning bid) - £10,000 (value) = a money donation of £10,000 You must check the permissibility of, and also report, the money donation of £10,000 from Ms Brown.

Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Valuing prizes: examples](#)

[Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment](#)

[Reporting auction prize donations](#)

[Reporting auction prize donations](#)

Among the details of the donation you need to report, you must report the date the donation is received. You usually receive a donation on the day you take physical ownership of it. But you may receive it earlier if a person makes a firm commitment to provide the donation to you. For example, if someone donates a crate of vintage champagne to you for auction, you might receive it on the date that the person gives the crate to you. But if the person donating the crate of vintage champagne offers to store the champagne for you until there has been a successful bid for it at auction, you will receive the donation when the commitment to donate the crate is made. Sometimes it may be difficult to decide when you have received a donation. You should make an honest assessment based on all the circumstances. If you are not sure, please contact us for advice.

Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Reporting auction prize donations](#)

[Valuing prizes: examples](#)

[Sponsorship](#)

[Sponsorship](#)

What is sponsorship? Sponsorship is support given to a political party, or other regulated organisation or individual, that helps them meet the costs of: any conference, meeting or other event

(including digital conferences or events) the preparation, production, or distribution of a publication (print or digital), or any study or research.

Sponsorship payments are a type of donation under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Where a payment does not amount to sponsorship, it may still be a donation if it meets the definition of a donation under PERA. What are the sponsorship rules? As with all donations to parties, sponsorship payments over £500 can only be accepted from a permissible donor. You must report donations you receive over certain thresholds. Please see Who can you accept donations and loans from? and Which donations and loans do you need to report? for further details.

Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Sponsorship Reporting auction prize donations Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules? Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules? Yes: Admission charges for conferences, meetings or other events - for example party conference entry passes or an admission fee to attend an event organised by or on behalf of a party, regulated organisation or individual The purchase price of any publications Commercial rate payments for adverts in publications – any amounts above the commercial rate will not be exempt and will be considered a donation if the value exceeds £500 Some payments for conference stands Are all types of advertising exempt? No. The exemption only applies up to the commercial value of adverts which appear in publications. For example, adverts that appear in any publication, including a publication which sets out a party's policies, such as a manifesto ahead of an election. Payments for any other type of advertising, such as banners at an event or digital advertising at a virtual event, should be treated as sponsorship if they help meet the cost of the event. Advertising payments that do not help to meet the costs of an event or publication in any way do not count as sponsorship. For example, if you sell advertising space for your online event and do not incur any direct costs for the event. However, if someone pays more than the commercial value of an advert, the difference between what they pay and the commercial value will be a donation. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules? Sponsorship How much of what you receive is a donation? How much of what you receive is a donation? When calculating the value of sponsorship, the full amount of the payment received should be taken into account and reported if over the thresholds above. No deduction for any commercial value, or any benefit to the sponsor etc, should be made. Fundraising events and dinners If an event is hosted by or on behalf of a party (or party accounting unit), or another regulated organisation or individual, support to help meet the costs of the event must be treated as sponsorship. For payments for a place or table at a dinner organised by a party or other regulated organisation or individual, the difference between the value of the dinner and the amount paid is a donation. Treatment of VAT Where a sponsorship payment includes VAT, the question of whether the VAT element should be reported as part of the sponsorship will depend on the facts. For instance, if the party would have been liable for the VAT if it had not been paid, then its payment is a benefit to the party and should be reported as sponsorship. Sponsorship by companies Where a company makes a payment that is treated as sponsorship, the entire amount is considered a donation under electoral law. Companies will therefore need to ensure that they have complied with any applicable controls on making a political donation under company law. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for How much of what I receive is a donation? Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules? Party conferences and conference stands Party conferences and conference stands Many political parties hold conferences through the year. There are certain rules that

parties should be aware of which apply to payments parties receive towards their conferences. Some political parties offer space for exhibitors for conference stands. The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) provides that the Commission sets a “maximum rate” up to which the hire of these stands will not be considered sponsorship. The Commission has set maximum rates for physical conference stands and digital conference stands respectively. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Party conferences and conference stands](#)

How much of what you receive is a donation?

Digital conference stands

Digital conference stands

If a political party hosts a digital conference and makes available live promotional space on the online platform it is using, it may be considered a digital conference stand. The typical features of a digital conference stand include: The digital stand must be available for hire for the duration of the conference There must be some level of real-time interaction between attendees and exhibitor It must be live An advert or banner (or something similar) on the conference website or hosting platform (note: an advert on a website without the other elements would not, in itself, be a digital conference stand) Payments of up to £7,000 (excluding VAT) for a digital stand do not need to be treated as sponsorship or any other type of donation. Anything you receive over and above £7,000 (excluding VAT) should be treated as sponsorship, and therefore as a donation to the party. You must report this donation if the amount you accept from one source exceeds the relevant reporting threshold. If you charge a higher price than £7,000 (excluding VAT) for a digital stand, we expect you to keep sufficient records to show this transaction. This includes details of the price you applied to it and how you calculated the price. We may ask to see your record keeping for our assurance purposes. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Digital conference stands](#)

Party conferences and conference stands

Physical conference stands

Physical conference stands

Payments of up to £15,000 (excluding VAT) for a 3m x 3m physical stand do not need to be treated as sponsorship or any other type of donation. Anything you receive above £15,000 (excluding VAT) for a 3m x 3m stand should be treated as sponsorship, and therefore as a donation to the party. You must report this donation if the amount you accept from one source exceeds the relevant reporting threshold. A higher pro rata amount can apply for stands larger than 3m x 3m but it is not necessary to pro rata a lower amount for smaller stands. If you charge a higher price than £15,000 (excluding VAT) for a stand larger than 3m x 3m, we expect you to keep sufficient records to show this transaction. This includes details of the size of the stand, what price you applied to it and how you calculated the price. We may ask to see your record keeping for our assurance purposes. If you use a higher pro-rata price for a physical conference stand larger than 3m x 3m, anything you receive above the relevant price must be treated as a donation to the party. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Physical conference stands](#)

Digital conference stands

Fringe events, receptions and meetings

Fringe events, receptions and meetings

Some political parties hold fringe events and other meetings at their party conferences. If you receive payments to hold these events, these payments will count as sponsorship. In this case any payments received with a value of over £500 can only be accepted from a permissible donor. The full value of the payment received should be taken into account and treated as sponsorship, and therefore as a donation to the party. This must be reported by the party if the amount you accept from one source exceeds the donation reporting thresholds. Please see ‘Which donations and loans do you need to report’ for details of the reporting thresholds. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Fringe events, receptions and meetings](#)

Physical conference stands

Conference or event packages

Conference or event packages Some parties may offer overall discounts when a combined package of items relating to an event are purchased together, for example a conference stand, a number of admission passes, and a number of seats at a dinner. If you offer a conference package, you will need to consider each part of the package to assess whether it is reportable. Some elements may be exempt, such as an admission charge, whilst others elements of the package, such as non-exempt types of advertising, will be treated as sponsorship if they help to meet the costs of the event. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Conference or event packages](#)

Fringe events, receptions and meetings What must you record when you accept a donation? What must you record when you accept a donation? If you accept a donation over £500, you must record these details: the required details of the source (please see [Who can you accept donations and loans from?](#) for guidance on the details you must record for each type of source) the section of the party that has accepted the donation (central party or an accounting unit) the amount of the donation, if money, or the nature and the value of the donation if non-money the date on which the donation was received the date on which the donation was accepted whether the donation is from an Irish source If you are reporting a donation from an Irish individual or unincorporated association, you must also provide us with extra documents when submitting your quarterly report. Please see the sections [Irish individuals](#) and [Irish unincorporated associations](#) for further details. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for What must you record when you accept a donation?](#)

How much of what you receive is a donation? What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? If you receive a donation and it isn't permissible, you must return it within 30 days. If your party keeps the impermissible donation after the 30 days, you are deemed to have accepted it. If your party accepts an impermissible donation, your party may be subject to civil sanctions. The party and the treasurer may also have committed criminal offences. Any potential breach will be dealt with in accordance with our [Enforcement Policy](#). [Enforcement Policy 4 April 2016 to 31 August 2023](#) If you've accepted an impermissible donation, you should tell us as soon as possible. You must record: the name of the source, if known the amount of the donation, if money, or the nature and value of the donation if non-money the manner in which the donation was made the date you received the donation the date you returned the donation the action you took to return the donation (for example, the person or institution you returned it to) You must include all impermissible donations in your quarterly report. How do you return an impermissible donation? If you know who the donor is, you must return it to them within 30 days of receiving the donation. If the donation is from an unidentified source (for example, an anonymous £600 money donation), you must return it within 30 days of receiving the donation to: the person who transferred the donation to you; or the financial institution used to transfer the donation If you cannot identify either, you must send the donation to the Electoral Commission. We will pay it into the Consolidated Fund, which is managed by HM Treasury. If any interest has been gained on the donation before you return it, you can keep it. This is not treated as a donation and it does not need to be reported. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source?](#)

What must you record when you accept a donation? Which loans are covered by the rules? Which loans are covered by the rules? Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), the following types of transactions are regulated: loans of money credit facilities, such as credit cards

and overdrafts securities or guarantees for a party's obligations to someone else Only transactions with a value of more than £500 are covered by the controls. In this guidance, we use the term 'loans' to refer to all of these transactions. Loans of £500 or less Loans with a value of £500 or less are outside the scope of PPERA and you do not need to record or report them. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Which loans are covered by the rules? What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? You can only enter into a loan with certain permissible sources. Please see Who can you accept donations and loans from? for the full list of permissible sources. You must complete permissibility checks before you enter into a loan as entering into a loan with an impermissible source is a criminal offence. You must satisfy yourselves that the source is permissible each time a loan is made, even if you have made permissibility checks for past loans from the same source. You should also carry out regular checks throughout the term of the loan to make sure that the source is still permissible. This is because the source must remain permissible for the whole period of the loan. You should keep a record of all your permissibility checks to show that you have followed the rules. If a source isn't permissible or they become impermissible at any point during the loan period, the transaction is void under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). You must still repay a loan that is void and the Commission may apply to the courts to recover the money if it is not repaid. If you have entered into an impermissible loan, or a loan becomes impermissible during the loan period, please read What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? for further guidance on the actions you must take. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? Which loans are covered by the rules? How do you work out the value of a loan? How do you work out the value of a loan? Type of loan Value A loan of money The total amount you will borrow A credit facility The maximum amount you can borrow A security (connected transaction) The amount which the lender would be liable for if your party defaults If the loan allows any interest to be added to the total amount you borrow, you don't need to include this in the value of the loan. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for How do you work out the value of a loan? What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? What must you record when you enter into a loan? What must you record when you enter into a loan? If you enter into a loan over £500, you must record these details: the required details of the source (please see Who can you accept donation and loans from? for guidance on the details you must record for each source) the section of the party that has entered into the loan (central party or an accounting unit) the nature of the transaction – whether it is a loan, credit facility or security arrangement the value of the loan the date the loan was entered into the date the loan is due to be repaid or a statement that it is indefinite, or otherwise how the date will be determined under the agreement if the loan ended, the date it ended the rate of interest – or how the rate will be determined under the agreement, or a statement that no interest is payable whether the agreement contains a provision that enables outstanding interest to be added to the sum owed whether or not any security has been given for the loan whether the loan was from an Irish source If you are reporting a loan from an Irish individual or unincorporated association, you must also provide us with extra documents when submitting your quarterly report. Please see the sections Irish individuals and Irish unincorporated associations for further details. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What must you record when you enter into a

loan? How do you work out the value of a loan? What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? If a source isn't permissible or they become impermissible at any point during the loan period, the transaction is void. It has no legal effect and you must pay back anything you owe. You must therefore continue to check the permissibility of the source throughout the term of the loan. If you have entered into a loan with an impermissible source, you should let us know as soon as you become aware the source is impermissible. You must record these details: the same details for a permissible loan (see What must you record when you enter into a loan?) details of how you dealt with the transaction, for example, how you repaid the loan You must include all impermissible loans in your quarterly report. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What do you do if you have an impermissible loan? What must you record when you enter into a loan? Who can you accept donations and loans from? Who can you accept donations and loans from? A registered Northern Ireland political party can accept donations from and enter into loans with the following permissible sources: an individual registered on a UK electoral register, including overseas electors and those leaving bequests an Irish citizen, including those leaving bequests a UK-registered company which is incorporated in the UK and carries on business in the UK an Irish-registered company which is incorporated in the EU, and has an office in Ireland or Northern Ireland from which the carrying out of one or more of its principal activities is directed a UK-registered or Irish-registered political party a UK-registered or Irish-registered trade union a UK-registered or Irish-registered building society a UK-registered limited liability partnership which carries on business in the UK an Irish-registered limited liability partnership that has an office in Ireland or Northern Ireland from which the carrying out of one or more of its principal activities is directed a UK-registered or Irish-registered friendly, industrial or provident society a UK-based unincorporated association that carries on the majority of its business or other activities in the UK an Irish based unincorporated association that carries on the majority of its business or other activities in Ireland and has its main office in Ireland You can also accept donations, but not loans, from certain types of trusts, certain public funds and from anyone who is paying for the reasonable costs of a visit outside the UK. Although you can legally accept donations from charities as long as they are also permissible donors, charities are not usually allowed to make political donations under charity law. If you know that a donor is a charity, you should make sure that they get advice from the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (or other charity regulator, as appropriate) before they make the donation. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Who can you accept donations and loans from? What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? UK individuals UK individuals What makes a UK individual permissible? Individuals must be on a UK electoral register at the time of the donation or loan. This includes overseas electors. If you are left a bequest, and the individual was on the electoral register at any time five years before their death, you can accept the donation. How do you check permissibility? You can use the electoral register to check if an individual is permissible. Registered political parties are entitled to a free copy of the full electoral register. A new version of the electoral register is usually published on 1 December every year, and it is updated regularly. You should contact the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland or the Electoral Registration Officer at the relevant local council in Great Britain in writing for your copy, explaining that you are asking for it as a registered political party. You should also ask them to send you all the updates. You will

receive the register in data form unless you request a printed version of the register. You can find contact details for local councils through our postcode search . You must check the register and updates carefully to make sure that the person is on the register on the date you enter into the loan, or on which you received the donation. In special circumstances, people have an anonymous registration. If a donor is anonymously registered, you must provide a statement that you have seen evidence that the individual has an anonymous entry on the register. Evidence will be in the form of a certificate of anonymous registration. You must submit a copy of the certificate with your quarterly report. You must only use the register for checking if an individual is permissible, or for electoral purposes. You must not pass it on to anyone else. What do you need to record? You must record: the individual's full name the address as it is shown on the electoral register, or if the person is an overseas elector, their home address You may find it helpful to note the person's electoral number, as a record of your check. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for UK individuals Who can you accept donations and loans from? Irish individuals Irish individuals What makes an Irish individual permissible? An Irish individual or a bequest from an Irish citizen is permissible if they are eligible (or would have been eligible) to obtain one of the following documents: an Irish passport an Irish certificate of nationality an Irish certificate of naturalisation How do you check permissibility? You should ask the individual to show you one of the documents mentioned above or satisfy yourself that they are, or in the case of a bequest, would have been eligible to obtain one of them. What do you need to record? You must record the individual's full name. You may also find it helpful to note the documentation that the individual produced, as a record of your check. You will need to provide us with a certified copy of one of the documents listed above when you report a donation or loan from an Irish individual to us. The document must be certified by the Department of Foreign Affairs Ireland. Certified copies can be obtained from: Consular Division Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 80 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2 D02 VY53 Tel: +353 1 4082174 / 4082322 Certified copies may also be requested from Irish Embassies and Consulates abroad. Please visit the Department of Foreign Affairs' website for contact details. If you receive a bequest from an Irish citizen please contact us for advice on the supporting documentation you will need to include with your donation report. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Irish individuals UK individuals UK companies UK companies What makes a UK company permissible? A company is permissible if it is: registered as a company at Companies House incorporated in the UK, and carrying on business in the UK You must be sure that the company meets all three criteria. How do you check UK company registration? You should check the register at Companies House, using the free Webcheck service at companieshouse.gov.uk . You should look at the full register entry for the company. How do you check if the a company is carrying on business in the UK? You must be satisfied that the company is carrying on business in the UK. The business can be non-profit-making. Even if you have direct personal knowledge of the company, you should check the Companies House register to see if: the company is in liquidation, dormant, or about to be struck off the company's accounts and annual return are overdue A company may still be carrying on business if it is in liquidation, dormant or late in filing documents, but you should make extra checks to satisfy yourself that this is the case. For any company, you should consider looking at: the company's website relevant trade, telephone directories or reputable websites the latest accounts filed at Companies House If you are still not sure if the company is carrying on business in the UK, you should ask for written confirmation of its

business activities from the company's directors. What do you need to record? You must record: the name as it is shown on the register the company's registered office address the registered company number Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for UK companies Irish individuals Irish companies Irish companies What makes an Irish company permissible? An Irish company is permissible if it is: registered as a company at the Companies Registration Office Ireland incorporated in a Member State of the EU, and has an office in Ireland or Northern Ireland from which the carrying out of one or more of its principal activities is directed You must be sure that the company meets all three criteria. How do I check Irish company registration and EU incorporation? You should check the register at the Companies Registration Office Ireland at core.cro.ie . You must check where the company is incorporated. Non-Irish companies may have a branch or place of business in Ireland but may not be incorporated within the EU. How do you check if the company is carrying out one or more of its principal activities in Ireland or Northern Ireland? You must be satisfied that the company has an office in Ireland or Northern Ireland from which the carrying out of one or more of its principal activities is directed. The business can be non-profit-making. Even if you have direct personal knowledge of the company, you should check with Companies Registration Office Ireland to see if: the company is still active the company's accounts and annual return are overdue A company may still be carrying out one or more of its principal activities if it is in liquidation, dormant or late in filing documents, but you should make extra checks to satisfy yourself that this is the case. For any company, you should consider looking at: the company's website relevant trade, telephone directories or reputable websites the latest accounts filed at Companies Registration Office Ireland If you are still not sure if the company is carrying out one or more of its principal activities you should ask for written confirmation that one or more of the company's principal activities are directed from its office in Ireland or Northern Ireland. What do you need to record? You must record: the name as it is shown on the register the company's registered office address the registered company number Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Irish companies UK companies UK limited liability partnerships UK limited liability partnerships What makes a UK limited liability partnership permissible? A limited liability partnership (LLP) is a permissible donor if it is: registered as an LLP at Companies House carrying on business in the UK How do you check permissibility? You should check the register at Companies House, using the free Webcheck service at companieshouse.gov.uk . How do you check if a limited liability partnership is carrying on business in the UK? You must be satisfied that the LLP is carrying on business in the UK. The business can be non-profit-making. Even if you have direct personal knowledge of the LLP, you should check the Companies House register to see if: the LLP is in liquidation, dormant, or about to be struck off the LLP's accounts and annual return are overdue An LLP may still be carrying on business if it is in liquidation, dormant or late in filing documents, but you should make extra checks to satisfy yourself that this is the case. For any company, you should consider looking at: the LLP's website relevant trade, telephone directories or reputable websites the latest accounts filed at Companies House If you are still not sure if the LLP is carrying on business in the UK, you should ask for written confirmation of its business activities from the LLP's directors. What do you need to record? You must record: the name as it is shown on the register the LLP's registered office address Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for UK limited liability partnerships Irish companies Irish limited liability partnerships Irish limited liability partnerships What makes an Irish limited liability partnership

permissible? An Irish limited liability partnership (LLP) is a permissible donor or lender if it is: registered as an LLP with the Companies Registration Office Ireland has an office in Ireland or Northern Ireland from which the carrying out of one or more of its principal activities is directed How do you check permissibility? To check the permissibility of an Irish LLP you should check the register at the Companies Registration Office Ireland at core.cro.ie . How do you check if the LLP is carrying out one or more of its principal activities in Ireland or Northern Ireland? You must be satisfied that the LLP has an office in Ireland or Northern Ireland from which the carrying out of one or more of its principal activities is directed. The business can be non-profit-making. Even if you have direct personal knowledge of the LLP, you should check with the Companies Registration Office Ireland to see if: the LLP is still active the LLP's accounts and annual return are overdue A LLP may still be carrying out one or more of its principal activities if it is in liquidation, dormant or late in filing documents, but you should make extra checks to satisfy yourself that this is the case. For any LLP, you should consider looking at: the LLP's website relevant trade, telephone directories or reputable websites the latest accounts filed at the Companies Registration Office Ireland If you are still not sure if the LLP is permissible you should ask for written confirmation that one or more of the LLP's principal activities are directed from its office in Ireland or Northern Ireland. What do you need to record? You must record: the name as it is shown on the register the LLP's registered office address Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Irish limited liability partnerships UK limited liability partnerships UK unincorporated associations UK unincorporated associations What makes a UK unincorporated association permissible? An unincorporated association is a permissible if: it has more than one member the main office is in the UK it is carrying on business or other activities in the UK How do you check permissibility? There is no register of unincorporated associations. Permissibility is a matter of fact in each case. In general, an unincorporated association is an association of two or more individuals who have come together to carry out a shared purpose. An unincorporated association has an identifiable membership which is bound together by identifiable rules or an agreement between the members. These rules set out how the unincorporated association is to be run and managed. Sometimes the rules might be formalised, for example in a written constitution. However they do not need to be formalised. For example, members' clubs are sometimes unincorporated associations. If you are not sure that an association meets the criteria, you should consider whether the donation is actually from individuals within it (rather than the association) or if someone within the association is acting as an agent for others. If you think this is the case, you must check the permissibility of all individuals who have contributed more than £500 and treat them as the donors. You can find more information on carrying on business in the previous section How do you check if a company is carrying on business in the UK? If an unincorporated association makes political donations amounting to more than £25,000 in a calendar year, you should make them aware that they have to report this to us. Please see our website for more information on unincorporated associations . What do you need to record? You will need to record: the name of the unincorporated association the association's main office address Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for UK unincorporated associations Irish limited liability partnerships Irish unincorporated associations Irish unincorporated associations What makes an Irish unincorporated association permissible? An Irish unincorporated association is a permissible donor or lender if: it has more than one member the main office is in Ireland it is carrying on business

or other activities wholly or mainly in Ireland How do you check permissibility? There is no register of unincorporated associations. Permissibility is a matter of fact in each case. In general, an unincorporated association is an association of two or more individuals who have come together to carry out a shared purpose. An unincorporated association has an identifiable membership which is bound together by identifiable rules or an agreement between the members. These rules set out how the unincorporated association is to be run and managed. Sometimes the rules might be formalised, for example in a written constitution. However they do not need to be formalised. For example, members' clubs are sometimes unincorporated associations. You must check the main office is in Ireland. If you are not sure that an association meets the criteria, you should consider whether the donation is actually from individuals within it (rather than the association) or if someone within the association is acting as an agent for others. If you think this is the case, you must check the permissibility of all individuals who have contributed more than £500 and treat them as the donors. You can find more information on carrying on business in the previous section How do you check if a company is carrying out one or more of its principal activities in Ireland or Northern Ireland? If an unincorporated association makes political donations amounting to more than £25,000 in a calendar year, you should make them aware that they have to report this to us. Please see our website for more information on unincorporated associations . What do you need to record? You will need to record: the name of the unincorporated association the unincorporated association's main office address If you are reporting a donation from an Irish unincorporated association, you must provide a statement from a currently practicing solicitor in Ireland that confirms the name and address of the association and the fact that it is an unincorporated association. If you are reporting a loan, you must provide this statement from a firm of solicitors currently practicing in Ireland. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Irish unincorporated associations](#) UK unincorporated associations UK trusts UK trusts What makes a UK trust permissible? Trusts created before 27 July 1999 A trust created before 27 July 1999 is permissible if no property has been transferred to the trust since this date, and the terms of the trust have not varied since this date If the trust is a pre-1999 trust, then you must report: that the donation was from a trustee the date on which the trust was created the full name of the creator of the trust, and every individual or organisation by whom, or under whose will, property was transferred to the trust before 27 July 1999 Permissible donor trusts Permissible donor trusts may have been created before or after 27 July 1999. A permissible donor trust is permissible if the trust was created by an individual or organisation that was a permissible source at the time. and only transfers of property from permissible sources have been made to the trust If a trust was created by an individual's will, that individual must have been on a UK electoral register at any time within five years prior to the date of their death. A trust cannot be a permissible donor trust if it has ever received property from an impermissible or unidentifiable source. If the trust is a permissible donor trust, then you must report: that the donation was from a trustee the required permissibility details of the individual or organisation that created the trust, and every other individual or organisation by whom, or under whose will, property has been transferred to the trust Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for UK trusts](#) Irish unincorporated associations Irish trusts Irish trusts What makes an Irish trust permissible? Trusts created before 1 November 2007 A trust created in Ireland before 1 November 2007 is permissible if it has only received transfers of property from permissible sources since this date. If a trust has

received property from an impermissible or unidentified source since this date, it is not a permissible trust. If the trust is a pre-2007 trust, then you must report: that the donation was from a trustee the date the trust was created the address of the trust's office the required permissibility details of the individual or organisation who created the trust, and every other individual or organisation by whom, or under whose will, property was transferred to the trust after 1 November 2007. Please see the previous pages for guidance on the permissibility details you must report for each type of source. Trusts created on or after 1 November 2007 A trusts created in Ireland on or after 1 November 2007 is permissible if the trust was created by an individual or organisation that was a permissible source at the time, and only transfers of property from permissible sources have been made to the trust If the trust is a post-2007 trust, then you must report: that the donation was from a trustee the date the trust was created the address of the trust's office the required permissibility details of the individual or organisation that created the trust, and every other individual or organisation by whom, or under whose will, property was transferred. Please see the previous pages for guidance on the permissibility details you must report for each type of source. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Irish trusts UK trusts Public funds and visits outside the UK Public funds and visits outside the UK Public funds Public funds received by registered parties are permissible donations, except for grants paid towards security costs at party conferences. What do you need to record? You will need to record: the full name and address of the organisation making the payment to the party, e.g., House of Commons Fees Office the provision under which the payment to the party has been made, e.g., Resolution of the House of Commons (give date and number, if applicable) Visits outside the UK Payments received by registered parties to meet reasonable qualifying costs incurred in connection with a visit outside the UK by a member or officer of the party are treated as permissible donations. Qualifying costs in relation to a visit include travelling to and from the UK, or travelling, accommodation or subsistence costs while on the visit. What do you need to record? You will need to record: the full name and address of the person or organisation that funded the visit the date(s) on which the visit took place the country or countries in which the visit took place Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Public funds and overseas visits Irish trusts Other sources Other sources UK registered political parties You can find the full list of political parties registered with us on our register of political parties . Irish registered political parties The Irish register of political parties is maintained by the Electoral Commission (Ireland) . UK trade unions A UK trade union must be listed as a trade union by the Certification Officer or the Certification Officer for Northern Ireland to be permissible. You should check the official list of active trade unions on the Certification Officer's website or on the Certification Officer for Northern Ireland's website . Irish trade unions Irish trade unions must be registered by the Registrar of Friendly Societies of Ireland to be permissible. You should check the register of friendly societies maintained by the Registrar. UK building societies A UK building society must be a building society within the meaning of the Building Societies Act 1986 to be permissible. You should check the list of building societies registered by the Financial Conduct Authority on the Mutuals Public Register . Irish building societies An Irish building society must be registered by the Central Bank and Financial Services Authority of Ireland. You should check the Central Bank of Ireland's Registers . UK friendly societies, and industrial and provident societies UK friendly societies, and industrial and provident societies must be registered under the Friendly Societies Act 1974, the Co-

operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, or the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 to be permissible. You should check the Mutuals Public Register maintained by the Financial Conduct Authority. Irish friendly societies, and industrial and provident societies Irish friendly societies, and industrial and provident societies must be registered by the Registrar of Friendly Societies of Ireland to be permissible. You should check the register of friendly societies maintained by the Registrar. What do you need to record? You will need to record: the name of the donor the address, as shown on the relevant register Last updated: 10 August 2023 Book traversal links for Other sources Public funds and visits outside the UK Which donations and loans do you need to report? Which donations and loans do you need to report? Certain donations and loans must be reported to us and made public. We use 'benefits' to refer to both donations and loans over £500. Benefits under £500 are not covered by the rules and do not need to be recorded, aggregated or reported. We publish details of the amounts and the donors and lenders on our website . We don't publish the addresses of individuals who donate or lend. You must submit quarterly reports showing donations and loans accepted in that quarter. There are separate reports for donations and for loans. All parties must report: all impermissible donations all impermissible loans all permissible donations over £7,500 all permissible loans over £7,500 all permissible benefits that add up to over £7,500 from the same source in the same calendar year (aggregated benefits) all permissible benefits that: are (or add up to) over £1,500 ; and come from a source the central party has already accepted an over £7,500 benefit from in that calendar year changes to the details of loans you have already reported to us, such as partial or full repayments or changes to the terms If your party has accounting units, the central party treasurer is responsible for reporting donations from accounting units too. Different reporting thresholds apply to accounting units. You can find more information in the next section, Parties with accounting units .

Aggregating benefits You must add together any permissible benefits that fall under the reporting threshold that you receive from the same source in the same calendar year. This means you must add together donations and loans from a source and report these when the total value of the benefits meets the relevant reporting threshold. You should report these aggregated benefits to us in the quarter that they exceed the reporting threshold. Each aggregated benefit should be recorded and reported individually in your quarterly report. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Which donations and loans do you need to report? Other sources

Parties with accounting units Parties with accounting units Parties with accounting units must report donations and loans received by the central party and accounting units. There are different thresholds for reporting benefits received by each branch of the party. a central party's reporting threshold is over £7,500 an accounting unit's reporting threshold is over £1,500 Accounting unit treasurers do not report to us separately. They must give all the relevant information on benefits to the central party treasurer when requested to do so. The central party treasurer is legally responsible for reporting benefits received by the central party and accounting units to us. Benefits to the central party you must report: all impermissible donations all impermissible loans all permissible donations over £7,500 all permissible loans over £7,500 all permissible benefits that add up to over £7,500 from the same source in the same calendar year (including benefits received by different sections of the party) all permissible benefits that: are (or add up to) over £1,500 ; and come from a source the central party has already accepted an over £7,500 benefit from in that calendar year changes to the details of loans you have already reported to us, such

as partial or full repayments, or changes to the terms Benefits to an accounting unit you must report: all impermissible donations all impermissible loans all permissible donations over £1,500 all permissible loans over £1,500 all permissible benefits that add up to over £1,500 from the same source in the same calendar year changes to the details of loans you have already reported to us, such as partial or full repayments, or changes to the terms Aggregating benefits Aggregating benefits You must add together any permissible benefits that fall under the reporting threshold that you receive from the same source in the same calendar year. This means you must add together donations and loans from a source and report these when the total value of the benefits meets the relevant reporting threshold. If these benefits are made to the same section of the party, you should report these aggregated benefits to us in the quarter that they exceed the central party or accounting unit reporting thresholds, respectively. Benefits from the same source to different sections of a party Permissible benefits that are accepted by an accounting unit but don't meet the reporting threshold should be treated as benefits that have been accepted by the central party. This means the central party reporting threshold will apply to these benefits. For example, an individual might make a number of donations to different sections of a party that are all below the reporting threshold. As the donations made to the accounting units are treated as donations to the central party, these donations are reportable if they exceed the £7,500 reporting threshold when aggregated. You should add together benefits from the same source made to different sections of the party at the end of the calendar year and report these aggregated benefits to us in Quarter Four. Please see the next section Reporting donations and loans: examples for further guidance on reporting benefits. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Parties with accounting units Which donations and loans do you need to report? Reporting donations and loans: examples Reporting donations and loans: examples Example 1: A limited liability partnership makes a £10,000 donation to a party in March and a £2,000 donation in July. In this example, the £10,000 donation is reportable because it exceeds the over £7,500 reporting threshold. After accepting this donation, the reporting threshold for further benefits from the same source drops to over £1,500 for the remainder of the year. This means the £2,000 donation is also reportable as it meets the lower threshold of over £1,500. Example 2: An unincorporated association makes three donations of £600 to a single accounting unit over a year. When added together the donation amount totals £1,800, which is over the £1,500 threshold for an accounting unit. These aggregated donations are reportable when the reporting threshold is met. In this example the donations become reportable in the quarter in which the third donation is accepted. Example 3: An individual gives a £5,000 donation and a £5,000 loan to the central party in the same calendar year. The party must report any permissible benefits that are or add up to over £7,500 from the same source in a calendar year. When added together the total value of these benefits is £10,000, which exceeds the £7,500 threshold. These aggregated benefits should be reported in the quarter that they exceed the reporting threshold. Example 4: A company gives £5,000 to the central party in January and £1,000 each to three accounting units in May. Individually, these donations are below the reporting thresholds for the central party and accounting units. The party must add together any benefits received from the same source over the calendar year which do not meet the reporting threshold alone. In this case, the three £1,000 donations to the accounting units should be treated as donations to the central party. When added together the total donation amount is £8,000, which is over the £7,500 reporting threshold for donations to the central

party. These aggregated donations are reportable and must be reported at the end of the calendar year, in Quarter Four. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Reporting donations and loans: examples](#) Parties with accounting units [How to report donations and loans](#) [How to report donations and loans](#) You must submit donation and loan reports to us every quarter showing the donations and loans your party has accepted during each reporting period. We must receive your reports within 30 days of the end of each reporting quarter. We will investigate any failure to submit a report within the deadline in line with our Enforcement Policy. [Enforcement Policy](#) 4 April 2016 to 31 August 2023 These are the deadlines for submitting quarterly reports: Quarter Date report is due One (1 January – 31 March) 30 April Two (1 April – 30 June) 30 July Three (1 July – 30 September) 30 October Four (1 October – 31 December) 30 January Submitting your reports You can submit your quarterly reports on PEF Online . Alternatively, you can download the reporting forms below and submit the completed forms to us by email or you can post these to us. Exemptions from quarterly reports If you haven't received any donations, entered into any new loans or made any changes to your existing loans, you still need to submit quarterly reports. This is called a 'nil report'. You can submit nil reports through PEF Online or if you are using the paper forms, the form you'll need for this is called an RP10QN (NI) for donations and an RP10QNb (NI) for loans. If you submit four consecutive nil reports, you are exempt from submitting further reports until you receive another reportable donation, enter into a new loan or make changes to an existing loan. If you are unsure whether your party is exempt from submitting a quarterly donations or loans report, please contact us . Even if you are exempt from quarterly reporting, you must still submit annual accounts for your party. Forms [Form RP10a \(NI\): Quarterly report of donations made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland](#) [Explanatory notes for Form RP10a \(NI\): Quarterly report of donations made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland](#) [Form RP10QN \(NI\): Quarterly report of donations made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland: statement of nil report](#) [Explanatory notes for Form RP10QN \(NI\): Quarterly report of donations made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland: statement of nil report](#) [Form RP10b \(NI\): Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland](#) [Explanatory notes for Form RP10b \(NI\): Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland](#) [Form RP10QNb \(NI\): Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland: statement of nil report](#) [Explanatory notes for Form RP10QNb \(NI\): Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party registered in Northern Ireland: statement of nil report](#) Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for How to report donations and loans](#) [Reporting donations and loans: examples](#) [UK Parliamentary general elections](#) [UK Parliamentary general elections](#) When a UK Parliamentary general election (UKPGE) is called you must report to us every week, unless you have made a declaration to us that you will not be standing any candidates at the election. You can make this declaration by submitting a completed Form RP6 to us at any time up until seven days after the election is called. You can withdraw the declaration if your party decides to stand candidates. When a UKPGE is called, we will write to you to let you know how to report to us and we will put details on our website. [Form RP6: Declaration of exemption of a registered political party - integrated notes](#) Last updated: 10 October 2022 [Book traversal links for UK Parliamentary general elections](#) [How to report donations and loans](#)

Running electoral registration - England Full guidance Our guidance for delivering the annual canvass is available [here](#) Running electoral registration - England This guidance has been produced to support Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) in planning for and delivering well-run electoral registration services. It has been developed in close consultation with colleagues across the electoral community including the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the Association of s (AEA), the Scottish Assessors Association (SAA), the UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board (ECAB), the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG) and the Welsh Electoral Practitioners Working Group (WEPWG). It reflects the ERO's legal obligations and what we, and colleagues across the electoral community, believe that EROs should expect of their staff in planning for and delivering well-run electoral registration services. The guidance is directed towards the ERO and the duties they carry out. As these duties may, in practice, be carried out by deputies and/or appointed staff, we use the term 'you' throughout this guidance to mean the ERO and whoever is carrying out the ERO's functions on their behalf. Throughout this guidance we use 'must' to refer to a specific legal requirement and 'may / should' for recommended practice. To help you use this guidance we have produced a Q&A document that should answer any initial queries you may have. Questions and answers document for the new style ERO guidance Updates to our guidance Change log Date of update Description of change November 2022 Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents guidance added. February 2023 Updates to: The requirement to Notify anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document Guidance on the Availability of Voter Authority Certificate application forms■ The determination of an application for a Voter Authority Certificate The issuing and collection of temporary Voter Authority Certificates The list of accepted documents for an application for anonymous registration■ The retention and inspection requirements for the BPRL and VIDEF March 2023 Update to guidance on the management of photos submitted for Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector Document applications April 2023 Updates to: Guidance on the ■ use of voter ID data on and after polling day Guidance on the use of information supplied as part of an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document Removal of provisions to apply for an emergency proxy on the grounds of covid the ■processing of Crown Servant applications September 2023 Updated guidance on Absent Voting (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) added Book traversal links for Running electoral registration - England Your role and responsibilities as Electoral Registration Officer Your role and responsibilities as Electoral Registration Officer Your role and responsibilities as Electoral Registration Officer As Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) you are responsible for compiling and maintaining the register of electors. This guidance covers the appointment of EROs, your duties to conduct an annual canvass and to maintain the register throughout the year, and the resources required to support you in your duties. How are Electoral Registration Officers appointed? In order to be able to vote in elections in England, a person's name must be included in a register of electors. As ERO you are responsible for compiling the register of electors. The council of every district and London borough must appoint an officer of the council to be the ERO. In the City of London, the Common Council must appoint an officer as the ERO. The ERO should be a senior officer, for example the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, and should undertake relevant training to ensure they have, and maintain, the skills required for the role. Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for Your role and responsibilities as Electoral Registration Officer Running electoral registration -

England What are the duties of an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the duties of an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the duties of an Electoral Registration Officer? The statutory functions, including the duties of the ERO, are set out in legislation. Further duties can be imposed by a direction of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has a power to direct EROs in the discharge of their functions but can only exercise this power of direction on, and in accordance with, a recommendation of the Electoral Commission. The local authority that appointed you as ERO must provide the resources needed to discharge your statutory functions. Any expenses properly incurred by you in performance of your functions must be paid by the local authority that appointed you.

1 1. Sections 52 and 54 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for What are the duties of an Electoral Registration Officer? Your role and responsibilities as Electoral Registration Officer Maintaining the register Maintaining the register Maintaining the register The electoral register As ERO you have a duty to maintain: a register of parliamentary electors a register of local government electors 1 These registers contain details of those who are registered to vote and must be combined as far as is practicable. Any reference to the register in our guidance should be taken as a reference to the combined registers unless otherwise stated. The edited register You must also produce an edited (or open) version of the register. 2 We use the term edited register, as this is the technical term used in the legislation. Open register is used to describe the edited register to members of the public to make it easier to understand the purpose of this register and how it is used. Where we mention the edited register in this context, we will refer to the edited register as the open register. The edited register contains only the names and addresses of those on the full register who have not opted out of their details appearing on the edited register. Absent voting records In addition to maintaining the register, you have a duty to process absent vote applications, maintain the absent voting record and produce the lists of absent voters for an election. 3 More information can be found in our guidance on absent voting . 1. Section 9 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 93 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4 (RPA) 2000 and Regulation 45 RPR (England & Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 17 August 2021 Book traversal links for Maintaining the register What are the duties of an Electoral Registration Officer? Ensuring registers are accurate and complete Ensuring registers are accurate and complete Ensuring registers are accurate and complete You need to publish registers that are as accurate and complete as possible. By accurate we mean that there are no false entries and by complete we mean that every person who is entitled to have an entry in an electoral register is registered. You have a duty under Section 9A of the Representation People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013) to take all necessary steps to comply with your duty to maintain the electoral register, and to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all those eligible (and no others) are registered in it. 1 The steps required under Section 9A include: sending at least one canvass communication to any address sending a canvass form more than once making on one or more occasions house to house inquiries making on one or more occasions contact by telephone making contact by such other means as the registration officer thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in a register inspecting any records held by any person which he is permitted to inspect under or by virtue of any enactment or rule of law providing training to persons under his direction or control in connection

with the carrying out of the duty You must actively consider each of the steps listed and take all such action that you consider necessary in order to fulfil your duty to maintain the register of electors. The steps do not need to be taken in any particular order. If you fail to take these steps, you may be in breach of official duty, which on summary conviction can result in a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale. 2 You are also required by law to take specified steps to follow up on particular canvass non-responses, including making contact with the property or an individual. Any potential new electors identified will also need to be sent an Invitation to register (ITR) and a registration application form, and you will need to take the specified steps – issuing two reminders and a personal visit - to follow up with any ITR non-responders. 3 These processes will not all be linear and will need to be carried out concurrently. These duties apply throughout the year and not just during the canvass period. We provide more guidance to help you with production of the ITR and registration form in our forms and letters guidance . 1. Section 9A Representation People Act (RPA) 1983 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 63 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZB Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 29 May 2020 Book traversal links for Ensuring registers are accurate and complete Maintaining the register Carrying out house to house enquiries throughout the year Carrying out house to house enquiries throughout the year You are required to carry out house-to-house enquiries throughout the year 1 you should have the necessary staff in place to carry out these visits. 2 The visits can be used for: making enquiries with individuals who have not responded to an ITR identifying any changes to properties, such as new buildings or alterations to existing properties to help you to update your property database providing help to electors who need additional support or assistance to make an application to register or to respond to your enquiries Data protection training should be included in training for all staff and canvassers who are carrying out house to house enquiries. This will help you to embed the data protection principles in your work and demonstrate compliance with data protection legislation. More information on planning, training and the recruitment of staff, including canvassers can be found in planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass. 1. Section 9A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 8 Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 January 2021 Book traversal links for Carrying out house to house enquiries throughout the year Ensuring registers are accurate and complete Encouraging participation Encouraging participation Encouraging participation You have a duty to take such steps as you think appropriate to encourage the participation of electors in your area in the electoral process. In doing this, you must have regard to any guidance issued by the Electoral Commission. 1 Throughout the year you should work to identify people who are not registered and encourage them to register. You should also have specific plans to carry out registration activity in advance of scheduled elections or referendums. You should have a public engagement strategy and registration plan which sets out your approach to identifying and targeting potential new electors. Further information about encouraging participation is contained in our guidance on planning for registration and public engagement throughout the year . 1. Section 69 Electoral Administration Act 2006 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 25 May 2021 Book traversal links for Encouraging participation Carrying out house to house enquiries throughout the year Role as a data controller Role as a data controller Role as a data controller As ERO, you are a data controller with a statutory duty to process certain

personal data to maintain the electoral register. Under data protection legislation you will need to be able to demonstrate that you comply with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Advice from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is that all data controllers will need to ensure that they are registered with the ICO. This means that EROs must be registered separately to their council. Under data protection legislation, a public authority must appoint a data protection officer (DPO) to advise on data protection issues. As ERO, you are not included in the definition of a public authority contained in Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and you are therefore not required to appoint a DPO for the conduct of your duties; however, your appointing council must have a DPO in place and you should liaise with them over good practice in relation to data protection. A key element of data protection legislation is the increased focus on accountability and transparency when processing personal data. You must be able to demonstrate that you comply with your obligations under data protection legislation, ensuring that you process personal data lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. The key to achieving this is to have and maintain written plans and records to provide an audit trail. You can find more information in our guidance [What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer?](#) Last updated: 25 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Role as a data controller](#) [Encouraging participation](#) [What resources do Electoral Registration Officers need to carry out their role?](#) [What resources do Electoral Registration Officers need to carry out their role?](#) [What resources do Electoral Registration Officers need to carry out their role?](#) It is important that you are supported to fulfil your role, given the range of statutory duties, and the seriousness of any breaches.

- 1 The local authority that appointed you must provide the resources needed to discharge your statutory functions. Any expenses properly incurred by you in performance of your functions must be paid by the local authority that appointed you.
- 2 Appointing a Deputy You should ensure that your council approves the appointment of one or more Deputy EROs who can carry out the duties and powers of the ERO if you are unable to act personally. Any deputies appointed should have the skills and knowledge required to carry out the functions that they have been assigned. Appointments should be made in writing and include clear details of the full or particular powers that the deputy is authorised to exercise on your behalf. In particular, it may be useful to appoint deputies to undertake quasi-judicial procedures, such as hearings of registration applications, objections and reviews. The acceptance of any such appointment should also be made in writing. Unlike Returning Officers, the ERO cannot appoint a deputy themselves, unless the power to do so has been delegated to them by the council.
- 3 If the position of ERO is vacant or the ERO is incapable of acting, any of the duties and powers of the ERO may be carried out by the proper officer of the council.
- 4 The electoral registration team The council that appointed you must provide officers to assist you in your statutory functions.
- 5 You should consider how the council can provide the support required for your registration plans to be delivered. In particular, you should ensure that you have enough staff with the right skills in your team. For guidance on planning, training and recruitment of staff, see [planning for registration throughout the year](#).

. 1. Section 63 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Sections 52 and 54 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section 52(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 52(3) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Section 52(4) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) Last updated: 11 August 2021 [Book traversal links for What resources do Electoral](#)

Registration Officers need to carry out their role? Role as a data controller

Budgeting for registration activity Budgeting for registration activity Budgeting for registration activity As part of your annual planning process, you will need to consider what budget you require in order to carry out your statutory functions. The budget for registration should be settled between you and the council which appointed you, and that should be sufficient to allow you to fulfil your duty to maintain the register. This should include all activity involved in conducting the annual canvass. For further details on the necessary activities see our guidance on delivering the annual canvass . You also need sufficient resources to maintain the register throughout the year to ensure that it remains complete and accurate. For further details see our guidance on planning for registration throughout the year . You should properly account for the expenses of registration you incur and liaise with the council to agree a suitable accounting process and budget. While we recognise the increasing budget pressures facing local authorities which force difficult choices between competing statutory services, a lack of resources does not exempt you from complying with the law. Last updated: 30 November 2020 Book traversal links for Budgeting for registration activity

What resources do Electoral Registration Officers need to carry out their role? Your public engagement strategy and registration plan Your public engagement strategy and registration plan Your public engagement strategy and registration plan This section of the guidance covers the need to put together a public engagement strategy, what your public engagement strategy should include and how you should go about implementing it. It also covers considerations for putting together a registration plan. Why having a public engagement strategy and registration plan is important You have a duty under Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to take all necessary steps to comply with the duty to maintain the electoral register and to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that all those eligible – and no others – are registered in it. To ensure that the quality of the register is maintained throughout the year it is important that you: identify and target any unregistered residents process any amendments to an elector's current registration details take steps to remove electors who are no longer eligible

Maximising the number of voters registered relies on an effective local public engagement strategy with robust processes behind it. A proactive approach is required throughout the year to identify people who are not registered and encourage them to register. By encourage, we mean doing everything you can to encourage an application to be made before or after formally inviting someone to register. In particular, you should have plans in place to carry out registration activity in advance of scheduled elections or referendums to reach electors and encourage them to register to vote. Your public engagement strategy and registration plan should set out your approach to identifying and targeting potential new electors. It is important that they remain living documents and you use all available data to keep them under review. The challenge of maximising registration takes place in the context of wider challenges for electoral registration, including voter disengagement, transient populations and the other registration challenges that exist in your area. The lessons you have learnt in addressing these challenges to date should be reflected in your updated public engagement strategy. Public engagement includes: any forms, letters or emails you send directly to individuals or households phone calls, e-mails and direct face-to-face conversations with individuals local activity with partner organisations contact with organisations such as schools, universities, landlords, housing associations and hostels press releases, media work and use of social media public awareness activity, including local advertising and publicity directly aimed at

residents An effective local public engagement strategy should reduce the need for follow-up activity, free up resources and help to maximise the number of voters registered. You will need to build and maintain relationships with other teams from across the local authority for your public engagement work to be as effective as possible. These include: IT communications and engagement professionals other teams in the local authority who have contact with those residents less likely to be registered You will also need to work with external partners. You should consider who these partners can help you to reach and how. You will need to ensure that they are engaged, have all the information they need, and understand the timings for any planned engagement work. Last updated: 24 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Your public engagement strategy and registration plan](#) Budgeting for registration activity What should my public engagement strategy include? What should my public engagement strategy include? What should my public engagement strategy include? Your strategy should include: how you will identify and engage with potential target audiences (including hard to reach groups) details of the communication channels you will use to engage residents how you are going to work with internal and external partners to reach target audiences how you will raise awareness through advertising and the media how you will measure the success of your strategy Last updated: 6 October 2020 [Book traversal links for What should my public engagement strategy include?](#) Your public engagement strategy and registration plan Identifying potential target audiences for public engagement Identifying potential target audiences for public engagement Identifying potential target audiences for public engagement You should use data sources, such as data from your local authority and the census, to build a detailed profile of the make-up of your registration area. You should review this regularly and consider any additional data. Your local authority may hold and regularly update demographic information about residents including: the sorts of activities they take part in the services they use their attitudes their communication preferences where different groups are clustered geographically Some authorities also use consumer classification systems to identify the types of people in their area so that they can use their resources effectively to target groups with relevant information. Target groups may be distributed evenly across the authority, for example attainers, while others, such as students or private renters, may be concentrated in particular wards or neighbourhoods. This information may also be useful in your planning for the canvass . Research carried out by the Commission indicates that people from the following groups are less likely to be registered: younger people (under 35) private renters people of Black, mixed or other ethnicity groups citizens of the European Union and Commonwealth those considered to be at the lower end of the social economic scale grades Our research also shows that the registration of young people and, in particular, attainers , remains a challenge. The inspection of local authority education services data may provide you with information which could assist with the identification of potential electors who may be eligible to be registered as attainers. Your engagement strategy should include how you will engage with attainers in your area. Working with schools and colleges in your area to target these potential electors should be a key area of your public engagement activity. You may also be able to draw on your own or others experiences of engaging with young people to date and use any lessons learnt to inform your future plans. It might be helpful to contact other authorities with similar target groups in order to share experiences and understand what has worked for them in practice. You should continually review the demographics of your registration area to identify further groups that are under-registered. Last updated: 6 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Identifying](#)

potential target audiences for public engagement What should my public engagement strategy include? Checking the audience for public engagement Checking the audience for public engagement Eligible electors in your area will fall into distinct groups in relation to registration. Unregistered / new electors Any new electors will need to make a registration application and provide their personal identifiers in order to register to vote. Those who are not on the register, including typically unregistered groups, remain a target for registration activity. The groups that are less likely to join the register and the barriers that stop them doing so will vary by area, creating unique local challenges. There is an ongoing challenge in identifying local issues and taking action in response to these to ensure that as many people are registered as possible. Social groups needing additional engagement activity Research has shown that certain groups are more likely to be absent from the register or not registered at their current address. The reasons for particular groups being absent from the register are diverse – for example, they may be transient in where they live, they may be disengaged with politics, or they may be unaware of their rights. This means that these groups need to be reached in different ways, using different channels, and that they will be motivated by different messages. From the profile data you have gathered, you will have identified the specific social groups in your area that are less likely to join or be on the register, either because they are typically under-registered, or because they do not typically respond to communications from the ERO. These groups will need additional targeted engagement activity to increase the likelihood that they will join the register. These groups may include: Private renters Home-movers and mobile population Young people (under 35s) Attainers EU and Commonwealth citizens Some black and minority ethnic groups (African, Mixed, Bangladeshi) People resident at their property for less than 2 years People who have lived in the UK for less than 5 years Low level of fluency Unemployed Young people with no qualifications Students at term-time address Some challenges may not be audience-specific but may be particular to your area. For example you may have geographical barriers, or you may have low levels of broadband connection that mean people will find it harder to access online registration. Your strategy should also consider how to address these considerations. You will have identified the groups that need particular engagement activity in your public engagement strategy. After reviewing the profile of your registration area, you should review the particular groups identified to ensure that they remain relevant. Your resources might need to be re-directed, you might need to continue your work but refine your approach, or another group might have emerged requiring particular engagement, such as attainers. Electors who are already registered These electors will have their names included on communications sent out as part of the canvass. They will need to know what to do if any changes are required to their registration information. Example target audiences and opportunities for reaching them are set out below: Audience Challenges Opportunities to reach Registered electors Need to know how to update their details if they change Canvass communications Household notification letters Public information through broader audience channels such as local authority website, magazine and other communications Local awareness-raising advertisements Local media work Not registered (including typically under-registered and harder-to-reach groups) Barriers such as transient residency, unawareness of rights, disengagement, or difficulty with registering Canvass communications ITRs Follow up with direct contact (e.g. letters, phone calls, and house-to-house canvassing/personal visits) Household notification letters Targeted engagement activity including public information provision, advertising, and

working with partner organisations Hard to reach groups Research has shown that certain groups are more likely to be absent from the register or not registered at their current address. You will have identified the specific social groups in your area that are less likely to join or be on the register, either because they are typically under-registered, or because they do not typically respond to communications from the ERO. These groups will need additional targeted engagement activity to increase the likelihood that they will join the register. The table below sets out some of the challenges and opportunities for reaching these hard to reach groups.

Demographic	Challenges	Opportunities
Young people and attainagers	Not reached by traditional media	Unaware of need to register
Reliant on family influences	Disengagement with politics	Distrust of authority
Other priorities	Peer influenced	High social media users
High smart phone and text message use	Online registration and information	May be in school, college or training, providing potential communication channels
Students	Highly transient	Disengagement with paperwork and post
Other priorities and distractions	Not used to registering themselves	Institution asks them to complete paperwork-
Grouped in halls of residence or student areas of town	Potential to be incentivised	High social media users
Home movers	Unaware of need to re-register	Not a priority
Partners helping to spread messages	Mobile population, private renters and communal residency	Unaware of need to register/change details
Disengagement with politics	Other priorities	Partners helping to spread messages
Under-registered black and minority ethnic communities	Disengagement with politics	New residents may be unaware of rights
Partners helping to spread messages	Local advertising in locations with higher density of target population	People with disabilities and particular communication requirements
Unable to access mainstream communications	Some may rely on carers to receive and return post	May need help with completing forms
Need to produce accessible communications	High users of service providers, providing potential communication channels	Potential to reach carers and those who have influence with them
Over 80s	Low internet use	Difficulty getting to post box
May rely on carers to receive and return post	May need help with completing forms	Less exposed to outdoor advertising
High users of service providers, providing potential communication channels	Potential to reach carers and those who have influence with them	Disengaged households; young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
Disengagement with politics	Distrust of authority	Difficulty with completing forms
Not involved with institutions	High users of certain services providing potential communication channels	Peer influenced
Potential to be incentivised	Low level of literacy or understanding of	Unaware of rights
Difficulty completing forms	Provision of information in other languages	Partners helping to spread messages and providing help with form completion
Information in world language media	Homeless and travellers	Difficulty accessing and completing forms
Partners helping to spread messages and providing help with form completion	Residents in very rural areas	Less exposure to central services
Less exposure to outdoor advertisements	Partnering with community groups	Rural communications
Reliant on concentrated range of services	Our example tactics sheets for reaching target audiences contain ideas for targeting and communicating with typically under-registered groups, such as young people, BME groups and private renters.	Example tactics for reaching target audiences (DOC)

Further information and practice examples of how some EROs are working with care homes and students to encourage registration is also available. Sharing good practice - Reaching care home residents Sharing good practice - Reaching students

Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Checking the audience for public engagement Identifying potential target audiences for public engagement

Communication channels for engaging residents Communication channels for engaging residents You should consider whether the communication channels you use during the canvass, at scheduled polls and in your wider registration work, enable you to reach your target audience(s) effectively. You should regularly evaluate these channels to determine what worked well and what was less successful. For information and practice examples of how some EROs are targeting and communicating with potential electors, see our sharing good practice resource Communications. Sharing good practice - Communications Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Communication channels for engaging residents Checking the audience for public engagement Direct contact with residents Direct contact with residents Direct contact with residents Direct contact is an important element of your public engagement strategy and you should promote the channels residents can use to contact you including: letters telephone conversations text messages emails door-to-door visits social media channels Your experiences during the last canvass and your ongoing wider registration work will have given you a good indication of which areas respond quickly to written communications and which are more likely to require personal visits. You can use this information to inform your plans for the canvass. For example, in areas that do not respond well to written communications it might be a better use of resources to undertake personal visits earlier in the process compared to other areas. Any letters and emails you send must be easy to understand and carry clear messages about what the recipient needs to do and how they can do it. You should use the template wording that the Commission provides in its forms and letters guidance which reflects results of user testing. You can give an invitation to register by electronic means, including by email. This means that rather than sending potential electors an invitation to register with a voter registration form and a return envelope. You can (where you have an elector's email address) encourage them to register online by emailing them an ITR with a link to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote . This option should be reflected in your strategy and wider registration plans. For your public engagement strategy and registration plan, you will need to have established the practical process for writing out to residents for the canvass, including timings. You will also need to consider timings for your public engagement activity that supports the canvass, which should include any potential opportunities to link to any wider national or local voter registration activity For example, National Democracy Week, which aims to increase the number of people who understand and take part in the democratic process, is one such opportunity. Depending on when you issue your canvass communications, you may be able to capitalise on this and the accompanying national publicity, to drive canvass responses and raise awareness among under-registered groups. We will keep you updated with our plans for National Democracy Week via our EA Bulletin . You should also ensure that you are subscribed to our Roll Call newsletter which contains the latest information about promoting voter registration and our partnership work. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has made available resources that you can use to promote registration activities you have planned during this year. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Education make secondary schools resource available and has a Youth Engagement Toolkit for parliamentarians to use with young people in their areas. Last updated: 9 March 2022 Book traversal links for Direct contact with residents Communication channels for engaging residents Managing responses and enquiries from individuals Managing responses and enquiries from individuals Managing responses and enquiries from individuals Your public engagement strategy and registration plan need to address how you will sufficiently resource all

the methods that the public can use to contact the local authority. You should review the effectiveness of your resourcing throughout the year to inform future planning. The canvass and other public engagement activity that residents come into contact with will prompt higher levels of queries and questions, so it's important that you provide sufficient support for residents who make contact by telephone, by email or in writing. Providing telephone support is important because many residents will have difficulties accessing the internet or understanding written material. Residents will also expect to be able to e-mail queries, talk to someone face-to-face or write letters to the ERO. Face-to-face contact may include speaking to local authority frontline staff such as in libraries or leisure centres or the corporate contact centre. If you provide other methods for residents to contact you, such as Facebook, Twitter, web-forms, and text messages, you should review how effective these channels have been in responding to queries, and also the volume of queries you have received through these channels. A high volume of queries received through one channel could require additional resources in the future or if, for example, you received a significant number of queries through certain channels such as web forms, this could indicate high usage of your local authority website but may also suggest that the information provided there could be clearer in order to mitigate queries. How to plan resources needed to respond to enquiries To plan levels of resourcing you should consider: the peaks for demand for public information which are likely to occur following public engagement activity, for instance following the issue of canvass communications and in the run-up to registration deadlines what level of enquiries you received during peaks in registration activity increasing resources at your existing call centre or outsourcing responses, for example, using a specialist call centre the effectiveness of your approach during the last canvass and scheduled polls, and whether you need to do anything differently what contingencies you can put in place if enquiries are much higher than expected (you should test your contingency arrangements to ensure that they are robust) Directing residents to online registration (www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) and providing clear and easy to navigate information about registration on your website will help to reduce the burden on your public information response lines. The better the information available and the easier it is to access, the less people should reach for the telephone. You should regularly review the volume of queries you receive through each channel. Establishing an agreed response time for enquiries You should establish a fixed timeframe in which responses will be made where queries cannot be dealt with immediately, so you can let the enquirer know when they may expect to receive an answer. For example, you could set up an automatic response to e-mails letting the enquirer know you will get back to them within 48 hours. You could also include answers to frequently asked questions with this automated response, together with links to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote and to the absent voting forms on your website. Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Managing responses and enquiries from individuals Direct contact with residents Training public-facing staff to deal with enquiries Training public-facing staff to deal with enquiries Training public-facing staff to deal with enquiries You should provide updated face-to-face briefings or written information to local authority staff who deal with the public to ensure they have the information they need to be able to respond to any queries they may receive. This means thinking about likely queries and developing scripts and lines to help employees responding to enquiries to answer questions or refer callers to the right place. We have provided an FAQ resource to support you. FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal

links for Training public-facing staff to deal with enquiries Managing responses and enquiries from individuals Working with partners to reach target audiences Working with partners to reach target audiences Working with partners to reach target audiences Working with partners, inside and outside the local authority, is key to delivering your registration plan and promoting public awareness. Internal and external partners may be able to identify residents who are entitled to be registered, but do not have an entry in the register. External partnerships can be established at every level, from individual community leaders to national businesses. Partnerships also need to be built internally within the local authority and with organisations that provide services for the local authority. Council departments or organisations that are in regular contact with residents, for example those delivering meals on wheels or providing domestic care, could be approached to promote the completion of applications. It is important to identify and build relationships with the correct point of contact in each case. Partnerships should be free, with each side getting a mutual benefit for entering the partnership. However, some costs may be incurred for example, for the production of materials for partners to use with residents. Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Working with partners to reach target audiences Training public-facing staff to deal with enquiries How can partnerships help to raise public awareness? How can partnerships help to raise public awareness? How can partnerships help to raise public awareness? Partnerships can help you to raise public awareness by: sharing messages - for some social groups, messages are more likely to be acted upon if they come from someone they trust and know – for example, a respected community leader or organisation extending the reach of your advertising – for example, a dentist may put posters in their waiting room, you could also place them in community buildings or on public notice boards including information in the communications they already send out increasing your capacity by answering people's questions and supporting them to fill in forms - for example charitable organisations Other partnership activities could include: providing registration forms for estate agents to attach to rental contracts identifying a charity whose volunteers are willing to help people fill in forms working with a large local employer who is keen on supporting community causes providing materials for or working together to deliver a workshop on democracy and registration Partners may also be able to identify other opportunities that you have not yet considered. Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for How can partnerships help to raise public awareness? Working with partners to reach target audiences Approaching partners about supporting registration Approaching partners about supporting registration Approaching partners about supporting registration You will need to approach potential or existing partners about the possibility of them supporting your registration work. To an extent, you will need to 'pitch' your request to them to ensure that it has the highest chance of getting them on board, particularly as they may have requests from other organisations. First, research the best time for your approach – will they, for example, be busy at a particular time with another priority? You will also need to ensure your proposal contains ideas of how they could help, and how helping would be beneficial to them and to the people they work with. This will have a higher chance of getting them on board, particularly as they may have requests from other organisations. Not all organisations and individuals will be in a position to get involved; it's important to accept this and where possible consider alternatives. You will also need to support partners throughout any activities to increase the likelihood of them remaining engaged. Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for Approaching partners about

supporting registration How can partnerships help to raise public awareness? How to set up a new partnership How to set up a new partnership? How to set up a new partnership When setting up a partnership you may want to have a telephone conversation or face to face meeting particularly for larger partnerships, where the following points should be addressed: explain why the partnership is beneficial to both parties agree the level of support the partner will offer understand the mechanisms they will use for reaching their audience agree whether any materials will be needed and, if so, who will be producing them agree what messages they will use in communicating with their audience agree what information they will provide on how the audience can respond or where they can get more help agree who at the local authority will be available to answer the partner's questions be clear about timings and when messages need to change establish regular communications ensure that if things are not going as planned they are open to stopping the activity and, where relevant, returning materials agree an approach to evaluation of the activity Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for How to set up a new partnership Approaching partners about supporting registration Working with existing partners Working with existing partners Working with existing partners As well as identifying potential new partners, it is important to build on any existing partnership arrangements you have established. This could include those who: have previously supported registration work are in regular or significant communication with your target audiences have good relationships with target audiences and have previously worked with the local authority, but not on registration have good relationships with target audiences and have never worked with the local authority have a high profile in the local area among broad audiences Where you identify that you wish to continue working with an existing partner, you should review the partnership and identify whether there is anything you could do differently with them to achieve better results. If this partnership activity has resulted in an increase in the registration levels of your target group, you should feedback success to your partners, which may encourage them to undertake further work with you. Some examples of partners you may want to consider include: Service providers - for example, housing associations, home care services, schools, further education colleges. Other governmental organisations and local authority teams – for example, parish councils, housing services, social services. Influential individuals – for example a prominent student landlord, local celebrities, politicians, political parties and candidates. Community groups and charities – for example, a boxing club, Neighbourhood Watch, over-60s social groups Private companies and organisations – for example, a large local employer, gym, dentist, estate agent. You won't be able to work with everyone, so as well as evaluating the value added by existing partners during the last canvass and at scheduled polls, you should consider: who will best reach your target groups the practicalities of working together any other local factors It may be beneficial to categorise your list of partners, identifying which partners will require help to deliver detailed activity, and those who have agreed to simply relay or promote registration messages. Partnerships that may take a large amount of time to set up and reach a small number of people may still be worthwhile if the people they reach are high on your target list and are unlikely to be engaged in other ways. Similarly, an organisation that works with residents who are not on your target list, but reaches a huge of residents and is committed to taking time to spread your messages could at least be considered. It is also important to plan for working with politicians and political parties throughout the year so that they understand how the registration process works. Candidates and their supporters can extend your

registration reach by promoting registration during their electoral campaigning. If candidates, parties and politicians are not engaged, there is a risk that the messages and information they provide could be wrong or incomplete. Last updated: 6 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Working with existing partners](#) [How to set up a new partnership](#) [Partnership risks](#) The risks of working with partners [Partnership risks](#) Risks should not stop you working with partners, but they should be captured in your risk and issues register and you need to identify mitigations against these risks. Some potential risks include: The partnership results in wide-scale complaints – for example, if a partner engages in political campaigning there may be a perception that the ERO is not politically neutral The partner misrepresents your message - do they understand the relationship and their responsibilities? Do they understand and keep to the message you want to get across to residents and to what extent does it matter if they don't? Are they clear when the work ends, or when the message changes? The partner does not carry out the work they agreed - is this risk more significant because you have put time and money into the relationship? Perhaps they misunderstood the workload, or find themselves with an unexpected priority, or perhaps they start to incur additional costs and expect re-imbursement [Registration fatigue](#) – initial enthusiasm might fade so it will be important to try to maintain momentum in any partnership work, including by keeping up communication and providing feedback The cost outweighs the benefits - you may produce comprehensive materials and the organisation does little to help support your registration work You should consider developing lines to take in the event a partnership organisation attracts negative press which might implicate your local authority. You should evaluate how effective you were at mitigating any risks when working with partners. These learning points should be reflected when updating your engagement strategy to help inform your approach to future partnership working. Last updated: 6 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Partnership risks](#) [Working with existing partners](#) [Data protection considerations when working with partners](#) [Data protection considerations when working with partners](#) [Data protection considerations when working with partners](#) You need to be able to demonstrate that all information obtained, whether from internal or external partners, complies with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. You should ensure that any partners assisting electors to complete applications are aware of data protection principles before handling any personal data. External organisations from whom you are obtaining personal data, for example, universities and care homes, will hold personal data on their students and residents respectively and are likely to be data controllers in their own right. Although data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is strongly recommended that you agree with your partner a data sharing agreement to help you both demonstrate that you are acting in accordance with data protection legislation Our guidance on data protection for EROs and ROs contains further information on data protection considerations and a checklist to support you in developing a data sharing agreement. Last updated: 5 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Data protection considerations when working with partners](#) [Partnership risks](#) [Raising awareness using advertising and media](#) [Raising awareness using advertising and media](#) [Raising awareness using advertising and media](#) Public awareness activity, such as advertising and working with the media, is an important part of public engagement. As ERO, you have a general duty to promote participation and you will need to undertake advertising of your own as far as is possible. Your public engagement strategy should ensure that your public awareness raising activity is co-ordinated to

take place at key points during the canvass and in the period leading up to scheduled polls and should document any planned use of: local authority newsletters website bus shelters poster sites or notice boards social media media relations tools Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Raising awareness using advertising and media Data protection considerations when working with partners Getting the public to take action Getting the public to take action Getting the public to take action If the communications you produce are aimed at getting people to do something, a call to action is fundamental to success. A call to action is a statement that lays out what you want the audience to do next – for example, register online. Without it, people won't understand what they should do, or if it is unclear or buried in other information it may well be ignored. Calls to action should: be written succinctly, clearly telling people what to do use active instructive language ('Visit www.bigtown.org.uk for more information' is better than 'interested parties can find further relevant details at the Council's website') be visually prominent in the document - for example, in larger text, a different colour and with space around it to draw people's attention to it The Commission previously undertook research with the public, led by Ipsos Mori, to establish which communication messages best motivated and engaged people to take action. The research findings showed that the following key elements were motivating: 'Voting matters' (many people do not distinguish voting from registering) loss aversion (the implication that you stand to lose something if you don't register) Timing is crucial to ensuring that people don't get so accustomed to messages that they switch off, so you may want to consider limiting the use of some channels to the periods where they will have most impact. Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Getting the public to take action Raising awareness using advertising and media Using local authority owned media channels Using local authority owned media channels Using local authority owned media channels You should continue to consider the best places to display your advertising. Buying media (advertising space) such as outdoor poster sites and press advertisements can be prohibitively expensive. More inexpensive options such as community newsletters or local listings magazines may also be out of reach. You may, however, have a range of local-authority-owned channels available to you, for example: local authority residents' magazine internal staff newsletters local authority-owned vehicles local authority-owned poster sites local authority buildings bus shelters and billboards notice boards social media channels You should undertake an audit of potential owned media and consider the reach and frequency for each option. This will help you to establish how much of your target audience would be exposed to the activity and the number of times they would be exposed to the activity. You should keep any information up to date and relevant and check for any changes since activities were last undertaken. Your local authority website can also be used as an additional low-cost media channel. You should ensure that your web content is up-to-date and includes links on key pages to external websites, such as www.gov.uk/register-to-vote and www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter . How could I make use of social media channels? Social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+ and others provide an inexpensive opportunity to raise awareness and can be used for responding to public queries. Ongoing promotional work is required to build the numbers using your social media channels. Interesting, amusing, urgent or engaging messages are more likely to be shared by users and reach a wider audience. Posts should be made at key times, for example, at the start of the canvass, to ensure maximum impact. Think about how external events could provide a hook for social media activity. For example, we have previously made a series of

electoral registration Valentine's Day-themed tweets on 14 February. Social media also offers opportunities to immediately see the impact of your work. For example, how many times a Facebook post is liked or shared, or how often a tweet is retweeted. However, social media has limitations – for example, social media channels may in many cases be limited to those who are already engaged with the local authority. Last updated: 10 August 2021

Book traversal links for Using local authority owned media channels

Getting the public to take action

Events and street marketing opportunities

Events and street marketing opportunities

You should consider holding events that involve face-to-face contact with people, for example at an event such as a road show or at a stall in a shopping centre, to boost awareness. Novel activities at existing community events can draw attention and you can promote them in advance. Notify the press ahead of events to attract their attendance and achieve further media coverage. Events and street marketing can be useful for targeting under-registered groups by bringing information to them. You could supply posters and leaflets to draw attention to your stand. Then forms can be collected on the spot or facilities provided to make online applications. This also gives the public opportunity to ask about anything they do not understand. It has been shown that an individual is more likely to take action if they can do so straight away. Think about the locations that provide an opportunity for people to register then provide information at those points to influence people into taking action to register. For example, you may want to display reminders on library computers, at job clubs where computers for CV writing are provided, or in free computing skills classes. Last updated: 6 October 2020

Book traversal links for Events and street marketing opportunities

Using local authority owned media channels

Using paid for advertising

Using paid for advertising

Media is typically bought in the weeks and months before a campaign is due to go live. You will need to hold conversations early on to establish the deadlines for buying advertising media, and for supplying artwork. There are also likely to be technical requirements for the supply of artwork. You may buy individual sites from media owners, or work with a media buying agency to select the best media to meet your objectives and target audiences. What are the channels and who could they reach?

Radio – reaches lower income residents and young adults, as well as those in more rural areas; segmented audience can be reached by appropriate stations

Online – less useful for lower income households; reaches under-24s and students particularly through social media. Most capable of targeting specific groups

Newspaper – potential to reach lower incomes, particularly in certain titles

Magazines / newsletters – target specific local areas or community groups

Advertorials (promotional articles) for local press and websites – could be used to carry more detailed information

Outdoor – useful to reach target audiences by locating in areas with high density and passing footfall; potential to reach students; billboards and buses can provide high frequency of views

Mobile advertising vans – can deliver messages to geographic areas with high densities of your target audience

Event sponsorship – potential to reach young people and BMEs

What are the other considerations when using paid for advertising? Buying advertising space is expensive so you should consider the following factors:

Total reach – the number of relevant people expected to be exposed to an advertiser's message at least once in a specified time

Frequency – the number of times a member of the audience is exposed to a message in the specified time

Cost – The cost of reaching one thousand people or of reaching your target market

When establishing the reach and frequency you may, for example, want to consider if it's better to have fewer adverts on a larger radio station than lots of adverts on a

small radio station and whether a high reach campaign in a local newspaper running for one day is better than a low reach campaign in a community magazine that lasts a month. Think carefully about your target audiences before accepting any special offers from media owners. Ask why the price is reduced – it may be that the space does not have a proven ability to reach your audience. Last updated: 6 October 2020

Book traversal links for Using paid for advertising Events and street marketing opportunities Getting others to spread the message (earned media) Getting others to spread the message (earned media) Getting others to spread the message (earned media)

By actively working with the media, you have greater influence on the types of messages they carry. People's likelihood to register will be affected by the messages they hear in the press and news. Media relations activity provides an opportunity to get your message on the news agenda and raise the profile of your work. You may not be able to control public opinion, but you can supply messages that are more likely to reassure people and reduce negative coverage that could deter people from registering. Suggested activity may include: issuing press releases ahead of key events, such as at the start of the annual canvass giving interviews for radio and television holding publicity-generating events Last updated: 6 October 2020

Book traversal links for Getting others to spread the message (earned media) Using paid for advertising Ensuring communication materials are accessible and impactful Ensuring communication materials are accessible and impactful Ensuring communication materials are accessible and impactful

When producing communication materials you should ensure that they emphasise key messages and have a layout that supports clarity and impact. Clear and concise writing has a much higher chance of reaching as many people as possible and ensures the recipient will understand what they need to do. Communications that provide information in the way the reader wants to receive it are more likely to have greater impact. You should identify whether there is someone in your local authority who has expertise in writing for the public, plain or website accessibility, or if possible staff could undertake relevant training. Not everyone will understand the communications and may need further help or reassurance, so contact details of where the reader can get help should be included. For further information, see our factsheet on producing accessible communications. Factsheet on producing accessible communications (DOC) Last updated: 10 August 2021

Book traversal links for Ensuring communication materials are accessible and impactful Getting others to spread the message (earned media) Monitoring and evaluating the success of your public engagement strategy Monitoring and evaluating the success of your public engagement strategy Monitoring and evaluating the success of your public engagement strategy

Evaluations are essential for measuring the effectiveness of a project and demonstrating achievements Your engagement strategy and registration plan needs to be updated to reflect findings of your monitoring and evaluation. You should update it to reflect lessons learnt from work you have already undertaken and to include any new information about your registration area. This information will help to continue to refine the picture you have of the demographics of your area, confirm what the key challenges for engaging with your residents are and measure which activities are most effective in engaging with different target audiences You should outline how you will monitor and evaluate how effective your public engagement activity and tactics to engage your target groups were during the last canvass, at scheduled polls, and in your ongoing activity to maximise registration. Did you reach your target audience?

Measuring the success of your engagement activities In order to evaluate the success of an activity, it is important to have clear, measurable objectives and any evaluation measures should relate back clearly to the initial objectives. It is

likely that a variety of methods will be needed to evaluate a project. To identify the most appropriate methods to use for evaluation you should define the questions to be asked to form the evaluation and consider how these questions might be answered. There are a variety of methods that can be used to assess the effectiveness of your activity, some of which might be behaviour-based (what people have done, what has actually happened) and some of which might be perception-based (what people believe to have happened). The following are some mechanisms for collecting evidence to support your evaluation: recording feedback from the public at events or via your website recording the level of responses as a result of the activity recording the number of enquiries on the subject recording the number of hits to the website requesting information recording any feedback provided on social media distributing evaluation questionnaires or feedback forms at the end of an event conducting a public opinion survey to determine whether the public were aware of your activity, their thoughts about it and whether they took action as a result conducting pre-activity and post-activity surveys to determine whether people's knowledge and awareness of registration and the process has increased as a result of the activity interviews with stakeholders to determine what they thought of the activity focus groups held with residents to gather feedback – potentially as part of other events It is also important to attempt to measure: environmental factors or background noise: to what extent is increased participation the result of your activity or of some other factors? the base case: i.e. what would have happened in the absence of the activity? the number of relevant people who were exposed to the activity the number of times people were exposed to the activity any increases in the number of people taking action, such as registering to vote any positive feedback from participants in a scheme whether people's understanding of the process has increased any increase in requests for information The evaluation plan needs to set out who will participate in the evaluation and who is responsible for the various parts of the evaluation. Monitoring of progress and evaluation should be carried out at the end of each key stage of registration activity to ensure activities are effective and remain appropriate. While it is important to undertake evaluation as extensively as possible, consideration should be given to the resources allocated and the cost of evaluation should be proportionate to the cost of the project. You may not be able to evaluate everything in the detail you would like and you should set out any limitations to the evaluation in your plans, including any potential risks to the reliability and validity of the evaluation and findings. Your evaluation plans should identify relevant stakeholders, such as other local authorities, who may be interested in the evaluation and with whom the findings should be shared. Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Monitoring and evaluating the success of your public engagement strategy Ensuring communication materials are accessible and impactful How the Commission can support you with public engagement How the Commission can support you with public engagement How the Commission can support you with public engagement There are a range of resources available on the Commission's website which could be used or developed for future campaigns. You can also subscribe to our voter registration newsletter - Roll Call, which contains the latest information about promoting voter registration and our partnership work. Our resources will be updated ahead of scheduled polls as appropriate, but the general guidance and suggestions continue to be relevant and may be helpful throughout the year. Direct one-to-one support also continues to be available through our regional teams. You can contact them by: Telephone: 0333 103 1928 Email: infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal

links for How the Commission can support you with public engagement Monitoring and evaluating the success of your public engagement strategy Your registration plan Your registration plan Your registration plan While your public engagement strategy will help you identify the registration challenges in your area and a general approach for tackling them, your registration plan should be informed by it and capture the detailed actions of everything that needs to be done to maintain electoral registers that are as accurate and complete as possible – not just throughout the canvass period, but throughout the year. What should a registration plan include? Your registration plan should capture all registration activity throughout the year, including in the lead up to scheduled polls and during the canvass. We have produced a template registration plan you can use to support your planning for the delivery of electoral registration services. You do not have to use the template provided.

Template registration plan (XLS) It is important that you treat your registration plan as a living document and keep it under regular review using available data to monitor progress and to identify where any amendments need to be made. At a minimum, your registration plan should cover: a timetable of deliverables and tasks which should demonstrate how you intend to carry out the necessary steps under Section 9A, both during the canvass and throughout the year details of planned partnership activity objectives and success measures resource requirements review of internal processes to ensure they remain relevant, including what measures you have put in place to ensure data protection requirements are met identification of training needs, both for external and internal sources of training mechanisms for tracking and evaluating progress and for recording amendments processes to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate potential integrity problems, including what steps are to be taken to deal with any such problems You will need systems in place that enable you to track your progress towards ensuring that as many eligible residents as possible are included on the register. This should include processes to track responses from individuals and households to monitor, evaluate and target resources to identify where amendments to your plans are required. You also need to maintain a risk and issues register, identifying any risks to the effective delivery of your registration plan and corresponding mitigating actions. We have developed a template risk and issues register that you can use to record any risks you identify. It contains examples that you will need to consider and, if necessary, mitigate, as well as a log to record any issues that emerge and that you will need to address. Alternatively, you may wish to include risks including our examples in any risk management documentation you have already developed. Template risk and issues register (XLS) Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Your registration plan How the Commission can support you with public engagement What resources are needed to deliver your registration plan? What resources are needed to deliver your registration plan? What resources are needed to deliver your registration plan? You will need to identify what work you need to do to engage with residents, and consequently, what resources you will need to do this. Keeping your plan and activity under review will enable you to understand whether your local challenges are being met and enable you to target your resources where they are most needed. Key departments and individuals you will need to involve, may include: the local authority's IT department the local authority's finance team data holders the data protection officer at the local authority the local authority's call centre / reception manager the communications / media manager at the local authority (if there is one) the local authority's HR manager representatives of local authority teams/individuals and local organisations who work with under-registered groups in

your area, such as local education departments Your plan should cover how you will be engage these departments/individuals and how often you will meet with them. Consider: whether you should personally chair the group who should be involved what the terms of reference will be how actions will be recorded and taken forward Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for What resources are needed to deliver your registration plan? Your registration plan What records can you inspect to assist you with identifying potential new electors throughout the year? What records can you inspect to assist you with identifying potential new electors throughout the year? What records can you inspect to assist you with identifying potential new electors throughout the year? Your registration plan should include detail of data sources available to you and a schedule of when checks of those records are to be carried out. As ERO you can by law, for the purpose of meeting your registration duties, inspect and make copies of records kept in whatever form by: 1 the council which appointed you (where you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier area, this extends to the county council) 2 any registrar of births, deaths and marriages including any superintendent any person, including a company or organisation, providing services to, or authorised to exercise any function of, the council including any providing outsourced services under any finance agreement Where the ERO requests to inspect and/or take copies of the records listed above, a statutory or other restriction, including the GDPR, cannot be used to refuse disclosure of those records. 3 For example, if a private contractor has been appointed to collect council tax on behalf of your local authority, as ERO for that authority, you are entitled to access the data held by that contractor. In addition to this, the council which appointed the ERO is permitted to disclose to the ERO, for certain registration purposes, information contained in records held by the council. In the case of an ERO for a district council, this also applies to the relevant county council. 4 There are three purposes: to verify information relating to a person who is registered in a register maintained by the officer, or who is named in an application for registration to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered to identify those people who are registered but who are not entitled to be registered Disclosure can only be made in accordance with a written agreement between the council and the ERO processing of the information, including its transfer, storage, destruction and security. You should also ensure that you are making full use of all the records available to you to check entries on the register, taking steps to remove those electors who are no longer entitled to remain registered. You should record the number of electors removed from the register and the reason for the removal. For more information on what types of other records can also be used to identify changes and those who may no longer be entitled to be registered at a particular address see our guidance on managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year . You will need to use information sources available to identify and target new electors, and ensure that all necessary steps are taken to add them to register. While records may assist you in identifying who does not have an entry in the register, any potential new elector who is identified must always make a successful application before they can be added to the register. You should record the number of electors added to the register and how these applications originated. For example, whether the application was unsolicited or was it following information included in a canvass communication. The following records may help you maintain your register throughout the year: Council tax : These records may indicate new residents have moved into a property. However, the person named on council tax records is not always eligible to register to vote, for example

owners of properties that do not reside there. Also, council tax records will not necessarily tell you all of the people resident at the address who you may need to invite to register. Council tax records can be used as evidence that a property is empty or that it is not someone's main residence, which may affect their entitlement to register. Access to these records should include any supplementary notes, which may assist with clarifying who is resident. Council tax reduction (formerly council tax benefit) : These records may alert you to others living at a property. Housing : The records of arms-length management organisations and housing records where the council maintains the housing stock can be inspected for tenants details. Housing benefit : Housing benefits are paid directly to an individual and as such can be helpful in identifying new electors. Register of households in multiple occupation (HMOs) : You should consider using these records to make contact with landlords or managing agents who are likely to be able to provide names of new residents. Records held by registrars of deaths and marriages : Information received about marriages and civil partnerships could indicate an additional resident at a property. It may also alert you to a change of name of an existing elector. Or in the case of deaths indicate where an existing elector may need to be removed. Lists of residential and care homes / shelters / hostels : Social services (or equivalent department) will be able to provide lists of residential and care homes, as well as shelters and hostels. Wardens of these accommodations may be able to provide information on changes of residents. We have produced a factsheet for care homes in that you can adapt to reflect your particular circumstances. Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) The factsheet is based on our assisted applications guidance which details what one person can do to support another to register. Guidance on assisted applications in England and Wales (word) Lists of disabled people receiving council assistance : Social services (or equivalent department) may be able to provide details of certain disabled people living at home, such as those who are blind, deaf, etc., which should also enable you to tailor the service you provide to such individuals. Land Registry : Can be used to find information on sales of property, which can provide information on changes, particularly as the name of the buyer is given. Planning and building control : Inspection of building control records and liaising with house builders can give an indication of the progress of new developments and whether they are ready for residential occupation. Instead of liaising with planning and building control directly, you may be able to gain the necessary information from the Valuation Office. List of new British citizens held by the registrar : The registrar will have information on who has become a British citizen. You are entitled to inspect and make copies of these records, and could use them to identify potential new electors. Information on applying to register to vote could be given to the registrar to include packs they make available to those receiving British citizenship. Depending on their previous/other nationality, someone who has become a British citizen may already be on the electoral register, but information should be provided in any case to ensure that they have the correct franchise. Local authority education data : This data may provide information to assist with the identification of potential electors aged 16 to 18 years who may be eligible to be registered as attainers or electors. You separately have the power to require information from a person who is not the elector. You can use this power where it is required for the purposes of maintaining the register. 5 For example, you can use it to require those in charge of multiple occupation establishments or care homes to provide you with information on residents. To comply with data protection legislation, you need to demonstrate that all information obtained complies with the principles of processing personal data,

ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Therefore, you should maintain details of: the records to be checked a schedule of when those checks are carried out the lawful basis on which you are processing that information. For example, Section 9A places an obligation on you, the ERO, to inspect these records as part of your duty to maintain the electoral register, therefore providing the statutory basis by which you are processing that personal data the security in place to protect the data. For example, encrypting/password protecting data whenever it is transmitted, and using secure storage action taken on the basis of the information you have obtained retention and secure disposal of data (in accordance with your document retention plan) A number of EROs have identified tools to assist in managing registration processes. For information on and examples of utilising management tools, see our resource Effective management of registration processes: Sharing good practice - Effective management of registration processes Information and examples of how some EROs are utilising existing data sources to help ensure that registers are as accurate and complete as possible, see our resource Effective use of available data: Sharing good practice - Effective use of available data 1. Regulations 35(1) and (2) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 35(1), (2)(a) and (3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Paragraph 1(5) of Schedule 2 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 23(1) and 35(1), (2)(a) and (3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 23(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for What records can you inspect to assist you with identifying potential new electors throughout the year? What resources are needed to deliver your registration plan? Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Your public engagement strategy and registration plan Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Your public engagement strategy and registration plan Example tactics for reaching target audiences (DOC) Factsheet on producing accessible communications (DOC) FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) Guidance on assisted applications in England and Wales (word) Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) Sharing good practice - Communications Sharing good practice - Effective management of registration processes Sharing good practice - Effective use of available data Sharing good practice - Reaching care home residents Sharing good practice - Reaching students Template public engagement strategy (XLS) Template registration plan (XLS) Template risk and issues register (XLS) Last updated: 19 July 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Your public engagement strategy and registration plan What records can you inspect to assist you with identifying potential new electors throughout the year? Eligibility to register to vote Eligibility to register to vote Eligibility to register to vote In order for a person to be eligible to register to vote in England they must meet the eligibility criteria on the relevant date . There are three aspects to the entitlement to be registered: 1 the application is made by someone who appears to be the person named on the application any statutory requirements in relation to the application, including how it may be made and the information it must contain, are met the person named on the application appears to the ERO to meet the eligibility criteria for registration and is not disqualified from registering 1. Section 10ZC(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 11 August 2021 Book traversal

links for Eligibility to register to vote Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Your public engagement strategy and registration plan What is the relevant date? What is the relevant date? What is the relevant date? You must determine applications for registration based on whether an applicant meets the requirements for registration and whether or not they are disqualified from registration on the relevant date. 1 The relevant date varies depending on the way the application is made: for an application on a paper form it is the day the application is made, 2 i.e. when the form including all the required information is completed by the applicant for online applications it is the date the IER Digital Service records the application as being made, the electronic date stamp will be included on the information sent to you for telephone and in-person applications (which are allowed at your discretion) it is the time that all the information required for the application has been recorded and the applicant has declared the truth of the information Regardless of the relevant date on a paper application, you must have received the application to register form by the appropriate deadline for it to be determined and included in the next update to the register. 1. Section 10ZC(1) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 4(6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 16 September 2020 Book traversal links for What is the relevant date? Eligibility to register to vote At what age can someone register to vote? At what age can someone register to vote? At what age can someone register to vote? A person aged 18 or over on the relevant date who meets the residency and nationality qualifications and is not subject to any legal incapacity to vote is entitled to be registered. 1 Additionally, 17 year olds and some 16 year olds are entitled to be included on the register as attainers. 2 An attainer is someone who turns 18 by the end of the twelve months following the 1 December after the relevant date. The register must include the date on which any attainers will be 18 years old, i.e. the date from which they will be entitled to vote. 1. Sections 4(1)(d), 3(d), 1(1)(d), 2(1)(d) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 4(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 25 May 2021 Book traversal links for At what age can someone register to vote? What is the relevant date? What are the residency requirements for registration purposes? What are the residency requirements for registration purposes? What are the residency requirements for registration purposes? A person must be resident, on the relevant date, at the address at which they want to be registered. 1 Residence has a particular meaning in electoral law and is not equivalent to residence for other purposes such as income tax or council tax. Normally a person is resident at an address for electoral purposes if it is their permanent home address. When making a determination on someone's residence, you need to consider the circumstances of the applicant, including the purpose they are present at a particular address for and/or the reasons they are absent. What is a qualifying address for electoral registration purposes? The qualifying address is the address a person is entitled to be registered at. The applicant or elector must be deemed resident at this address in accordance with electoral legislation. The register must include the qualifying addresses of those persons registered in it, 2 subject to certain exceptions, including overseas and anonymous electors. More detailed information on these exceptions is available in our guidance on special category electors. Which electors are exempt from the residency requirement? Certain categories of electors have special provisions entitling them to register despite not meeting the residence requirement. These electors include: service voters anonymous electors overseas electors On submission of the relevant declaration together with

their application to register to vote, such electors will be deemed to meet the residence requirement. Our guidance on special category electors provides further information on these types of electors and the process by which they can register. Does unlawful occupation of grounds or a property prevent registration? Unlawful occupation of grounds or a dwelling does not disqualify a person from registering there if it is determined that this is their permanent residence. As a result any issue regarding tenancy, ownership or legal occupation of the property by the applicant must be disregarded in determining whether or not the residence requirement has been met. 1. Sections 4(1)(a) and 4(3)(a) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 9(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 10 August 2021 [Book traversal links for What are the residency requirements for registration purposes? At what age can someone register to vote? Does temporary absence or presence affect residency? Does temporary absence or presence affect residency? Does temporary absence or presence affect residency? Being resident for registration purposes does not require actual occupation of the qualifying address on the relevant date . 1 Being away on holiday Going away on holiday does not affect a person's residence qualification for electoral registration purposes as long as the qualifying address remains their permanent place of residence and they intend to return to that address after their time away. Working away from home Someone being away due to any office, service or employment, will not affect their residence qualification, as long as either: 2 they intend to resume actual residence within a period of six months from when they gave up residence, and the reason for their absence will not prevent them from doing so, or the property is a permanent place of residence for the applicant alone or with others and the only reason the applicant is not currently at the property is because of the duty they are undertaking Residents in temporary accommodation A person in temporary accommodation with no other home elsewhere may, depending on the circumstances, be considered to be resident at that address. If, however, the person does have a permanent home elsewhere, they may not be deemed to be resident at the temporary address. 3 Guests A guest staying at a property does not become resident if they have a permanent home elsewhere. The guest will be deemed to be resident at their permanent home. However, a guest who does not have a permanent home elsewhere may, depending on the circumstances, be regarded as being resident for electoral purposes at that address. 1. Section 5\(2\) Representation of the People Act \(RPA\) 1983 ■ \[Back to content at footnote 1\]\(#\) 2. Section 5\(3\) RPA 1983 ■ \[Back to content at footnote 2\]\(#\) 3. Section 5\(2\) RPA 1983 ■ \[Back to content at footnote 3\]\(#\) Last updated: 1 June 2020 \[Book traversal links for Does temporary absence or presence affect residency? What are the residency requirements for registration purposes? Can electors register to vote at more than one address? Can electors register to vote at more than one address? Can electors register to vote at more than one address? Some electors may be entitled to register at more than one address. When considering an application to register a person at a secondary address you should take into account the purpose for which the elector is present at that address, to establish if they may be deemed resident there. You should consider each case on its own merits. When coming to a determination you need to consider that: a person may have more than one home, but property ownership is not sufficient to establish that someone is resident at an address - it is unlikely that owning a second property which is visited only for recreational purposes would meet the residency qualification owning and paying council tax on a property alone is not sufficient to satisfy the residence qualification, this may give an indication of connection to an address but is not evidence of residence how the second home is used\]\(#\)](#)

will affect whether or not someone may be considered to be resident at an address, i.e. is this where the 'main business of life' is being conducted? temporary presence at an address does not make a person resident there temporary absence does not deprive a person of their residence In each case, a person would need to be able to demonstrate their degree of permanency at both addresses. Each decision must be made on a case-by-case basis. Students often live at two different addresses, one during term time and one during the holidays. Students are entitled to register in respect of both addresses if you consider that they have their permanent home at both places. 1 We have produced a resource with examples of how some EROs are engaging with students and encouraging student registration. Sharing good practice - Reaching students 1. Section 5(5) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 1 June 2020 Book traversal links for Can electors register to vote at more than one address? Does temporary absence or presence affect residency? Can someone register to vote without a fixed address? Can someone register to vote without a fixed address? Can someone register to vote without a fixed address? A person who does not have a fixed or permanent address may register at the place where they spend most of their time, or to which they have a local connection. In some cases they will need to register by making a declaration of local connection. More information on making and processing declarations of local connection can be found in our guidance on special category electors . How can merchant seamen register? Merchant seamen who are not resident in the UK but would be if not for their employment are entitled to be treated as resident at either an address at which they would normally be resident, or at a hostel or club which provides accommodation for merchant seamen and at which they would commonly stay in during the course of their occupation. 1 How can gypsy and traveller communities register? Some members of gypsy or travelling communities may not have a permanent address, although they may settle for a period of time at sites designated by the local authority. When present at those sites for a substantive time, they may be considered to be resident there and may register as ordinary electors. The local authority, who are responsible for maintaining any sites and ensuring appropriate education is provided for the children, may be able to assist you in assessing the situation in the local area and helping facilitate the registration of any gypsies or travellers who meet the entitlement. Where there is no address where a particular gypsy and traveller community can be considered resident, they cannot register as ordinary electors. They may instead register by making a declaration of local connection at the place where they spend most of their time, or to where they have a local connection. 2 You should consider the presence of any gypsy or travelling communities in your area and decide on the best approach to take locally. How can people living on narrow boats and other movable residences register? Any person living permanently on a boat, houseboat or similar residence which has a permanent mooring in Great Britain can be treated as being resident at that address and should be registered as an ordinary elector. When a person lives on a boat or other similar residence without a permanent mooring, they cannot be treated as being resident at any particular address. They will be entitled to make a registration by declaration of local connection at a place where they spend the most of their time (whether during the day or night). 3 This may, for example, be a boatyard used for maintenance. How can homeless people register? A homeless person will not have a permanent home address and therefore will not be able to register as an ordinary elector. They may make an application to register by local connection at an address where they spend a substantial part of their time, whether during the day or night. 4 It may, for example, be a bus shelter, a park bench or the doorway to a

high street store. 1. Section 6 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 7B RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 7B RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 7B RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Can someone register to vote without a fixed address? Can electors register to vote at more than one address? Can a patient in a mental health hospital register to vote? Can a patient in a mental health hospital register to vote? Can a patient in a mental health hospital register to vote? A person admitted as an in-patient in a mental health hospital or other establishment maintained mainly for the reception and treatment of persons with a mental health problem may be registered at the hospital/establishment, if the period they are likely to spend there is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there. 1 Patients in mental health hospitals are also entitled to be registered by making a declaration of local connection at: 2 the address at which they would be living if they were not a patient an address where they used to live before they became a patient A person in a mental health hospital may still be considered resident at their permanent home if their stay in hospital is not long enough for them to be able to be regarded as resident there or for them to be able to register through a declaration of local connection. 3 More information on making and processing declarations of local connection can be found in our guidance on special category electors . Patients in mental health hospitals who are convicted offenders and are legally incapable of voting are not entitled to be registered. 4 1. Section 7(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 7(5)(b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 7(5)(a) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 3A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Can a patient in a mental health hospital register to vote? Can someone register to vote without a fixed address? Can prisoners register to vote? Can prisoners register to vote? Can prisoners register to vote? Convicted persons detained in penal institutions are not entitled to be registered because they are legally incapable of voting . However, it is possible that in some limited circumstances, a prisoner may meet the criteria to register to vote. Can a prisoner on remand register? A person who has been remanded in custody (but is not a convicted prisoner) who is detained in a penal institution or some other place for custodial purposes, may be deemed to be resident there for registration purposes, if the period of detention is sufficient to enable them to be regarded as being resident there. 1 A remand prisoner may also choose to register by making a declaration of local connection at: 2 the address at which they would be living if they were not a prisoner on remand an address where they used to live before they became a prisoner on remand A remand prisoner may still be considered resident at their permanent home if their stay at their place of custody is not long enough for them to be able to be regarded as resident there or for them to be able to register through a declaration of local connection. 3 Can a convicted prisoner released on temporary licence register? Convicted persons detained in penal institutions are not entitled to be registered because they are legally incapable of voting . However, it is possible that in some limited circumstances, convicted prisoners who have been released on temporary licence may meet the criteria to register to vote. In these cases, the person's place of residence should be determined in the ordinary way. Our guidance provides further information on the registration options available for prisoners on remand and patients in mental hospitals . 1. Section 7A(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 7A(5)(b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3.

Section 7A(5)(a) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Can prisoners register to vote? Can a patient in a mental health hospital register to vote? What are the nationality requirements to register to vote? What are the nationality requirements to register to vote? What are the nationality requirements to register to vote? General provisions An individual's citizenship is one of the factors that determines which, if any, elections in the UK a person is entitled to be registered to vote at. If an applicant is unsure regarding any aspect of their nationality, they should be advised to contact the Home Office . You should point out to them that they need to be sure of their nationality before applying – knowingly providing false information on an application is an offence, punishable on summary conviction by up to six months imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. 1 1. Section 13D Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for What are the nationality requirements to register to vote? Can prisoners register to vote? Registration of British citizens Registration of British citizens Registration of British citizens British citizens fulfil the nationality qualification for registration in respect of all elections in the UK. 1 Marriage to a British citizen does not automatically mean someone becomes a British citizen. Being born in the UK does not automatically confer British citizenship either. If an applicant is unsure whether they are a British citizen, they should contact the Home Office to make sure that they meet the nationality qualification before applying. Citizenship ceremonies Citizenship ceremonies are the final stage of attaining British citizenship. However, an invitation to a citizenship ceremony is not in itself proof of citizenship. 1. Sections 4(1)(c) and (3)(c) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 1 June 2020 Book traversal links for Registration of British citizens What are the nationality requirements to register to vote? How should an elector with dual nationality be registered? How should an elector with dual nationality be registered? How should an elector with dual nationality be registered? Some applicants may have more than one nationality. You should always process an application in accordance with the nationality that provides the higher level of franchise. For example, an application stating that the applicant is a dual German and British citizen should be registered as a British citizen, as this gives them the wider franchise. Where an application is made by a resident who is ineligible to register (for example, a US citizen), their application must be rejected and a notice must be sent to the applicant. This notice should make it clear that the application failed the nationality qualification and what steps should be taken should they also hold an eligible nationality. If an applicant does also hold a nationality that would entitle them to register, they can be registered in respect of that nationality. Last updated: 1 June 2020 Book traversal links for How should an elector with dual nationality be registered? Registration of British citizens Can a Commonwealth citizen register to vote? Can a Commonwealth citizen register to vote? Can a Commonwealth citizen register to vote? Qualifying Commonwealth citizens are entitled to register as Parliamentary and as local government electors provided that on the relevant date they also fulfil the age and residence requirements for registration and are not subject to any other legal incapacity. 1 Citizens of Commonwealth countries other than the United Kingdom are not eligible to register as overseas electors. 2 Meaning of 'qualifying Commonwealth citizen' 3 A person is a qualifying Commonwealth citizen if they do not require leave to enter or remain in the UK, or they do require leave to enter or remain in the UK but have been granted such leave, or are treated as having been granted such leave. Any type of leave to

enter or remain is acceptable, whether indefinite, time limited or conditional.

Commonwealth citizens temporarily in the UK and pending removal The Home Office have advised that Commonwealth citizens who are temporarily in the UK pending removal, are not in the UK legally whilst arrangements for their removal are being made. As these citizens do not have leave to enter or remain they are not eligible to register to vote. List of Commonwealth countries Antigua and Barbuda Kenya Saint Lucia Australia Kingdom of Eswatini Saint Vincent and the Grenadines The Bahamas Kiribati Samoa Bangladesh Lesotho Seychelles Barbados Malawi Sierra Leone Belize Malaysia Singapore Botswana Maldives Solomon Islands Brunei Darussalam Malta* South Africa Cameroon Mauritius Sri Lanka Canada Mozambique Tonga Cyprus* Namibia Trinidad and Tobago Dominica Nauru Tuvalu Fiji New Zealand Uganda Ghana Nigeria United Kingdom The Gambia Pakistan United Republic of Tanzania Grenada Papua New Guinea Vanuatu Guyana Rwanda Zambia India Saint Kitts and Nevis Zimbabwe Jamaica *Although also EU member states, citizens of Cyprus and Malta are eligible to be registered to vote in respect of all elections held in the UK. Citizens of Commonwealth countries that have been suspended from the Commonwealth retain their voting rights. Their voting rights would only be affected if their country was also deleted from the list of Commonwealth countries in the British Nationality Act 1981 through an Act of the UK Parliament. 1. Sections 4(1)(c) and (3)(c) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sections 1(1) and 2 RPA 1985 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 4(6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 November 2022 Book traversal links for Can a Commonwealth citizen register to vote? How should an elector with dual nationality be registered? Can a citizen from the British Overseas Territories register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Overseas Territories register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Overseas Territories register to vote? Citizens from British Overseas Territories are all Commonwealth citizens and are entitled to register as electors in respect of all elections, provided that they also fulfil the age and residence requirements for such registration and are not subject to any other legal incapacity. British Overseas Territories Anguilla Montserrat Bermuda Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands British Antarctic Territory St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha British Indian Ocean Territory South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands Cayman Islands Sovereign Base areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia on Cyprus Falkland Islands Turks and Caicos Islands Gibraltar Virgin Islands Citizens from British Overseas Territories are not eligible to register as overseas electors. How do you process an application from a citizen from Hong Kong? Following its transfer to Chinese sovereignty on 1 July 1997, Hong Kong was deleted from the list of British Overseas Territories. As a result, former residents of Hong Kong are not automatically qualifying Commonwealth citizens. Only those previous residents of Hong Kong who hold a British Overseas Territories, British Nationals (Overseas) or British Overseas passport meet the nationality criterion for all elections in the UK. Any previous resident of Hong Kong who only has a Chinese Special Administrative Region passport is Chinese and may not register. If an elector declares their nationality to be Hong Kong Chinese then you should exercise your powers to require evidence of the elector's actual nationality and confirm the type of passport that they hold. Last updated: 6 February 2023 Book traversal links for Can a citizen from the British Overseas Territories register to vote? Can a Commonwealth citizen register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Crown Dependencies register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Crown Dependencies register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Crown Dependencies register to vote? The British Crown Dependencies consist of the Isle of Man and the

Channel Islands including Jersey, Guernsey, Sark, Alderney, Herm and the other inhabited Channel Islands. Citizens of the British Crown Dependencies who are resident in the UK are considered to be Commonwealth citizens for the purposes of electoral registration. However, unlike Commonwealth citizens, they may register as overseas electors. Last updated: 1 June 2020 Book traversal links for Can a citizen from the British Crown Dependencies register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Overseas Territories register to vote? Can a citizen from the European Union register to vote? Can a citizen from the European Union register to vote? Can a citizen from the European Union register to vote? Citizens from member countries of the European Union are eligible to register to vote in local government elections, providing they meet with the age and residency requirements and that they are not legally incapable of voting . Citizens of the Republic of Ireland, Cyprus and Malta are eligible to be registered to vote in respect of all elections in the UK. Member states of the European Union Austria France The Netherlands Belgium Germany Poland Bulgaria Greece Portugal Croatia Hungary Republic of Ireland* Cyprus* Italy Romania Czech Republic Latvia Slovakia Denmark Lithuania Slovenia Estonia Luxembourg Spain Finland Malta* Sweden *Citizens of the Republic of Ireland, Cyprus and Malta are eligible to be registered to vote in respect of all elections in the UK. How do you process an application from a citizen of Cyprus? For registration purposes, the whole of Cyprus is considered to be a Commonwealth country and you should not be concerned with the political situation of the island. If there is any doubt as to whether a person from Cyprus should be registered, they should be asked to provide confirmation that they are Cypriot, such as a Uniform Format Form with a UK visa, UK residence permit showing Cypriot nationality, or other appropriate evidence. Registration as a Cypriot national cannot be based solely on a Turkish passport. Last updated: 2 August 2021 Book traversal links for Can a citizen from the European Union register to vote? Can a citizen from the British Crown Dependencies register to vote? Which nationalities can vote at which elections? Which nationalities can vote at which elections? Which nationalities can vote at which elections? UK Parliamentary elections All British, Republic of Ireland and qualifying Commonwealth citizens meet the nationality requirement to register to vote in UK Parliamentary elections. 1 Local government elections British citizens, citizens from the European Union and qualifying Commonwealth citizens all meet the nationality requirement to register to vote in local government elections. 2 Other elections The local government election franchise is also used as the basis for elections to the Greater London Authority, 3 as well as for Police and Crime Commissioner elections. 4 We have produced a resource outlining the nationality requirements for each type of election. Citizenship and election type check list 1. Section 1(1)(c) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 2(1)(c) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 36(2A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 51(6) Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 1 June 2020 Book traversal links for Which nationalities can vote at which elections? Can a citizen from the European Union register to vote? Data protection considerations for the provision of nationality information Data protection considerations for the provision of nationality information Data protection considerations for the provision of nationality information Data protection legislation does not affect the requirement for nationality information to be provided on an application. However nationality data is classed as special category of personal data because it may reveal an individual's racial or ethnic origin. Data protection legislation prohibits the processing of special categories of personal

data unless an additional lawful basis beyond those for the main purposes of processing data are met. The appropriate lawful basis for processing special categories of personal data for electoral purposes would be that it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest and with a basis in UK law. Additionally, the Data Protection Act 2018 requires that in order to process nationality data – whether as part of an application to register, or in relation to staff appointments – you must have in place a 'Policy Document' which, amongst other things, must explain: the procedures for complying with the data protection principles the policies for retention and erasure Your policy document will need to reflect your local procedures and policies for the processing, retention and erasure of personal data. This policy document must be: kept until six months after the processing ceases reviewed and updated at appropriate times made available to the ICO on request Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further information on special categories of data and the need for a policy document. The guidance also highlights the need to ensure that a Privacy Notice is published on your website before carrying out any collection of data. Last updated: 5 June 2023 Book traversal links for Data protection considerations for the provision of nationality information Which nationalities can vote at which elections? Your powers to request further information Your powers to request further information Your powers to request further information If you are not satisfied that an applicant or elector is eligible to be registered, you have the powers to request documentary evidence from them in regard to their residency, date of birth and/or nationality. You also have the general power to require any third party to provide information about any aspect in relation to a person's entitlement to be registered. 1 You separately have the power to require information from any other person for the purposes of maintaining the register. 2 Failure to respond to a request for information could lead to a £1,000 fine. 3 Where you formally request information you should make clear the maximum fine they may incur if they do not respond. If any fee is payable in connection with the production of the evidence you require, you must pay the fee and treat it as part of the registration expenses paid by the local authority. 4 Guidance on the use of this power to verify applicants who cannot provide any of the information required on an application is contained in our guidance on the exceptions process . 1. Regulation 23 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 23(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 24 (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Your powers to request further information Data protection considerations for the provision of nationality information Requesting evidence of residency at a particular address Requesting evidence of residency at a particular address Requesting evidence of residency at a particular address If you are not satisfied that an applicant or elector is resident at a particular address, you can ask them to provide further information. 1 For example, you may have local knowledge that suggests that the applicant is not resident. While it will be in the interest of the elector or applicant to respond, you cannot require them to provide you with this information. Where they do not respond and you cannot obtain this information through other means, you may put their application on hold or review their registration. You could also use your power to require information from any other person for the purposes of maintaining the register 2 in regard to an applicant or elector's residence in some circumstances, for example, you could require those in charge of multiple occupation establishments to provide you with information on residents. 1. Regulations 26B and

23(1A) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23(1) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 1 June 2020 Book traversal links for Requesting evidence of residency at a particular address Your powers to request further information Requesting evidence of someone's date of birth Requesting evidence of someone's date of birth Requesting evidence of someone's date of birth Date of birth checks form part of the application verification process. If you are not satisfied as to any applicant or elector's age, you have the power to require the applicant or elector to provide documentary evidence confirming their date of birth. 1 You can ask for the following evidence that will help you decide whether or not someone satisfies the age criterion: 2 a birth certificate a certificate of naturalisation a document showing that a person has become a citizen of another Commonwealth country (although this may, in some cases, not include a date of birth) If someone does not know their date of birth, there are certain documents you can require them to submit to you under the exceptions process . You also have the power to request additional evidence in order to verify the identity of an applicant. 1. Regulation 24 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 24(2)(a), (b), and (d)(i) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Requesting evidence of someone's date of birth Requesting evidence of residency at a particular address Requesting evidence of someone's nationality Requesting evidence of someone's nationality Requesting evidence of someone's nationality If you are not satisfied as to any applicant or elector's nationality, you have the power to require the applicant or elector to provide documentary evidence confirming their nationality. You can ask for the following evidence: 1 a birth certificate a certificate of naturalisation where a person has made an application to register as an overseas elector, further evidence as to their status as a British citizen a document showing that someone has become a Commonwealth citizen a statutory declaration that they are a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a relevant citizen of the European Union In order to be entitled to register to vote a person must be legally resident in the UK. If you are in any doubt as to whether an applicant or elector is legally resident, you can request checks of a person's immigration status against Home Office records. Further guidance on this process and contact details are available by contacting the Home Office . You will be asked to complete a template which will be provided – please complete and return the section below the heading 'Subject 1' to the same email address. The Home Office have requested one template per subject per email, and that 'ER' be added to the subject header for each email to ensure that it goes into the correct folder for a response. The Home Office will respond within five working days unless a file is required, in which case it will respond within ten working days. The fact that you may require additional evidence of an applicant's nationality, and may request checks of a person's immigration status against Government records is included on the registration application form approved by the Minister and made available to you by the Commission. 1. Regulation 24 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 1 March 2022 Book traversal links for Requesting evidence of someone's nationality Requesting evidence of someone's date of birth How does legal incapacity affect the right to register to vote? How does legal incapacity affect the right to register to vote? How does legal incapacity affect the right to register to vote? A person subject to a legal incapacity to vote cannot be included on the register of electors. 1 Peers Peers who are members of the House of Lords 2 are

disqualified from voting at UK Parliamentary elections and therefore are not entitled to be registered in the UK Parliamentary register of electors. They do, however, qualify to be registered in the local government register of electors as they are not disqualified from voting in local government elections. 3 A full list of members of the House of Lords can be found on the House of Lords website . Alternatively, the Information Office at the House of Lords will be able to assist with enquiries by email or can be contacted by telephoning 0800 223 0855 or 020 7219 3107. Detained convicted prisoners Detained convicted prisoners who have been found guilty of an offence (excluding contempt of court) and are detained in prison (except for detention in consequence of non-compliance with a non-custodial sentence) are not legally capable of voting and therefore not eligible to be included in the register of electors. This applies whether the person is in prison or unlawfully at large. 4 It is possible in some limited circumstances, convicted prisoners who are released on temporary licence may meet the criteria to register to vote, given that such prisoners may not be detained within the meaning of section 3 RPA 1983. Convicted offenders detained in a mental health hospital Convicted offenders that are detained in a mental health hospital (or are unlawfully at large) are not legally capable of voting and therefore cannot be included in the register of electors. 5 Persons found guilty of electoral offences Persons found guilty of: the corrupt practice of personation found guilty of a corrupt practice relating to applications for postal and proxy votes are legally incapable of being registered to vote for five years from the date of the conviction or the report of an election court. 6 Persons found guilty of: knowingly voting or applying to vote when subject to a legal incapacity to vote knowingly appointing a proxy who is subject to a legal incapacity to vote knowingly voting as proxy on behalf of someone who is subject to a legal incapacity to vote multiple voting (both as an elector or a proxy) are legally incapable of being registered to vote for three years from the date of the conviction or election court report: 7 There may be some occasions where a court does not impose any further incapacity to register to vote or mitigates or ends any existing incapacity. You will therefore need to make a determination on a case-by-case basis, having regard where possible to any judgments or court reports. A successful appeal against a conviction would also remove the legal incapacity. 1. Section 4 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 3(2) House of Lords Act 1999 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 3(2) House of Lords Act 1999 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 3 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Section 3A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Sections 60, 62, 173(1), (2) and (3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Sections 61, 173(1), (2) and (3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for How does legal incapacity affect the right to register to vote? Requesting evidence of someone's nationality How does mental capacity affect the right to register to vote? How does mental capacity affect the right to register to vote? How does mental capacity affect the right to register to vote? A lack of mental capacity is not a legal incapacity to vote. 1 Persons who meet the other registration qualifications are eligible for registration regardless of their mental capacity. Voting rights While electors with any level or no level of mental capacity may be registered to vote, the decision as to whether and how to vote at an election must be made by the elector themselves and not by any other person on their behalf. Those who care for or who otherwise make decisions on behalf of a person may not make decisions on voting. We have produced guidance for care staff in England and Wales on engaging with those in their care and the levels of assistance that they may provide in

relation to a person's application for registration and absent voting. Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) 1. Section 5(6) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for How does mental capacity affect the right to register to vote? How does legal incapacity affect the right to register to vote? Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Eligibility to register to vote Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Eligibility to register to vote Citizenship and election type check list Guidance on assisted applications in England and Wales (word) Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) List of eligible countries for registration purposes (PDF) Sharing good practice - Reaching students Last updated: 5 June 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Eligibility to register to vote How does mental capacity affect the right to register to vote? Special category electors Special category electors Special category electors Special arrangements apply to some electors, including those who do not meet the usual residence qualification. These are: overseas electors, i.e. British citizens living outside the UK HM forces service voters (and their spouses or civil partners) Crown servants and British Council employees (and their spouses or civil partners) electors who have a declaration of local connection, who include people living in the UK but who have no permanent address or fixed address anonymously registered electors, i.e. those who can register anonymously because their safety would be at risk if they appeared on the register using their name patients in mental health hospitals whose stay at the hospital is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there remand prisoners whose stay at a penal institution is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there As well as providing the same information as ordinary electors in their application to register, they must provide additional specific information, through a declaration, to register as a special category elector. Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for Special category electors Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Eligibility to register to vote How can special category electors apply to register to vote? How can special category electors apply to register to vote? How can special category electors apply to register to vote? Online applications Overseas electors, HM forces service voters (and their spouses or civil partners), and Crown servants and British Council employees (and their spouses or civil partners) may apply through the register to vote website . Forms You must use the special category elector registration forms approved by the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and made available by the Commission on our website . The prescribed forms include a data protection statement and the prescribed description of the electoral and open registers. Reminders The duty to send a second and third invitation to non-responding new potential electors and the duty to make at least one personal visit does not apply where someone has made an application: 1 under Section 7(2) or 7A(2) of the RPA 1983 by making a declaration of local connection, service declaration or overseas elector's declaration to register anonymously The exceptions and attestation processes for special category electors All special category electors whose personal identifiers cannot be matched against DWP data must provide some form of evidence as to their identity in order to be registered to vote. Anonymous electors and declarations of local connection (any type) who fail the DWP match must provide documentary evidence or, if they cannot provide documentary evidence, an attestation in the same way as people applying to register as an ordinary elector. See our guidance on verification, exceptions and attestations . All correspondence between you and applicants may be sent electronically. In addition, it is permissible

for applicants to provide attestations or documentary evidence by electronic means such as a fax or scanned image. The process for all other types of special category electors is given in the guidance that follows for each type of special category elector. Data protection Data protection legislation requires you to have a policy document in place when processing special categories of personal data, which includes nationality data received as part of an application to register. We have produced guidance on the requirement to have a policy document when processing special categories of personal data, including what it must contain. 1. Regulation 32ZD(6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 June 2023 Book traversal links for How can special category electors apply to register to vote? Special category electors Overseas electors Overseas electors Some British citizens may register as overseas electors if they are now living abroad. Subject to the conditions outlined below, a British citizen living abroad is entitled to be registered as an overseas elector if they are either: 1 a person who is (or was) included in a register of Parliamentary electors before they left the UK a person who was too young to be included on the register at the time they left the UK Conditions that apply to a person who is (or was) included in a register of Parliamentary electors before they left the UK: All of the following conditions must be satisfied: 2 the entry on the register was made on the basis that they were resident, or treated for the purposes of registration as resident, at that address the entry on the register was in force within 15 years of the date given on the declaration provided as part of the application to register as an overseas elector they have not appeared in any other electoral register for any other qualifying address since being last registered at the application address Conditions that apply to a person who was too young to be included on the register at the time they left the UK: All of the following conditions must be satisfied: 3 they have last lived in the UK within 15 years of the date given on the declaration provided as part of their application to register they were too young to have been included in a register of electors prior to residing overseas they have the name of a parent or guardian included in a register of electors for the address at which they were residing prior to living overseas 1. Section 1 Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1985 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 1(3) RPA 1985 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 1(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for Overseas electors How can special category electors apply to register to vote? What must be included in an application from an overseas elector? What must be included in an application from an overseas elector? What must be included in an application from an overseas elector? An application to register as an overseas elector must contain all of the following: 1 the applicant's full name the last UK address at which they were registered a correspondence address any address where they have ceased to reside in the 12 months prior to the date of the application and, where that address is not in the UK, an indication of whether they were registered as an overseas elector during this period an indication of whether they are resident at any other address, including any address where they are currently registered and claim to be entitled to remain registered the applicant's date of birth or, if unable to provide this information, the reason why they are unable to do so and a statement as to whether the applicant is under 18 years old or aged 76 or over the applicant's National Insurance number or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason they are not able to do so an indication of whether their name should be omitted from the edited register a declaration that the contents of the application are true the date

of the application the appropriate declaration If an overseas applicant changed their name before their details last appeared on an electoral register in the UK, they may also provide their previous name, but this is not mandatory. However, it may help in verifying their identity and the application form must provide space for the applicant to provide this information if they wish. The declaration must be dated and must state: 2 the applicant's full name and present address their previous name, and the reason for the change, if they changed their name since they last appeared on an electoral register in the UK that they are a British citizen that they are not resident in the UK on the relevant date the date when they ceased to be resident in the UK or, in the case of a person relying on registration in pursuance of a service declaration, when they ceased to have a service qualification or, if later, ceased to be so resident which of the two sets of conditions to qualify as an overseas elector apply – and the additional appropriate details for each as set out in the table below

First set of conditions Additional details required Applicant previously registered in the UK - The address in the UK at which they were registered - If they were last registered in pursuance of a service or other declaration, rather than actual residence at the address and no longer had connection with the address at the time at which they were so registered, a statement that they were so registered - ■ If their name has changed since they were last registered in respect of the address, the name under which they had last previously registered and the reason for the name change

Second set of conditions Additional details required Applicant too young to be registered at the time they left the UK - Their date of birth - The address in the UK at which they were resident - ■ The name of the parent or guardian on whose registration in respect of that address they rely - ■ Whether the person named was a parent or guardian - ■ If the applicant has not on a previous occasion made an overseas elector's declaration following which they were registered, the applicant's birth certificate must be sent together with the declaration. The birth certificate must contain the applicant's date of birth and the names of either or both of the parents - ■ Where the applicant's name on their birth certificate (if required to be submitted) is not the same as their name as given in the declaration, the reason for the change of name. - ■ Where the applicant is required to provide their birth certificate and they rely on the registration of either a parent whose name in the register is not the same as the name of that parent as given in either the applicant's birth certificate or in the declaration or a guardian whose name in the register is not the same as the name of that guardian as given in the declaration, the name of the parent or guardian as given in the register and, where known, the reason for the change or, as the case may be, changes of name or, where such reason (or reasons) is not known, a statement to that effect if they were previously registered as an overseas elector and have not, since being so registered, been registered in such a register by virtue of being resident or treated for the purposes of registration as resident at an address in the United Kingdom, a statement of those facts and indicate when they were last registered as an overseas elector if they have never made an overseas declaration before or if they have not made such a declaration since being registered by virtue of being resident or treated for the purposes of registration as resident at an address in the United Kingdom: if they have a British passport which describes their national status as 'British citizen', the number, date and place of issue of that passport if they do not have such a passport, but were born in the UK before 1 January 1983, that fact if they do not have such a passport and were not born in the UK before 1 January 1983, a statement of when and how they acquired British citizenship, together with the date, place and country of their

birth Depending on which of the two sets of conditions to qualify as an overseas elector apply, the additional details outlined in the table above are also required. A declaration may not specify more than one UK address. 3 Where more than one declaration bearing the same date is made specifying different addresses in the UK, the declarations will be void. 1. Regulations 26(1) and (5) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 2(3), (4) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1985, Regulations 18 and 19 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 2(4) RPA 1985 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 11 August 2021 Book traversal links for What must be included in an application from an overseas elector? Overseas electors How is the 15 year period calculated? How is the 15 year period calculated? How is the 15 year period calculated? For electors who are (or were) included in a register of Parliamentary electors before they left the UK The 15 year period begins from the last day that the elector was last on a register of electors in the UK, either as an ordinary elector or as a service voter. 1 The date the elector left the UK is irrelevant. The 15 year requirement will be met if both the application and declaration are dated within 15 years of the last date the applicant appeared on a register. The application/declaration is deemed to be made on the date that it is dated. For electors who were too young to be included on a register of electors when they left the UK If someone was too young to have registered before they left the UK (including as an attainer), the 15 year period begins from the date they claim to have left the UK. 2 1. Section 1(3)(c) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1985 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 1(4)(a) RPA 1985 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for How is the 15 year period calculated? What must be included in an application from an overseas elector? How should an application from an overseas elector be processed? How should an application from an overseas elector be processed? How should an application from an overseas elector be processed? Acknowledging applications There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged, although you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement if you wish. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful, as set out below. Verifying applications All applications and declarations should be processed and the applicant's identity verified as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive an application where the qualifying address falls outside your area you should forward it to the relevant ERO without delay. Potential overseas electors who fail the DWP match must provide an attestation as to their identity. You must write to the applicant informing them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and ask them to supply an attestation. You may wish to create a form which contains the necessary legal statements and requirements for the attestation. Alternatively, you may wish to set this detail out in the letter to the applicant. In all cases, you must communicate the legislative requirements for an attestation. 1 The attestation must: be in writing confirm that the applicant is the person stated on the overseas elector application be signed by a registered elector who is a British citizen living overseas and who is not the spouse, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant state the full name, address and occupation of the person signing the attestation state the attestor's British passport number together with its date and place of issue state the date on which the attestation is made Persons attesting overseas applications should be registered electors who are a British citizens living overseas and may attest an unlimited number of applications. You may wish to set a deadline date for the applicant to respond; this will be helpful when

deciding to reject an application because no response has been received. The time given to applicants to respond is at the discretion of the ERO; however, it should allow the applicant reasonable time to source and return their attestation. You should consider whether to allow additional time for overseas electors, bearing in mind the distance the elector lives from the UK. Confirming applications and declarations If you have determined that an applicant is entitled to be registered, you must confirm to them in writing that their registration application has been successful. 2 You should also include, alongside the confirmation letter, information on any absent voting arrangements that are in place. If no arrangements are in place you should make clear what their absent voting options are. If you have rejected a registration application, you must return the declaration, notify the applicant and inform them of the reasons why. 3 Where an existing overseas elector has successfully renewed their declaration, there is no requirement to send them a confirmation notice. You may, however, still decide to send them further information confirming that their renewal has been successful, which you could do by e-mail. This communication could also include information on when their declaration will expire, how and when they will next be reminded to renew it, what absent voting arrangements they have in place and, if they have none, information on absent voting options. You should make the elector aware of the general timings for dispatching postal votes ahead of an election and could advise the elector to appoint a proxy as an alternative if it is not realistic for their postal ballot pack to be dispatched, completed and returned before the close of poll. It is, of course, the elector's choice as to which method of voting they prefer, but it is important that they can make an informed decision. Further information can be found in our guidance on absent voting .

1. Regulation 26B Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 22(1) and Regulation 29(2BA) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 22(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 14 October 2020

Book traversal links for How should an application from an overseas elector be processed? How is the 15 year period calculated? How should overseas electors be listed in the register? How should overseas electors be listed in the register? Overseas electors should be listed as other electors at the end of each relevant part of the register and entries must be shown without an address. They must be grouped in alphabetical order together with any service voters and persons registered by making a declaration of local connection.

1 All overseas electors must have the letter F prefixed before their name.

2 1. Regulation 41(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 42(6) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 25 May 2021

Book traversal links for How should overseas electors be listed in the register? How should an application from an overseas elector be processed? How long are overseas declarations valid for? How long are overseas declarations valid for? How long are overseas declarations valid for? An overseas declaration is valid for 12 months. Registrations can be removed earlier in the following circumstances: cancellation by the elector

1 you determine the person is not entitled to be registered

2 you determine the person was registered, or that their entry was altered, as a result of an application made by another person (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided on the application and who has declared that the information provided is true)

3 if another entry is made in respect of the elector in any register of electors

4 For guidance on removing an elector from the register, see our guidance on

deletions . A declaration received later than three months after it is dated must be rejected. 5 The applicant should be informed and invited to submit a fresh declaration. An overseas voter may cancel their declaration at any time. 6 The cancellation of an overseas declaration will cancel any absent voting arrangement made in connection with that declaration, even if the elector registers as an ordinary elector at the same qualifying address. 1. Section 2(2)(b) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 2(2)(aa) RPA 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section (2)(ab) RPA 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 2(2)(c) RPA 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Section 2(6) RPA 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Section 2(5) RPA 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020 [Book traversal links for How long are overseas declarations valid for?](#) [How should overseas electors be listed in the register?](#) [Renewal of overseas declarations](#) [Renewal of overseas declarations](#) [Renewal of overseas declarations](#) A person registered as an overseas elector is entitled to remain registered until the end of the 12 month period beginning with the date when the entry first takes effect, provided the other conditions for registration remain satisfied. 1 You will need to maintain a record showing when reminders are due to be sent. You must remind every overseas elector of the need to make a fresh declaration if they wish to remain registered. 2 The reminder must be sent between 9 and 10 months after the date when the overseas entry first takes effect 3 and should include a declaration for the overseas elector to complete. You are required to send a second reminder if they have not responded to the first not less than 21 days and not more than 28 days after sending the first reminder. 4 Reminders must not be sent where you have received information that the person is no longer entitled to make the relevant declaration or no longer wishes to be registered as an overseas elector. 5 Where a declaration is not renewed within the 12 month period and the person is removed from the register, they will also lose any absent voting arrangement they had in place. Further information about notifying electors of loss of entitlement to absent voting arrangements can be found in our guidance on absent voting . 1. Section 2(2)(a) Representation of the People Act 1985 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 25(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulation 25(3)(a) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulation 25(3A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 25(4) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Renewal of overseas declarations](#) [How long are overseas declarations valid for?](#) [HM forces service voters](#) [HM forces service voters](#) [HM forces service voters](#) A member of HM forces and their spouse or civil partner may register as a service voter, although they may choose in certain circumstances to make a registration application as an ordinary elector instead. 1 A member of HM forces is a person serving on full pay the naval, military or air forces of the Crown raised in the UK. The following do not qualify as an HM forces service voter: 2 persons serving only as a member of a reserve or auxiliary force (except those serving during a period of emergency) members of the regular army required, by the terms of their service, to serve in Northern Ireland only When a person is not qualified to be a service voter for one of the reasons listed above, and is away from a UK address at which they have been residing, they can still be deemed to be resident there. They may therefore be registered as an ordinary elector if outside the UK on duty. 3 [Service Unit Registration Officers](#) Each unit has designated one member of staff to be a Unit Registration Officer (URO) and each base commander has been asked to give assistance to the URO and other personnel in their unit to promote participation in

the electoral process. A Unit could be a base, ship, depot, barracks etc. The responsibilities of the URO include providing information to service personnel and their families and acting as a liaison between the unit and local EROs. Where you have any military establishments in your area you should make contact with the UROs. If any problems occur with the registration of service personnel you should raise these issues with the URO of the unit in the first instance. It should now be possible for you to contact a URO in any location, including overseas. To ascertain who the URO is for any particular unit, the Ministry of Defence recommends contacting the unit directly, initially through directory enquiries, and then asking for information about the URO from: Royal Navy – First Lieutenant's office Army – Adjutant's office RAF – OC PSF (Officer Commanding Personnel Services Flight)

Registration of HM forces service voters who are qualifying Commonwealth citizens A service declaration must state the address where the applicant is living in the UK or, if they are living abroad because of their service, where they would have been living in the UK but for their service abroad. If they cannot give such an address, they must give an address at which they have lived in the UK.

4 Qualifying Commonwealth citizens, who have been recruited to the services in their country of origin or outside the UK without previously being resident in the UK, but who receive their training in the UK and are then immediately posted overseas may register at:

- the address of the barracks where they were enlisted and/or did their training
- a barracks where they were or would be resident if they were not posted abroad
- their regimental headquarters where they may have been resident
- an address in the UK where they would be resident were they no longer in the forces or not required to be resident in barracks, such as a relative's address

1. Section 14(1)(a) and (d) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Section 59(1)(b) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Section 59(2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Section 16(1)(d) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

Last updated: 10 August 2021

Book traversal links for HM forces service voters

Renewal of overseas declarations

What must be included in an application from a member of HM forces? What must be included in an application from a member of HM forces? What must be included in an application from a member of HM forces? An application to register as an HM forces service voter must contain all of the following:

- 1 the applicant's full name
- their correspondence address or British Forces Post Office (BFPO) number
- any address where the applicant has ceased to reside in the 12 months prior to the date of the application and, where that address is not in the UK, an indication of whether registered as an overseas elector during this period
- an indication of whether the applicant is resident at any other address, including any address where the applicant is currently registered and claims to be entitled to remain registered
- the applicant's date of birth or, if unable to provide this information, the reason why they are unable to do so and a statement as to whether as to whether the applicant is under 18 years old or aged 76 or over
- the applicant's National Insurance number or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason they are not able to do so
- the applicant's nationality or nationalities or, if they are not able to provide this information, the reason they are not able to do so
- an indication of whether their name should be omitted from the edited register
- a declaration that the contents of the application are true
- the date of the application
- the appropriate declaration

The application form must also provide space for their most recent previous name 2 (if they have one) and an explanation that providing this information is not mandatory but may help in verifying their identity and that if it is not provided, additional personal information may be required. An HM forces

service declaration must state: 3 the date of declaration the applicant's full name and address that on that date the applicant is, or but for the circumstances entitling that person to make the declaration would have been, residing in the UK the address where the applicant is, or would have been residing in the UK, or if they cannot give any such address, an address at which they have resided in the UK that on the date of the declaration the applicant is a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of a member state of the European Union whether the applicant had on the date of the declaration attained the age of 18 years and, if they had not, their date of birth the grounds on which a service qualification is claimed information relating to the service in which they or the person entitling them to make the application serve (whether naval, military or air forces), their rank and service number 1. Regulation 26(1) and (4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 16(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 and Regulation 15 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 15 March 2021 Book traversal links for What must be included in an application from a member of HM forces? HM forces service voters How should an application from a member of HM forces be processed? How should an application from a member of HM forces be processed? How should an application from a member of HM forces be processed? Acknowledging applications There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged although you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement if you wish. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful, as set out below. Verifying applications All applications and declarations should be processed and the applicant's identity verified as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive an application where the qualifying address falls outside your area you should forward it to the relevant ERO without delay. Members of the armed forces whose personal identifiers fail the DWP match must provide an attestation as to their identity You must write to the applicant informing them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and ask them to supply an attestation. You may wish to create a form which contains the necessary legal statements and requirements for the attestation. Alternatively, you may wish to set this detail out in the letter to the applicant. In all cases, you must communicate the legislative requirements for an attestation. 1 The attestation must: be in writing confirm that the applicant is the person stated in the service voter's application be signed by an officer of the armed forces who is not the spouse, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant state the full name, address and rank of the person signing the attestation and the service (whether naval, military or air forces) in which the attestor serves state the date on which it is made Persons attesting armed forces applications do not have to be registered to vote and may attest an unlimited number of applications. You may wish to set a deadline date for the applicant to respond; this will be helpful when deciding to reject an application because no response has been received. The time given to applicants to respond is at the discretion of the ERO; however, it should allow the applicant reasonable time to source and return their attestation, bearing in mind that armed forces electors may be deployed to overseas locations. Spouses or civil partners of members of the armed forces whose personal identifiers fail the DWP match must provide documentary evidence in support of their application You must write to the applicant informing them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and asking them to supply documentary evidence. This must be a copy of the information / photograph page of their passport or both sides of their EEA identity

card, certified by an officer of the armed forces who is not the applicant's spouse or civil partner. You may wish to set a deadline date for the applicant to respond; this will be helpful when deciding to reject an application because no response has been received. The time given to applicants to respond is at the discretion of the ERO; however, it should allow the applicant reasonable time to source and return their attestation, bearing in mind that armed forces electors may be deployed to overseas locations. Confirming applications and declarations If you have determined an applicant is entitled to be registered, you must confirm to them in writing that their registration application has been successful. 2 You should also include alongside the confirmation letter, information on any absent voting arrangements that are in place. If no arrangements are in place you should make clear what the absent voting options are. If you have rejected a registration application, you must notify the applicant and inform them of the reasons why. 3 Where an existing HM forces elector has successfully renewed their declaration, there is no requirement to send them a confirmation notice. You may, however, still decide to confirm their renewal has been successful, which you could do by e-mail. This communication could also include information on when their declaration will expire, how and when they will next be reminded to renew it, what absent voting arrangements they have in place and, if they have none, information on absent voting options. You should make the elector aware of the general timings for dispatching postal votes ahead of an election and could advise the elector to appoint a proxy as an alternative if it is not realistic for their postal ballot pack to be dispatched, completed and returned before the close of poll. It is, of course, the elector's choice as to which method of voting they prefer, but it is important that they can make an informed decision. Further information can be found in our guidance on absent voting . 1. Regulation 26B Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 17(1) and Regulation 29(2BA) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 17(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for How should an application from a member of HM forces be processed? What must be included in an application from a member of HM forces? How should HM forces service voters be listed in the register? How should HM forces service voters be listed in the register? How should HM forces service voters be listed in the register? Service voters either living at their qualifying address, or who would be living there were it not for the fact that they were stationed elsewhere because of their employment in the services, must be shown in the main body of the register, in the same way as ordinary electors. HM forces service voters should only be listed as other electors when they no longer have a connection to their qualifying address other than the fact that they once lived there. 1 Their names are to be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the relevant polling district beneath the other electors heading. The entry will show their name and elector number but not their address. 2 1. Regulation 40(2) and 41(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 41(3) RPR ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 25 May 2021 Book traversal links for How should HM forces service voters be listed in the register? How should an application from a member of HM forces be processed? How long are service declarations valid for? How long are service declarations valid for? How long are service declarations valid for? A service declaration for members of HM forces or their spouse or civil partner is valid for five years. 1 Registrations can be removed earlier in the following circumstances: 2 cancellation by the elector you determine the person is

not entitled to be registered you determine the person was registered, or their entry was altered, as a result of an application made by another person (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided on the application and who has declared that the information provided is true) if another entry is made in respect of the elector in any register of electors For guidance on removing an elector from the register, see our guidance on deletions . A service declaration received later than three months after it is dated must be rejected. 3 The applicant should be informed and invited to submit a fresh declaration. A service voter may cancel their declaration at any time. 4 The cancellation of a service declaration will cancel any absent voting arrangement made in connection with that declaration even if the elector registers as an ordinary elector at the same qualifying address. 1. Article 2 Service Voters' Registration Period Order 2010 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 15(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 15(8) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 15(7) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for How long are service declarations valid for? How should HM forces service voters be listed in the register? Renewal of service declarations Renewal of service declarations Renewal of service declarations A person registered as an HM forces service voter is entitled to remain registered, provided the elector continues to satisfy the other conditions for registration, until the end of the five year period beginning with the date when the entry first takes effect. You should make contact with the HM forces service voter during this five year period to ensure that their registration and voting arrangements remain current. You will need to maintain a record showing when reminders are due to be sent. You must remind every service voter of the need to make a fresh declaration if they wish to remain registered. 1 The reminder must be sent between 57 and 58 months after the date when the service entry first takes effect 2 and should include a new declaration for the service voter to complete. If you do not receive a fresh declaration, you are required to send a second reminder not less than 21 days and not more than 28 days after sending the first reminder. 3 Reminders must not be sent where you have received information that the person is no longer entitled to make the relevant declaration or no longer wishes to be registered as a service voter. 4 Where a declaration is not renewed within the five year period and the person is removed from the register, they will also lose any absent voting arrangement they had in place. Further information about notifying electors of loss of entitlement to absent voting arrangements can be found in our guidance on absent voting . 1. Regulation 25(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 25(3)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 25(3A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 25(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Renewal of service declarations How long are service declarations valid for? Crown servants and British Council employee service voters Crown servants and British Council employee service voters Crown servants and British Council employees abroad and their spouse or civil partner accompanying them can be registered at any time as service voters 1 – although they may choose in certain circumstances to make a registration application as an ordinary elector instead. A Crown servant is a person employed in the service of the Crown in a post outside the UK. They are required to devote the whole of their working time to the duties of that post, and their remuneration is paid wholly out of money provided by Parliament. 2 However, spouses and civil partners who are themselves in the UK do not qualify for this type

of registration. 3 1. Section 14(1)(e) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 14 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 14(1)(b),(c) and (e) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 26 April 2023 Book traversal links for Crown servants and British Council employee service voters Renewal of service declarations What must be included in an application from a Crown servant or British Council employee? What must be included in an application from a Crown servant or British Council employee? What must be included in an application from a Crown servant or British Council employee? An application to register as a service voter must contain all of the following: 1 the applicant's full name their correspondence address any address where the applicant has ceased to reside in the 12 months prior to the date of the application and, where that is not in the UK, an indication of whether that person was registered as an overseas elector during this period an indication of whether the applicant is resident at any other address, including any address where the applicant is currently registered and claims to be entitled to remain registered the applicant's date of birth or, if unable to provide this information, the reason why they are unable to do so and a statement as to whether the applicant is under 18 years old or aged 76 or over the applicant's National Insurance number or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason they are not able to do so the applicant's nationality or nationalities or, if they are not able to provide this information, the reason they are not able to do so an indication of whether their name should be omitted from the edited register a declaration that the contents of the application are true the date of the application the appropriate declaration The application form must also provide space for their most recent previous name 2 (if they have one) and an explanation that providing this information is not mandatory but may help in verifying their identity and that if it is not provided, additional personal information may be required. Their service declaration must state: 3 the date of declaration the applicant's full name and address that on that date the applicant is, or but for the circumstances entitling that person to make the declaration would have been, residing in the UK the address where the applicant is, or, would have been residing in the UK, or if they cannot give such an address, an address at which they have resided in the UK that on the date of the declaration the applicant is a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of a member state of the European Union whether the applicant had on the date of the declaration attained the age of 18 years and, if they had not, their date of birth the grounds on which a service qualification is claimed information relating to their job (or the person's job who entitles them to make the application) must be declared as shown in the table below: Crown Servant ■ British Council employee ■ the name of the government department they work for ■ their position / post ■ their position / post ■ their staff, payroll or other identifying number ■ their staff, payroll or other identifying number n/a ■ The declaration made by Crown servants and British Council employees does not need to be sent via their employer, which means that Crown servant and British Council employees can complete the registration process online. 4 1. Regulation 26(1) and (4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 16 Representation of the People Act 1983 and Regulations 15 and 15A RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 16 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 26 April 2023 Book traversal links for What must be included in an application from a Crown servant or British Council employee? Crown servants

and British Council employee service voters How should an application and declaration from a Crown servant or British Council employee be processed? How should an application and declaration from a Crown servant or British Council employee be processed? How should an application and declaration from a Crown servant or British Council employee be processed? Acknowledging applications There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged although you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful, as set out below. Verifying applications All applications and declarations should be processed and the applicant's identity verified as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive an application where the qualifying address falls outside your area it should be forwarded to the relevant ERO without delay. Potential Crown servants, British Council employees or their spouses or civil partners who fail the DWP match must provide documentary evidence in support of their application. You must write to the applicant informing them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and asking them to supply documentary evidence. This must be a copy of the information / photograph page of their passport or both sides of their EEA identity card, certified by a Crown servant or British Council employee who is not the applicant's spouse or civil partner. You may wish to set a deadline date for the applicant to respond; this will be helpful when deciding to reject an application because no response has been received. The time given to applicants to respond is at the discretion of the ERO; however, it should allow the applicant reasonable time to source and return their attestation, bearing in mind that some electors may be deployed to overseas locations. Declaration requirements The declaration must contain all the required information for it to be considered duly made. 1 If the declaration does not meet with the requirement, you shall return the declaration to the applicant and explain what information is missing. 2 ■ Confirming applications and declarations If you have determined that an applicant is entitled to be registered, you must confirm to them in writing that their registration application has been successful. 3 You should also include, alongside the confirmation letter, information on any absent voting arrangements that are in place. If no arrangements are in place you should make clear what the options are. If you have rejected a registration application, you must notify the applicant and inform them of the reasons why. Where an existing service voter has successfully renewed their declaration, there is no requirement to send a confirmation notice. You may, however, still decide to send them further information confirming that their renewal has been successful, which you could do by e-mail. This communication could also include information on when their declaration will expire, how and when they will next be reminded to renew it, what absent voting arrangements they have in place and, if they have none, information on absent voting options. You should also make the elector aware of the general timings for dispatching postal votes ahead of an election and could advise the elector to appoint a proxy as an alternative if it is not realistic for their postal ballot pack to be dispatched, completed and returned before the close of poll. It is, of course, the elector's choice as to which method of voting they prefer, but it is important that electors can make an informed decision. Further information can be found in our guidance on absent voting . 1. Regulation 17(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 17(2) RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 17(1) and Regulation 29(2BA) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 9 August 2023 Book traversal links for How should an application and

declaration from a Crown servant or British Council employee be processed? What must be included in an application from a Crown servant or British Council employee? How should Crown servants and British Council employee service voters be listed in the register? How should Crown servants and British Council employee service voters be listed in the register? How should Crown servants and British Council employee service voters be listed in the register? Service voters either living at their qualifying address, or who would be living there were it not for the fact that they were stationed elsewhere because of their employment, must be shown in the main body of the register, in the same way as ordinary electors. Crown servant and British Council employee service voters should only be listed as other electors when they no longer have a connection to their qualifying address other than the fact that they once lived there. 1 If this is the case then their names are to be listed in alphabetical order at the end of the relevant polling district of the register beneath the 'other electors' heading. The entry will show their name and elector number but not their address. 2 1. Regulations 40 and 41(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 41(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for How should Crown servants and British Council employee service voters be listed in the register? How should an application and declaration from a Crown servant or British Council employee be processed? How long are service declarations for Crown servants and British Council employees valid for? How long are service declarations for Crown servants and British Council employees valid for? How long are service declarations for Crown servants and British Council employees valid for? A service declaration for Crown servants, British Council employees, or their spouse or civil partner is valid for 12 months. 1 Registrations can be removed earlier in the following circumstances: 2 cancellation by the elector you determine the person is not entitled to be registered you determine the person was registered, or that their entry was altered, as a result of an application made by another person (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided on the application and who has declared that the information provided is true) if another entry is made in respect of the elector in any register of electors For guidance on removing an elector from the register, see our guidance on deletions . A declaration received later than three months after it is dated must be rejected. 3 The applicant should be informed and invited to submit a fresh declaration. A service voter may cancel their declaration at any time. 4 The cancellation of a service declaration will cancel any absent voting arrangement made in connection with that declaration even if the elector registers as an ordinary elector at the same qualifying address. 1. Section 15(2)(a) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 15(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 15(8) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 15(7) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 25 April 2023 Book traversal links for How long are service declarations for Crown servants and British Council employees valid for? How should Crown servants and British Council employee service voters be listed in the register? Renewal of Crown servant and British Council employee service declarations Renewal of Crown servant and British Council employee service declarations Renewal of Crown servant and British Council employee service declarations A Crown servant or British Council employee is entitled to remain registered provided the elector continues to satisfy the other conditions for registration during this period until the end of the 12 month period beginning with the date when their entry first takes effect. You will need to maintain a record showing when reminders are due to be sent. You must remind

every service voter of the need to make a fresh declaration to remain registered as a service voter. 1 The reminder must be sent between 9 and 10 months after the date when the service entry first takes effect 2 and should include a declaration for the service voter to complete. If you do not receive a fresh declaration, you are required to send a second reminder not less than 21 days and not more than 28 days after sending the first reminder. 3 Reminders must not be sent where you have received information that the person is no longer entitled to make the relevant declaration or no longer wishes to be registered as a service voter. 4 Where a declaration is not renewed within the 12 month period and the person is removed from the register, they will also lose any voting arrangement they had in place. Further information about notifying electors of loss of entitlement to absent voting arrangements can be found in our guidance on absent voting . 1. Regulation 25(2) 2001 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 25(3)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 25(3)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 25(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 25 April 2023 Book traversal links for Renewal of Crown servant and British Council employee service declarations How long are service declarations for Crown servants and British Council employees valid for? Declarations of local connection Declarations of local connection Declarations of local connection A person who does not have a fixed or permanent address may register at the place where they spend most of their time, or to which they have a local connection, 1 by making a declaration of local connection. Our guidance on eligibility to register sets out in detail who can make a declaration of local connection. 1. Section 7B Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for Declarations of local connection Renewal of Crown servant and British Council employee service declarations What must be included in an application made by a declaration of local connection? What must be included in an application made by a declaration of local connection? What must be included in an application made by a declaration of local connection? An application to register by making a declaration of local connection must include all of the following: 1 the applicant's full name the address in respect of which the applicant applies to be registered any address where the applicant has ceased to reside in the 12 months prior to the date of the application and, where that address is not in the UK, an indication of whether that person was registered as an overseas elector during this period. an indication of whether the applicant is resident at any other address, including any address where the applicant is currently registered and claims to be entitled to remain registered the applicant's date of birth or, if unable to provide this information, the reason why they are not able to do so and a statement as to whether the applicant is under 18 years old or aged 76 or over the applicant's National Insurance number or, if they are they are not able to provide this, the reason they are not able to do so the applicant's nationality or nationalities or, if they are not able to provide this information, the reason they are not able to do so an indication of whether the applicant requests their name to be omitted from the edited register a declaration that the contents of the application are true the date of the application the appropriate declaration The application form must also provide space for their most recent previous name 2 (if they have one) and an explanation that providing this information is not mandatory but may help in verifying their identity and that if it is not provided, additional personal information may be required. A declaration of local connection must be signed and dated by the applicant and state: 3 the

applicant's full name the address to which correspondence can be delivered or a statement confirming that they are willing to collect correspondence from the ERO the category in which their declaration falls, e.g. mental health patient, remand prisoner or person of no fixed address in the case of a person of no fixed address, the address of, or near, a place where they commonly spend a substantial part of their time in the case of a prisoner on remand, the name and address of the place where they are detained, as well as the address at which they would be residing if they were not detained. If they are unable to give such an address, an address at which they have previously resided in the case of a mental health patient, the name and address of the mental health hospital, as well as the address at which they would be residing if they were not a patient. If they are unable to give such an address, an address at which they have previously resided that they have attained 18 years of age or, if not, their date of birth. that they are a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of a European Union member state At a by-election to the UK Parliament any declaration of local connection made by a homeless person received during the period from the date of the vacancy to the close of nominations must include a statement that the applicant has spent a substantial part of time during the past three months at or near to the address at which they claim to be entitled to be registered. 4 If a person makes a declaration of local connection stating more than one address, or makes more than one declaration on the same date and stating different addresses, the declaration or declarations will be void. 5 1. Regulation 26(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26(3)(ea) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 7B(3) and (4) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 7B(6) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Section 7B(8) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for What must be included in an application made by a declaration of local connection? Declarations of local connection How should applications made by a declaration of local connection be processed? How should applications made by a declaration of local connection be processed? How should applications made by a declaration of local connection be processed? Acknowledging applications There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged although you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful, as set out below. Verifying applications All applications and declarations should be processed and the applicant's identity verified as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive an application where the qualifying address falls outside your area it should be forwarded to the relevant ERO without delay. Any applicant who fails the DWP match must provide documentary evidence, or if they cannot provide documentary evidence, an attestation in the same way as people applying to register as an ordinary elector. Confirming applications and declarations If you have determined that an applicant is entitled to be registered, you must confirm to them in writing that their registration application has been successful. 1 You should also include, alongside the confirmation letter, information on any absent voting arrangements that are in place. If no arrangements are in place you should make clear what the absent voting options are. If you have rejected a registration application, you must notify the applicant and inform them of the reasons why. Where a person who is registered through a declaration of local connection has successfully renewed their declaration, there is no requirement to send them a confirmation notice. You may, however, still decide to send them further information confirming

that their renewal has been successful, which you could do by e-mail. This communication could also include information on when their declaration will expire, how and when they will next be reminded to renew it, what absent voting arrangements they have in place and, if they have none, information on absent voting options. 1. Regulation 29(2BA) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 15 October 2020 Book traversal links for How should applications made by a declaration of local connection be processed? What must be included in an application made by a declaration of local connection? How should electors registered by making a declaration of local connection be listed in the register? How should electors registered by making a declaration of local connection be listed in the register? How should electors registered by making a declaration of local connection be listed in the register? All persons registered through a declaration of local connection must be included at the end of each relevant part of the register under the heading 'other electors' without an address. Their names are to be included in alphabetical order, grouped together with any service voters and overseas electors, but before any anonymously registered electors. 1 1. Regulations 40 and 41(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for How should electors registered by making a declaration of local connection be listed in the register? How should applications made by a declaration of local connection be processed? How long are declarations of local connection valid for? How long are declarations of local connection valid for? How long are declarations of local connection valid for? A declaration of local connection is valid for 12 months from the date when the entry on the register first takes effect. 1 Registrations can be removed earlier in the following circumstances: 2 cancellation by the elector you determine the person is not entitled to be registered you determine the person was registered, or that their entry was altered, as a result of an application made by another person (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided on the application and who has declared that the information provided is true) if another entry is made in respect of the elector in any register of electors For guidance on removing an elector from the register, see our guidance on deletions. A declaration received later than three months after it is dated must be rejected. 3 The applicant should be informed and invited to submit a fresh declaration. 1. Section 7C(2)(a) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 7C(2)(aa), (ab), (b) and (c) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 7B(10) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 15 October 2020 Book traversal links for How long are declarations of local connection valid for? How should electors registered by making a declaration of local connection be listed in the register? Renewal of declarations of local connection Renewal of declarations of local connection A person registered through a declaration of local connection is entitled to remain registered until the end of the 12 month period beginning with the date when the entry first takes effect, provided the other conditions for registration remain satisfied. You will need to maintain a record showing when reminders are due to be sent. You must remind the elector of the need to make a fresh declaration if they wish to remain registered. 1 The reminder must be sent between 9 and 10 months after the date when the entry first takes effect 2 and should include a declaration for the elector to complete. If you do not receive a fresh declaration, you are required to send a second reminder not less than 21 days and not more than 28 days after sending the first reminder. 3 Reminders must not be sent where you have

received information that the person is no longer entitled to make the relevant declaration. 4 Where a declaration is not renewed within the 12 month period and the person is removed from the register, they will also lose any absent voting arrangement they had in place. Further information about notifying electors of loss of entitlement to absent voting arrangements can be found in our guidance on absent voting . You should consider the most appropriate method of obtaining a renewal from those who have registered through a declaration of local connection. It may be appropriate, in addition to simply sending a renewal notice by post, to make a personal visit to ensure the reminder and declaration reaches the elector. 1. Regulation 25(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 25(3)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 25(3A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 25(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 15 October 2020 Book traversal links for Renewal of declarations of local connection How long are declarations of local connection valid for? Prisoners and detained mental health patients Prisoners and detained mental health patients Prisoners and detained mental health patients Some remand prisoners or detained mental health patients may remain registered as ordinary electors if their absence from their home address is limited. Longer term remand prisoners or mental health patients may register through a declaration of local connection, at an address where they would be living, if it were not for their circumstances, or where they used to live before becoming a remand prisoner or mental health patient. 1 Some remand prisoners or mental health patients will qualify to register at a place of custody or hospital address, if their length of stay is sufficient. 2 Our guidance on eligibility to register sets out the options that prisoners and patients in mental health hospitals have for registering. 1. Section 7A (5) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 7A (2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for Prisoners and detained mental health patients Renewal of declarations of local connection Who may apply and how should applications be processed? Who may apply and how should applications be processed? Who may apply and how should applications be processed? Prisoners on remand and patients in mental health hospitals who are registered at their place of custody or hospital must supply the same information as for an ordinary application. 1 Acknowledging applications There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged although you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful, as set out below. Verifying applications All applications and declarations should be processed and the applicant's identity verified as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive an application where the qualifying address falls outside your area it should be forwarded to the relevant ERO without delay. Any applicant who fails the DWP match must provide documentary evidence, or if they cannot provide documentary evidence, an attestation in the same way as people applying to register as an ordinary elector. Confirming applications and declarations If you have determined that an applicant is entitled to be registered, you must confirm to them in writing that their registration application has been successful. 2 You should also include, alongside the confirmation letter, information on any absent voting arrangements that are in place. If no arrangements are in place you should make clear what the absent voting options are. If you have rejected a registration application, you must notify the applicant and inform them of the reasons why. 1. Regulation 26 2001 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 29(2BA) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 25 May 2021 Book traversal links for Who may apply and how should applications be processed? Prisoners and detained mental health patients How long are registrations valid for? How long are registrations valid for? How long are registrations valid for? Registration of remand prisoners and mental health patients lasts for 12 months from the day the entry is made on the register. 1 Registrations can be removed earlier in the following circumstances: 2 cancellation by the elector you determine the person is not entitled to be registered you determine the person was registered, or that their entry was altered, as a result of an application made by another person (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided on the application and who has declared that the information provided is true) if another entry is made in respect of the elector in any register of electors For guidance on removing an elector from the register, see our guidance on deletions . 1. Sections 7(3)(a) and 7A(3)(a) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sections 7(3)(aa) – (b) and 7A(3)(aa) – (b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 15 October 2020 Book traversal links for How long are registrations valid for? Who may apply and how should applications be processed? Anonymous registration Anonymous registration Anonymous registration Anonymous registration is available to electors whose safety would be at risk if their name or address were listed on the electoral register. Other persons in the same household also qualify to register as anonymous electors and may also apply for anonymous registration if they wish. 1 You should consider which establishments or properties, such as refuges, should receive anonymous registration forms and additional information as part of your duty to maintain the register. Registration application forms could be sent with a note explaining what anonymous registration is and how people can apply. In partnership with Women's Aid we have produced a guide to anonymous registration for professionals working with survivors of domestic violence. Anonymous registration: Supporting survivors of domestic abuse to register to vote - England (PDF) The guide, which may also be useful to you and your staff, explains what anonymous registration is and that an applicant's name and address details will be kept securely and will not be searchable on the electoral register. The guide also outlines how to apply for anonymous registration. There may be circumstances where a returned canvass communication may include a note from a potential elector with a reason that may satisfy the requirements for anonymous registration. An anonymous registration application should then be sent and the person told that others in the household may also be entitled to register anonymously. Combining anonymous registration with other special category elector entitlement Anonymous registration does not affect any other special category elector entitlement and can be combined. For example, a person may be an anonymous elector with a local connection or an anonymous service voter, or an anonymous overseas voter if they meet the qualification for both registrations. 1. Section 9B (10) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 January 2023 Book traversal links for Anonymous registration How long are registrations valid for? What must be included in an application for anonymous registration? What must be included in an application for anonymous registration? What must be included in an application for anonymous registration? Applicants for anonymous registration must include the following as part of their application for registration: 1 the applicant's full name the address where the applicant is resident on the date of the application and in respect of which they are applying to be registered any address where the applicant has ceased to reside in the 12 months prior to the date of the application and, where that address is not in the

UK, an indication of whether that person was registered as an overseas elector during this period an indication of whether the applicant is resident at any other address, including any address where the applicant is currently registered and claims to be entitled to remain registered the applicant's date of birth or, if unable to provide this information, the reason why they are unable to do so and a statement as to whether the applicant is under 18 years old or aged 76 or over the applicant's National Insurance number or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason they are not able to do so the applicant's nationality or nationalities or, if they are not able to provide this information, the reason they are not able to do so a declaration that the contents of the application are true the date of the application the fact that the application is accompanied by an application for anonymous registration An application for anonymous registration must be in writing. It must be signed and dated by the applicant and must contain: 2 the applicant's full name and address the reason for their application evidence to support their application (a court document or an attestation as described below) if the applicant is someone who lives in the same household as someone whose safety would be at risk, evidence that the applicant lives in the same household as that person. Evidence could be a utility bill, bank statement, photocard driving licence, etc. if the applicant is someone who lives in the same household as someone whose safety would be at risk, evidence that that person's safety would be at risk a declaration that: the evidence to support their application is genuine so far as the applicant is aware if it is someone who lives in the same household, the person to whom the evidence relates lives in the same household and that, as far as they are aware, the evidence is genuine the other information given is true The application form must also provide space for their most recent previous name (if they have one) 3 and an explanation that providing this information is not mandatory but may help in verifying their identity and that if it is not provided, additional personal information may be required. Applicants must be able to satisfy you that their safety or that of any other person in the same household would be at risk if their details were made public. 4 Documentary evidence or an attestation must be provided in support of the application. 5 You should not involve yourself in the personal circumstances of applicants and your decisions should only rely on the accompanying documents. You should be satisfied that documents provided in support of an application are genuine. Anonymously registered electors are entitled to submit a correspondence address which must be used for future registration correspondence if given. 6 1. Regulation 26(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 31G RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 26(3)(ea) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 31H(2)(b) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 31H(2)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 31G(6) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for What must be included in an application for anonymous registration? Anonymous registration What documents or attestations must be included with an application for anonymous registration? What documents or attestations must be included with an application for anonymous registration? What documents or attestations must be included with an application for anonymous registration? The application must be accompanied by either a court order or an attestation. 1 Any court order or injunction must be for the protection or the benefit of the applicant or another person of the same household. 2 The order must be in force on the day of the application, 3 but need not be for the whole 12 month period of registration. An order ceasing to be in force during the 12 month period of registration does not

reduce or otherwise affect the length of registration. A copy of any relevant court document is acceptable. 4 The eligible court documents are: 5 Eligible court documents An injunction for the purpose of restraining a person from pursuing any conduct which amounts to harassment granted in proceedings under Section 3 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 or under article 5 of the Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 An injunction granted under Section 3A(2) of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 A restraining order made under Section 5(1) of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, or under article 7 of the Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 A restraining order on acquittal made under Section 5A(1) of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, or under article 7A(1) of the Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 A non-harassment order, interdict or interim interdict made under Section 8 or 8A of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 A non-harassment order made under Section 234A(2) of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 A non-molestation order made under Section 42(2) of the Family Law Act 1996, or under article 20(2) of the Family Homes and Domestic Violence (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 A matrimonial interdict within the meaning of Section 14 of the Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981 A domestic interdict within the meaning of Section 18A of the Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981 A relevant interdict within the meaning of Section 113 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 An interdict that has been determined to be a domestic abuse interdict within the meaning of Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2011 Any interdict with an attached power of arrest made under Section 1 of the Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001 A forced marriage protection order or interim forced marriage protection order made under Part 4A of the Family Law Act 1996, or under Section 2 of, and paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to, the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, or under Section 1 or Section 5 of the Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Act 2011 A domestic violence protection order made under Section 28 of the Crime and Security Act 2010 or section 97 of, and paragraph 5 of Schedule 7 to, the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015. A template of a domestic violence protection order is available on our website, though you should be aware that each order will be tailored to the circumstances of the case A female genital mutilation protection order made under Section 5A of, and paragraphs 1 or 18 of Schedule 2 to, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. A template of a female genital mutilation protection order is available on our website, though you should be aware that an Order may vary in appearance A domestic abuse protection order within the meaning of Section 27 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 No documents other than these can be used as eligible court documents in support of an application for anonymous registration. If an attestation is used it must certify that if the name or address were on the register the applicant's or another member of the same household's 'safety would be at risk'. 6 Attestations must be in writing and must be signed and dated by a qualifying officer. The period of the attestation begins on the date stated and lasts for a period of between one and five years. The actual length must be stated within the attestation. 7 The anonymous registration application form approved by the Lord President of the Council and made available by the Electoral Commission contains a template attestation that applicants may use. The qualifying officers who may attest are: 8 a police officer of or above the rank of inspector of any police force in the UK the Director General of the Security Service or the National Crime Agency a director of adult social services or children's services in England or a director of social services in Wales any chief social work officer in Scotland any director of social services of a Health and Social Services Board or

executive director of social work of a Health and Social Services Trust in Northern Ireland any medical practitioner who is registered with the General Medical Council any nurse or midwife who is registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council any person who manages a refuge. A 'refuge' means accommodation together with a planned programme of therapeutic and practical support for victims of, or those at risk of, domestic abuse or violence 9 No person other than those listed may attest an application for anonymous registration. It is not possible for a qualifying officer to delegate their power to attest an application to a different person. The attestation can come from one of the qualifying officers from a different area from which the elector now lives and is registering. This may often be the case where the applicant has moved to a new area to set up home away from the cause of the risk to their safety. For example, an attestation from one local authority director of children's services is valid in every local authority area in Great Britain. You should consider contacting any qualifying officers to alert them to their powers under the anonymous registration process. They may wish to be aware of their attestation powers and any guidance that their representative groups have given on dealing with requests for attestation. In particular, you should proactively contact any refuges, GP surgeries and other medical establishments in your registration area who may not be aware that the types of court order and the attestation requirements have been expanded. For example, you could contact social services, Women's Aid, or other organisations who work with survivors of domestic abuse, and – explaining what are you doing – ask for details of refuges in your registration area. In partnership with Women's Aid we have produced a guide to anonymous registration for professionals working with survivors of domestic violence. Anonymous registration: Supporting survivors of domestic abuse to register to vote - England (PDF) The guide explains what anonymous registration is and that an applicant's name and address details will be kept securely and will not be searchable on the electoral register. The guide also outlines how to apply for anonymous registration and how refuge managers may provide an attestation if they wish to do so. If you consider it necessary, you are able to undertake online checks of certain categories of attestor: The General Medical Council maintains a list of registered medical practitioners available on their website: www.gmc-uk.org The Nursing & Midwifery Council maintains a list of registered nurses and midwives on their website: www.nmc.org.uk If you have concerns about an application for anonymous registration, it should be treated like any other application for registration. As set out in identifying suspicious registration applications , your local police single point of contact (SPOC) will help you ensure that any possible instances of registration fraud are quickly identified and dealt with. If you have reason to believe that an attestation provided as part of an application for anonymous registration is not genuine, you should contact your SPOC as soon as possible. 1. Regulation 31I(2) or 31(5) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 31I(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 31I(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 31I(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 31I(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 31J(2)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 31J(2)(b), (c) and (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Regulation 31J(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Regulation 31J(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 9 Last updated: 8 February 2023 Book traversal links for What documents or attestations must be included with an application for anonymous registration? What must be included in an application for anonymous registration? How

should an application for anonymous registration be processed? How should an application for anonymous registration be processed? How should an application for anonymous registration be processed? Acknowledging applications There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged although you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement if you wish. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful, as set out below. Verifying applications Applications should be processed and the applicant's identity verified as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive an application where the qualifying address falls outside your area it should be forwarded to the relevant ERO without delay. Any applicant who fails the DWP match must provide documentary evidence, or if they cannot provide documentary evidence, an attestation in the same way as people applying to register as an ordinary elector. Anonymous registration application details such as name and address are not added to the lists of applications. Anonymous applications are not available for public inspection at any time. 1 This means that these applications do not have the same type of public scrutiny as other electoral registration applications. You should therefore be particularly proactive in being satisfied that all the requirements for registration are met. When an anonymous application is received, all previous 'ordinary' applications either awaiting determination or determined but not added to the register for that individual are suspended until the anonymous application is determined. If the anonymous application is rejected, then all pending applications for registration must be disregarded. If the anonymous registration application is rejected, they cannot be added as an ordinary elector. Confirming applications and declarations If you determine that an applicant is entitled to be registered anonymously, you must issue a certificate of anonymous registration. 2 You must also send them a notice by post, as soon as is reasonably practicable, to inform them that they must have an Anonymous Elector's Document if they want to vote in person at relevant elections, or sign a signing sheet in person at a recall petition. 3 You should also consider confirming any absent voting arrangements that are in place, or if no arrangements are in place you should make clear what their absent voting options are. If a person already has an entry on the register and an anonymous application is accepted, the ordinary register entry must be removed and the anonymous registration added. However, the existing entry must not be removed until the anonymous application is accepted. If you have rejected an application, you should notify the applicant and inform them of the reasons why. The details of a person who has made an application to register anonymously must not be added to the register if the anonymous part of the application fails. 4 However, you should encourage them to submit an ordinary registration application and invite them to register. If they do not submit an application in response to an invitation, you may require them to submit an application to register, but you should consider the individual's particular circumstances before issuing a 'requirement to register' notice . 1. Regulation 28(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 45G(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 25(2) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 9B(6) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 8 February 2023 Book traversal links for How should an application for anonymous registration be processed? What documents or attestations must be included with an application for anonymous registration? What are the deadlines for adding anonymously registered electors to the register? What are the deadlines for adding anonymously registered electors to the register? What are the

deadlines for adding anonymously registered electors to the register? The deadlines for anonymous applications are different from ordinary registration applications as there is no five day objections period for anonymous applicants. This is because their applications cannot be objected to. The deadlines for receiving and determining anonymous registration applications are as follows: 1 Action Deadline For being added to a monthly notice of alteration 14 calendar days before the publication of the notice For being added to the final election notice of alteration 6 working days before polling day For being added to the revised register following the canvass The last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published For being added to a revised register published at any other time 14 calendar days before the end of the month preceding the month when the revised register is due to be published 1. Sections 13A(2) and (3), 13B(1), 13(1) and (3) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 11 August 2021 Book traversal links for What are the deadlines for adding anonymously registered electors to the register? How should an application for anonymous registration be processed? How should anonymous electors be listed in the register? How should anonymous electors be listed in the register? How should anonymous electors be listed in the register? Persons registered anonymously must be included at the end of each relevant part of the register under the heading other electors without a name or address. The entry for each anonymously registered elector must consist of their elector number and the letter 'N'. 1 Anonymous entries must not be included in the edited register and all anonymous electors are automatically opted out. 2 You must keep a separate list – the record of anonymous entries. This will contain the elector number, full name, qualifying address, correspondence address (if any) and the date that the registration first took effect. If the person has a postal vote, the delivery address must also be kept on the record. 3 You should ensure that the list is kept secure and prevent any unauthorised access. Only the following persons and organisations are entitled to have access to the record of anonymous entries: 4 Returning Officers and referendum Counting Officers the Jury Service the security services, including Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) the police, including the National Crime Agency (at the request of a senior officer, this means an officer a rank senior to that of superintendent, or, in the case of the National Crime Agency, the Director General of that Agency) When a person is entered in the record, you will need to issue a signed 'certificate of anonymous registration'. This must state the local authority area, the elector's name, qualifying address, electoral number and the date on which the registration took effect. It must also state that the registration will end no later than 12 months from that date if a fresh application for anonymous registration is not made. 5 We have produced a template certificate of anonymous registration which you may wish to use. Template certificate of anonymous registration (DOC) Absent voting lists The absent voting lists for anonymous electors and their proxies, must contain only the elector's electoral number and the period for which the absent vote is in effect, but not any name or address. 6 At an election, the copy of the absent voting lists to enable postal vote issuing and marking the return of postal votes contains only the electoral number. 7 The address to which the ballot pack will be sent must not be on that list and all correspondence must be sent in an unidentifiable envelope. 8 1. Regulation 41A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 93(2A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 45A RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulations 45C, 45D, 45E and 45F RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5.

Regulation 45G(3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Schedule 4 Paragraph 5(4) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) 7. Regulations 77(8)(a), 78(4)(a) and 78A(4)(a) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 7](#) 8. Section 9B(8) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 8](#) Last updated: 25 May 2021

[Book traversal links for How should anonymous electors be listed in the register?](#)
[What are the deadlines for adding anonymously registered electors to the register?](#)
[How long is an anonymous registration valid for?](#) [How long is an anonymous registration valid for?](#) [Registration lasts for 12 months from the day the anonymous entry is first made on the register.](#) 1
[Anonymous registrations can be removed earlier in the following circumstances:](#) 2
[cancellation by the elector you determine the person is not entitled to be registered](#)
[you determine the person was registered, or that their entry was altered, as a result of an application made by another person \(i.e. not the individual whose details are provided on the application and who has declared that the information provided is true\)](#) For guidance on removing an elector from the register, see our guidance on deletions . 1. Section 9C(1)(a) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Sections 9C(1)(b) and 10ZE(1) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 15 October 2020

[Book traversal links for How long is an anonymous registration valid for?](#) [How should anonymous electors be listed in the register?](#) [Renewal process for anonymous registrations](#) [Renewal process for an anonymous registration](#) [An anonymous elector is entitled to remain registered, provided the elector continues to satisfy the other conditions for registration during this period, until the end of the 12 month period beginning with the date when their entry first takes effect. You will need to maintain a record showing when reminders are due to be sent. You must send a reminder between 9 and 10 months after the date of the first registration \(and each anniversary\). The reminder must explain that a fresh application for anonymous registration must be made if the elector wants to remain registered anonymously.](#) 1
[Any renewal application must contain the same level of evidence as the original application. Applicants should therefore be advised to keep a copy of attestations or copies of court documents for subsequent applications. You should offer to copy any originals so that they can be returned and the copy kept for reference. If the elector loses their supporting documents, provided you have the appropriate safeguards in place, you could supply a copy of any document or attestation which is still in force to assist with any renewal. Anonymous entries can be subject to the review procedures. Further consideration of the review process is contained in reviews, objections and deletions . The name and address of the person is not entered on the list of persons under review.](#) 1. Regulation 25A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 15 October 2020

[Book traversal links for Renewal process for anonymous registrations](#) [How long is an anonymous registration valid for?](#) [Donations to registered political parties by anonymously registered electors](#) [Donations to registered political parties by anonymously registered electors](#) [Donations to registered political parties by anonymously registered electors](#) [Anonymously registered individuals can donate to registered political parties but they must provide the party with a copy of their certificate of anonymous registration as proof of eligibility. A registered political party may ask you to confirm the validity of any certificate. The elector details cannot be confirmed but you may wish to confirm the format of their certificate and that the electoral number on that certificate matches the register entry for an anonymous elector. Guidance for Returning Officers on sending poll cards and postal](#)

votes to electors registered anonymously is contained in Part C and D of our guidance for Returning Officers . Last updated: 27 July 2020 Book traversal links for Donations to registered political parties by anonymously registered electors Renewal process for anonymous registrations Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Special Category Electors Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Special Category Electors Anonymous registration: Supporting survivors of domestic abuse to register to vote - England (PDF) Template certificate of anonymous registration (DOC) Last updated: 19 July 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Special Category Electors Donations to registered political parties by anonymously registered electors Inviting individuals to register to vote Inviting individuals to register to vote This section contains guidance on who should be invited to register to vote and how the invitation should be made. It also covers the follow up processes to undertake if someone does not respond to an invitation to register, what you can do to require them to register and information on issuing a civil penalty notice. Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for Inviting individuals to register to vote Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Special Category Electors Who should be invited to register to vote? Who should be invited to register to vote? Any potential electors identified, for example by a successful response to a canvass communication, direct contact from individuals or by other local data matching, should be invited to make an application to register to vote. You should do this by sending an invitation to register (ITR) and an application form. The ITR must invite potential electors to make an application to register as soon as reasonably practicable and within 28 calendar days of the date that you identified that they may be entitled to be registered. Where the 28 day period ends on a weekend or bank holiday, the period is extended to the next working day. 1 Your EMS should have a mechanism for keeping a record of the date on which you conclude that an individual may be entitled to be registered, which then starts the 28-day period. You should have a process in place to identify whether an application to register has been made before you give an invitation. You should not issue an ITR to an individual who has made an application to register, or if you identify that they are not eligible to register to vote. Your EMS may be able to automate a process to check for applications received through any allowed channels before you issue an ITR. Some manual checking of applications received against invitations issued may also be required, as the name on an application may not exactly match the name of the individual to whom you have given an invitation. A manual check could be done by cross-checking the details on an application against your list of potential new electors to whom you have sent an ITR. On paper applications, this process could be facilitated by adding a barcode to the paper application form you are including alongside your ITR. Sharing good practice Swale Borough Council have successfully used a postcard-style colour-coded household notification card to encourage people who are not already registered to make an application. Further information on this can be found here. What works – Household notification cards (DOC) 1. Regulation 8, Representation of the People Regulation (England & Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 October 2020 Book traversal links for Who should be invited to register to vote? Inviting individuals to register to vote The content of the invitation to register Content of the invitation to register The content of the ITR is prescribed. 1 Whenever you issue an ITR you must include a paper application form with it. You must use the application form approved by the Minister for the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and made available to you by the Commission and must, if practicable, pre-print on the application form the full name

and address of the individual being invited. 2 This does not apply if you give the ITR by electronic means. 3 In that case the prescribed email ITR includes a link to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote . The ITR and application form that you must use are available on our website. The prescribed form includes a data protection statement and the prescribed description of the electoral and open registers. The prescribed email invitation is included in the letters folder , also available on our website. You should always ensure that you are using the latest versions. Our forms and letters guidance sets out how the application form and letter must be used. The forms and letters guidance is available on our website. 1. Regulation 32ZC(3)(b) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZC(3)(c) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZC(3A) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 10 March 2022 Book traversal links for The content of the invitation to register Who should be invited to register to vote? How should an invitation to register be issued? How should an invitation to register be issued? An ITR must be given either by delivering it to the individual (including by post) or by leaving it at the individual's address. 1 The ITR may also be given by electronic means, including by email. 2 An ITR cannot be given verbally, such as by telephone, although you can informally prompt applications to register by any suitable means before or after you have given an invitation. When you have decided how to give an ITR, you should ensure that you have processes in place to create an audit trail of the deliveries. Before you can require an individual to make an application to register, you will need to establish that they have received at least one ITR. You may want to ensure that at least one of the ITRs is hand-delivered. This will provide you with assurance that an ITR was delivered. Your public engagement strategy and registration plan should reflect your considerations of the delivery method for ITRs. Envelopes If you are delivering a paper ITR you should address the covering envelope to the named individual at the address you have identified. You must print the following information on the envelope. 3 a direction requesting that the envelope is not re-directed if it is incorrectly addressed a direction requesting that any other individual who receives the envelope and who is resident at the address inform you if the addressee is not resident there your contact details You must also include with the ITR – except for any sent electronically – a pre-addressed, pre-paid reply envelope in which the form can be returned. 4 Suggested content for envelopes, which includes all required information, and accompanying guidance can be found here . 1. Regulation 32ZC(3)(za)(i) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZC(3)(za)(ii) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZC(3)(d) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZC(3)(d) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for How should an invitation to register be issued? The content of the invitation to register Encouraging applications before giving an invitation to register Encouraging applications before giving an invitation to register You can prompt an individual to make an application after you have given a formal ITR. There may be circumstances, such as immediately before an election, where you should encourage people to register informally and not wait to formally invite them to register. Prompting and encouraging an application to be made, in particular an online application, has the

potential to improve efficiency and reduce your costs because you will not have to start the formal ITR process, which would involve follow up activity if no response is received. You can use contact information provided to you by individuals on canvass communications for any appropriate purpose in connection with that individual's entitlement to be registered, or for the purpose of carrying out your duty to encourage electoral registration. 1 If you do decide to informally prompt applications you should do so as soon as possible after you identify an individual, to allow time for them to make an application before a formal invitation is given. You could prompt applications by: emailing a link to the online application form and providing information about the other available channels for registration if you have an e-mail address encouraging an application to register when following up a canvass communication using telephone canvassing, if you have identified potential new electors providing information about how to register by phone or email to individuals who get in touch with the local authority contact centre about a change of address Any methods used to prompt applications should also enable you to identify and invite to register other potential new electors who may be resident at the same address. You should consider how you will evaluate your approach to prompting applications to understand how effective they are in encouraging registration and reducing the number of electors you formally invite to register. The outcome of any evaluation carried out may identify which approaches are most effective allowing you to tailor your approach to prompting applications across your local area. You do not have to issue an invitation to an individual who, when informally prompted, makes an application before the end of the 28-day period in which an ITR must have been given. If a prompt encouraging an individual to make an application to register does not lead to an application being made, you are still required send an ITR within 28 days of becoming aware of the potential elector. Sharing good practice Information on and examples of how some EROs are utilising their registration stationary and materials to encourages responses, can be found in our resource 'Encouraging responses'. Sharing good practice - Encouraging a response 1. Section 9A, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 9 August 2023 Book traversal links for Encouraging applications before giving an invitation to register How should an invitation to register be issued? How should I follow up with non-responders to an invitation to register? How should I follow up with non-responders to an invitation to register? After an individual has been given an ITR, you are required to take certain steps to encourage them to make an application to register if they have not yet done so. You should have processes in place to identify whether an application has been made by any available channel before you send a reminder invitation. You may visit the address at which you delivered the first invitation at any time to encourage the individual to make an application. You are not required to carry out the follow up steps if, since sending the first ITR, you are now satisfied that the individual in question is not entitled to be registered at the address where the invitation was given, or that the individual is registered at a different address. 1 1. Regulation 32ZD(5) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for How should I follow up with non-responders to an invitation to register? Encouraging applications before giving an invitation to register Sending reminder invitations Sending reminder invitations If you have given an ITR and the individual does not make an application to register within a reasonable period of time , you must give them a second invitation. 1 If no application is made within a reasonable period of time following the second invitation you must give a third invitation. 2 There is no

difference in the requirements for the content and delivery of ITRs at the second and third reminder stages. In practice, the second and third invitations are reminders to the individual to make an application to register. You should consider whether the use of a different delivery method for the second or third invitation could be more effective. For example if you have not received a response to an email ITR, you should consider giving the reminder invitations by post or by hand. You are not required to send reminder invitations to special category electors. 1. Regulation 32ZD(1), Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZD(3), Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 24 June 2020

Book traversal links for Sending reminder invitations How should I follow up with non-responders to an invitation to register? Making at least one personal visit Making at least one personal visit If you have given a third invitation and no application to register has been made, you are required by law to make at least one visit to the address for the purpose of encouraging an application to be made. 1 You can choose to make a visit at any time in the process, for example, at the same time as delivering any of the invitations. You may, therefore, have met this requirement before the end of the ITR chasing cycle. You must, however, have made a visit specifically for the purpose of encouraging an individual to make an application to register. In our view, this means a visit where you have attempted to make contact personally with the individual you are inviting. What constitutes a personal visit? A visit made only for the purpose of leaving an ITR and application form at the address with no attempt made to contact the individual being invited would not, in our view, satisfy the requirement. The requirement would be fulfilled if the individual making the visit speaks to the individual being invited and encourages them to make an application. As with all stages of this process, you should ensure that you keep records for the purpose of having a clear audit trail of the steps that you have taken as part of the ITR process. This will help to ensure that, if you consider requiring an individual to make an application, you are able to establish that the prerequisites for making such a requirement have been met. You should, in any case, consider making a further visit if this is likely to result in an application being made. If no application is made in response to the third invitation and you have made at least one visit to the address, you can move to the next stage of requiring the individual to make an application to register by giving them notice in writing of the requirement. 2 1. Regulation 32ZD(3), Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 9E(4) RPA 1983 and Regulation 32ZE(2)(a) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 10 August 2021

Book traversal links for Making at least one personal visit Sending reminder invitations When can I require an individual to make an application to register to vote? When can I require an individual to make an application to register to vote? If you have given a third ITR and, after a reasonable period of time, you have not received a response and you have made a personal visit at least once to encourage an application, you may require an individual to submit an application to register by a specified date. This must be done on a written notice. 1 Before you can require an individual to make an application for registration you must establish that the individual: has received at least one ITR 2 - ideally, you should obtain confirmation from the named person, such as written confirmation of receipt or a written statement from a canvasser that they have given an invitation to the individual in person. Confirmation by email or telephone would also be acceptable and, if the telephone call is not recorded, you

should make a written note of the conversation has received a personal visit to encourage an application 3 – an individual must already have received a personal visit as part of the ITR follow-up process has been informed of how to make an application for registration 4 - your ITR will already have informed the individual how they can make an application to register has been informed that you may impose a civil penalty if you require them to make an application and they fail to do so 5 – your ITR will already have included an explanation of the circumstances where a civil penalty may be imposed, and the amount is resident at the address at which the ITRs were given 6 - you should consider if there are any local records you can check or other action that you can take to confirm that the person is resident Your record-keeping and processes for issuing ITRs and carrying out personal visits should be designed to ensure that you can be satisfied that all of those requirements have been established.

1. Regulation 32ZE(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulation 32ZE(2)(b)(i) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Regulation 32ZE(2)(a) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Regulation 32ZE(2)(b)(ii) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

5. Regulation 32ZE(2)(b)(iii) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#)

6. Regulation 32ZE(2)(c) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#)

Last updated: 24 June 2020

[Book traversal links for When can I require an individual to make an application to register to vote?](#)

[Making at least one personal visit](#)

[What information must the requirement to register notice contain?](#)

[What information must the requirement to register notice contain?](#)

The notice requiring an individual to make an application for registration must state:

- 1 the date by which the individual must make an application for registration that, if the individual does not make an application by that date, you may impose a civil penalty the amount of the civil penalty (£80) and the rate of interest payable if the penalty is not paid on time that, if the individual is not entitled to be registered, they must inform you of that fact before the date by which the application must be made and explain why they are not entitled, and that in such a case they are not required to make an application for registration that, if the individual is registered at another address, they must inform you of that fact before the date by which the application must be made and provide you with that address, and that in such a case they are not required to make an application for registration that the individual may make other representations as to why they should not be required to make an application to register by the date by which the application must be made, or why a civil penalty should not be imposed if they do not do so

A template requirement to register notice can be found [here](#). The date by which the named individual must make an application is not prescribed. When deciding on a date by which the individual must make an application, you should allow sufficient time for them to receive the notice, digest the information and submit an application. As with the recommended maximum period that would be considered reasonable in relation to an invitation to register, in most cases, 28 calendar days would provide sufficient time for the person to receive the notice, digest the information and submit an application. You must include an application for registration with the notice and the full name and address of the individual should be pre-printed on the application.

- 2 You should also include a pre-paid and pre-printed return envelope alongside the application, as well as information on how to register online, or by telephone or in person (if you offer

those services). 1. Regulation 32ZE(3) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 32ZE(4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 25 May 2021 Book traversal links for What information must the requirement to register notice contain? When can I require an individual to make an application to register to vote? When can I cancel a requirement to register notice? When can I cancel a requirement to register notice? You must cancel a requirement to register if, as a result of direct communications from the individual or from other information, any of the following apply: 1 you are satisfied that the individual is not entitled to be registered at the address at which you gave the invitations to register you are satisfied that the individual is registered at a different address you discover that any of the requirements for sending a notice requiring an individual to register had not been met You have discretion to cancel a requirement to make an application for registration if you consider it appropriate to do so. 2 For example, you may consider it appropriate to cancel the requirement notice if an individual is ill and, as a result, will be unable to make a declaration of truth for the foreseeable future. However, the discretion to cancel a notice should only be used in very limited and special circumstances, and a decision to cancel should be taken on a case-by-case basis, with each case considered on its merits. You should maintain a clear audit trail of the decision and the reason(s) for it. There may be individual cases where you receive information that an individual who is subject to a requirement to register notice is unable to make an application within the specified timeframes. For example, if they are away from their address for an extended period. This in itself should not trigger a cancellation of the requirement to register process, however in such circumstances, you should instead consider extending the time allowed for the potential elector to submit their application. Whenever you decide to cancel the requirement to register, you must give the individual concerned notice in writing of your decision. 3 1. Regulation 32ZE(5) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 32ZE(6) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulation 32ZE(6) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for When can I cancel a requirement to register notice? What information must the requirement to register notice contain? What is the civil penalty process if someone fails to make an application to register to vote? What is the civil penalty process if someone fails to make an application to register to vote? You may impose a civil penalty on individuals who were issued a requirement to register but who failed to make an application to register by the date you stated in the requirement to register notice. 1 You should have a process in place for issuing civil penalties. This should include how you will: make the arrangements for collecting any money account for any money collected ensure any that any money collected is returned to the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to be paid into the Consolidated Fund You may want to seek advice on carrying out the civil penalty process and collecting penalties from other departments within the council who have experience of undertaking similar processes, including the council's legal department. If you decide to impose a civil penalty on an individual, you must give a civil penalty notice informing them that a penalty has been imposed and specifying the reasons for it. 2 1. Section 9E(7) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 32ZF(2) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 10 March 2022

Book traversal links for What is the civil penalty process if someone fails to make an application to register to vote? When can I cancel a requirement to register notice? What information must the civil penalty notice contain? What information must the civil penalty notice contain? The notice must explain that the individual must: 1 make an application to register within 28 calendar days from the date of the notice, or pay the full amount of the civil penalty within 28 calendar days from the date of the notice, or request a review of the decision to impose the civil penalty within 14 calendar days from the date of the notice The notice must also state: 2 the amount of the civil penalty (£80) 3 how to make payment the rate of interest payable if the penalty is not paid on time (which is the daily rate of interest equivalent to 8% per year from the date that the civil penalty must be paid) that making an application to register by the date stated on the notice will prevent the person being liable to pay the civil penalty 1. Regulation 32ZF(3) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZF(4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZF(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for What information must the civil penalty notice contain? What is the civil penalty process if someone fails to make an application to register to vote? What if I receive a request for a review of my decision to issue a civil penalty? What if I receive a request for a review of my decision to issue a civil penalty? An individual may ask you to review your decision to impose a civil penalty. There is a 14 calendar day period for you to review your decision which starts on the date of the notice. 1 You should ensure that the civil penalty notice is issued on the day that it is dated. Any request to review your decision to impose a civil penalty must be made in writing (which includes via email). 2 If you receive a request for a review within 14 calendar days of the notice, you must send an acknowledgement notice to the individual within 7 calendar days of receiving the request to tell them that they have up to 14 calendar days from the date of the acknowledgement notice to: 3 make representations explaining why they have not made an application to register or why the civil penalty should be cancelled submit evidence in support of such representations You must also explain in the acknowledgement notice how any representations can be made and how any evidence can be submitted. 4 The acknowledgement notice should be dated and sent on the same day, as the date of the acknowledgement determines the start of the 14 day period for making representations. 1. Regulations 32ZF(3)(c) and 32ZH(2) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZH(2) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulations 32ZH(3)(a) and (b) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZH(3)(c) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for What if I receive a request for a review of my decision to issue a civil penalty? What information must the civil penalty notice contain? What is the timeframe for a carrying out the review? What is the timeframe for a carrying out the review? If an individual makes a request for a review within the 14 calendar day time period from the date of the notice, you must carry out a review of your decision to impose a civil penalty. This obligation is irrespective of whether the individual has submitted any representations or evidence to you. Your review must not start before the earlier of: 1 the end of the 14th calendar day after the date of the

acknowledgment notice the receipt of any representations or evidence This means that if you receive any representations or evidence before the end of the 14 day period, you may commence your review then. If not, you must wait until the end of the 14 day period before you can start your review process. Considering representations and evidence If any representations or evidence are submitted, you must consider them. There may be circumstances where you receive representations or evidence after you have already started the review, or indeed after you have completed it but before the penalty has been paid. In those cases, you should still take the representations and evidence into account and review your grounds for issuing the civil penalty notice in light of these. In the absence of any representations or evidence, you should check whether there are any grounds for cancelling the civil penalty notice.

1. Regulation 32ZH(4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for What is the timeframe for a carrying out the review? What if I receive a request for a review of my decision to issue a civil penalty? What action do I take when the review is completed? What action do I take when the review is completed? On completion of your review you must either uphold the decision to issue a civil penalty or cancel the civil penalty.

1 You must then inform the individual, in writing, of the outcome of the review.

2 If you uphold the decision to impose a civil penalty, the notice confirming the outcome of the review must state:

3 that they may appeal against that decision to the First-tier Tribunal and how to make such an appeal, and the date by which the civil penalty must be paid

1. Regulation 32ZH(5) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 32ZH(6) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 32ZH(7) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 24 June 2020 Book traversal links for What action do I take when the review is completed? What is the timeframe for a carrying out the review? Cancelling a civil penalty notice

Cancelling a civil penalty notice You must cancel a civil penalty notice if the individual makes an application for registration before the time for payment of the civil penalty,

1 or if either as a result of direct communications from the individual or from other information:

2 you are satisfied that the individual is not entitled to be registered at the address at which you gave the invitations to register you are satisfied that the individual is registered at a different address you discover that any of the requirements for sending a notice requiring a individual to register had not been met You have discretion to cancel a civil penalty notice if you consider it appropriate to do so.

3 For example: An individual may have been away for the vast majority of the period between the requirement to register and the civil penalty notice. Depending on the circumstances, it may be appropriate to cancel the civil penalty and set a new deadline for receiving an application. An individual may not have responded to your invitations and requirement to register on the grounds of a disability or an inability to read or write. Again, in these circumstances, you should consider cancelling the civil penalty and offer any assistance which may be necessary to enable the individual to make an application. An individual may not have responded to your ITR because they had concerns that their safety could be compromised by providing you with personal information. In those circumstances, you should assess whether they would qualify for registering as an anonymous elector and, where appropriate, cancel the civil penalty and explain the anonymous registration process to them.

1. Regulation 32ZG(5)(a) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content

at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZG(5)(b) and (c) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZG(6) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Cancelling a civil penalty notice What action do I take when the review is completed? Appeals to the First-tier Tribunal Appeals to the First-tier Tribunal If an individual has made a request for a review of your decision to impose a civil penalty and is unsuccessful, the final course of appeal open to them is to appeal to the First-tier Tribunal. 1 The Tribunal may either uphold your decision to impose a civil penalty or cancel the penalty. 2 During the time the appeal process takes place, the requirement to pay the civil penalty is suspended. 3 Should the individual make an appeal, you will need to prepare information and evidence to help the Tribunal establish whether all the legal requirements leading to the issuing of the civil penalty were met. You should include copies of all the documents that you used (including your invitations and notices), and information and evidence about: why you decided to send an ITR (e.g. which record was checked that led you to believe that there was an individual resident who was eligible for registration, or whether you gained this information through correspondence with the elector themselves or through a third party) when and how you gave the three invitations to register and when you carried out a personal visit, including any responses you received the dates on which you gave the requirement to register and issued the civil penalty notice if the individual requested a review or otherwise made any representations or submitted any evidence to you, the representations, evidence and conclusion of your review The chamber of the First-tier Tribunal responsible for hearing appeals against civil penalty notices is the General Regulatory Chamber: General Regulatory Chamber HM Courts and Tribunals Service PO Box 9300 Leicester, LE1 8DJ Telephone: 0300 123 4504 Email: grc@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk The Commission has produced template notices and letters to use when undertaking the civil penalty process. These are available on our website. 1. Regulation 32ZI(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZI(2) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZH(2) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Appeals to the First-tier Tribunal Cancelling a civil penalty notice What is the timescale for payment of a civil penalty? What is the timescale for payment of a civil penalty? Where no review has been requested or no appeal has been made to the First-tier Tribunal, payment must be made within 28 calendar days of the date of the civil penalty notice. 1 Where the individual has requested a review or made an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal, the civil penalty must also be paid within 28 calendar days, but the 28-day period ceases to run while the review or appeal is being considered and re-starts if the review or appeal is unsuccessful. 2 When calculating the 28-day period, the day on which any review or appeal is requested is excluded and the day on which the review or appeal concludes is included. You should liaise with your council's legal department regarding the process for any debt recovery should an individual fail to pay the penalty within the required timeframe. Where a payment is overdue, interest is accrued at a daily rate equivalent to 8% per year. 3 In cases where an individual refuses to pay, an application can be made to the county court, for recovering the debt and any accrued interest. 4 1. Regulations 32ZH(7)(b) and 32ZG(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 32ZH(7)(b) and 32ZG(2) Representation of the

People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZG(3) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZG(4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 25 May 2021 Book traversal links for What is the timescale for payment of a civil penalty? Appeals to the First-tier Tribunal Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Inviting individuals to register to vote Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Inviting individuals to register to vote Guidance on electoral registration form designs and letters Part 2 (DOC) What works – Household notification cards (DOC) Sharing good practice - Encouraging a response Last updated: 8 November 2021 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Inviting individuals to register to vote What is the timescale for payment of a civil penalty? How can individuals register to vote? How can individuals register to vote? Individuals are able to apply to register to vote in a number of ways: 1 online via the central government website - www.gov.uk/register-to-vote by providing the necessary information in writing (e.g. on a paper form) by telephone to your staff (if you offer the service) in person at your office (if you offer the service) You are obliged to send an invitation to register (ITR) to potential electors within 28 days of becoming aware of them. However if you have an email address for a potential elector you could, in the first instance, use it to encourage them to submit an online application or issue an ITR by electronic means. The register to vote website will not allow a person to submit an application to register to vote online unless they provide all the information necessary or have given a reason as to why this cannot be provided. You may, however, receive applications on paper which do not contain all the information required for processing. In such cases, you will be able to obtain the missing information through various channels, irrespective of how the original application was made. While there is a specific process to follow where someone cannot provide their date of birth, National Insurance number or nationality, you can collect missing information by telephone, in person or via email. For example, it may not be clear from a paper application whether a missing National Insurance number was an oversight by the potential elector or was not included because they cannot provide it. Where you have the telephone number or email address for that elector, you can obtain the missing information through those channels. Promotion of the application channels available You should make sure that your potential electors know how to apply to register. You should ensure that you: provide a link to the online registration form on any relevant pages of your website (and the council's, if that is separate) provide a link to online registration wherever electoral registration may be relevant including, for example, on any online system for setting up new council tax accounts and on the websites of partner organisations set out the alternative registration channels for those who cannot, or do not wish to, apply online liaise with local parties and candidates to share information on how to register online or obtain registration forms liaise with other local partners you work with to promote registration in any materials they may distribute to or use to communicate with residents provide a clear link to the online application form at the end of any process you provide for responding to canvass communications You should make clear the various application channels so that electors can make a choice that best meets their needs and preferences. Promoting the different ways of registering should make the application process as accessible as possible. What can a person do to assist another person to register to vote? We have produced a factsheet for care homes that you can adapt to reflect your particular

circumstances. The factsheet is based on our assisted applications guidance which details what one person can do to support another to register. Information supplied as part of ■an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document You cannot use any■ information supplied as part of an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document, such as a National Insurance number, for any other purpose than the processing of that application. 2 This means that you cannot use the information provided as part of an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document to complete a registration application for the same elector if they are not registered to vote. The registration process is prescribed and requires the elector to provide a declaration that the information on the application is true. 3 Information included on a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document also cannot be used to complete registration applications where the registration application is incomplete or the information supplied with the registration application has not matched with DWP records. Further information on potential data sources that can be used for local data matching can be found in our guidance . We would advise, however, that where you have received an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document from an elector who is not already on the electoral register, that you may use this information to invite them to register. More information on the potential sources of data to register electors can be found in our guidance . 1. Regulation 26(8) and (9) Representation of the People (England and Wales) 2001 (RPR E&W) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 14 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 26 RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 April 2023 Book traversal links for How can individuals register to vote? Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Inviting individuals to register to vote Online applications Online applications The online registration form is hosted on the central government website www.gov.uk/register-to-vote , you should provide a link to this from your website and include it in all of your communications and public awareness activity. If you have an email address for an individual you could use it to encourage them to submit an online application. You can also issue an invitation to register by electronic means, including by email. Information from applications to register that are completed online will be sent to your EMS system automatically from the IER Digital Service. Online registration provides a range of opportunities to integrate registering into other services the council provides and to deliver electoral registration more efficiently. Promoting online or other channels may make it simpler and potentially cheaper for you to process applications. There are many benefits for individuals in completing an application online including: improved accessibility for individuals with particular communication needs who may be able to complete the application more easily online, for example those with visual impairments who use electronic screen readers providing assurance that the application they have made is complete as the online system will not allow any incomplete applications to be submitted, for example any applications with obvious inadvertent errors, such as their date of birth being missed or given in the wrong format providing assurance that the application is received the moment it is submitted, which is particularly beneficial close to a registration deadline ahead of an election There are also benefits for you including: reduced need for manual data input fewer errors due to the validation of information entered on the online form no need to decipher handwriting applications will be complete when received, reducing the need to follow-up any missing information verification will be undertaken immediately rather than once you enter the data into your EMS system not

having to receive, open, scan and store a paper form Your own website and social media accounts are also key tools for communicating messages about registration and encouraging applications. You should regularly review and update any general advice or information contained on your website relating to electoral registration so that people have accurate and up-to-date information about how to register. Last updated: 21 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Online applications](#)

How can individuals register to vote? Paper application forms Paper application forms There is no requirement for an application to register that is made in writing (on paper) to be made on a particular form. The application must, however, contain all the information required for a valid application. Forms can be sent to you by post, delivered by hand or sent electronically, such as by fax or as a scanned copy sent by e-mail. Where you are making non pre-populated forms available you may supply them in hard copy or electronically, so that they can be printed out, completed, and sent to you. The paper application form that you must include alongside an invitation to register must be the form 1 as approved by the Minister for the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and made available by the Commission . 2 The form includes space for you to add your contact details, local authority information, unique reference, security code and a barcode. If you receive a written application that is not on an application form you should check that it contains all the required information. If incomplete, you should follow the process outlined in our guidance on incomplete applications . Where you receive a written application that is not made on the approved form and which does not include the explanation of the full and open registers using the prescribed short form of words , you should write to the applicant to provide them with the prescribed short form of words. You should set out their existing open register preference including an explanation of how they can change their preference if they wish to do so

1. Regulations 26(6) and (7) 2001 Regulations ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulations 32ZC(3)(b) 2001 Regulations ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 11 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Paper application forms](#)

[Online applications](#)

[Telephone and in-person applications](#)

Telephone and in-person applications Legislation enables applications by phone and in person. For the benefit and convenience of electors, you should offer these services wherever possible. This will also help you meet your duties under the Equalities Act, as people who may have difficulties completing the paper or online form will have the opportunity to apply without the need to provide the information in writing. If you are unable to provide telephone and/or in-person registration for all, you may allow these at your discretion in certain circumstances, and you should do so to assist applicants with disabilities in order to meet equalities obligations. If you decide to allow telephone applications, you may use a central contact centre. This gives staff the opportunity to promote registration to residents who are contacting the authority for another purpose and take an application to register by phone. This could help to maximise the accuracy and completeness of the register and avoid you having to formally invite them to register. Because of the requirement for an application to be made in writing, where a person applies by telephone or in-person, you must transfer the information into an application in writing. In practice this can be achieved by inputting the information into a paper application form or the register to vote website. If you decide to accept applications by telephone and/or in-person it is important that you keep accurate records of the applications or information provided. Before collecting the information required for the application, you should inform the applicant: that the information they provide will be processed in accordance with data protection

legislation (reflecting the wording used in the prescribed voter registration form) what information will appear on the register that it is an offence to knowingly provide false information, and that the maximum penalty is up to six months in prison and/or an unlimited fine Before asking whether the applicant wishes their name and address to be included in the open register you must provide the applicant with an explanation of what the open register is, using the prescribed short form of words. When taking information on the applicant's nationality, you should consider highlighting to the applicant that checks may be carried out in relation to their immigration status against Home Office records. Further guidance on this process and contact details are available by contacting the Home Office: ICESSVECWorkflow@homeoffice.gov.uk. You will be asked to complete a template which will be provided – please complete and return the section below the heading 'Subject 1' to the same email address. The Home Office have requested one template per subject per email, and that 'ER' be added to the subject header for each email to ensure that it goes into the correct folder for a response. The Home Office will respond within five working days unless a file is required, in which case it will respond within ten working days. The fact that you may request checks of a person's immigration status against Government records is included on the registration application form approved by the Minister and made available to you by the Commission. You may ask for an e-mail address and telephone numbers to use for future contact, as well as an indication of whether the applicant wishes to be able to vote by post or by proxy. However, you must make it clear that the applicant is not required to provide this information. Under data protection legislation, an elector can object to the processing of their email or telephone contact details. To demonstrate that you are processing personal data lawfully and transparently you should maintain records to detail any request made under the right to object to processing. Your EMS provider may have the facility to record consent against elector records. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further information on lawful processing and the rights of the data subject. You should review all of your existing email templates and ensure that where you communicate by email, you include an unsubscribe option. The email ITR that you must use has been updated to include an unsubscribe option. Applicants must make a declaration of truth. 1 Once you have taken the required information you should read it back to the applicant, giving them an opportunity to review the information provided and satisfy themselves that it is true and accurate. If an applicant does not have all of the information to hand they can call back at a later time. When you collect the missing information, you should go through the same process of giving the elector general information about how their data will be used and alert them to the offence of making a false statement. A declaration of truth must also be made to cover the missing information and you should give the applicant an opportunity to review the information supplied and correct any errors. 1.

Regulation 26(1)(j) 2001 Regulations, RPR ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 June 2023 Book traversal links for Telephone and in-person applications Paper application forms What information must an application to register to vote contain? What information must an application to register to vote contain? One of the criteria regarding an individual's eligibility to register is that any statutory requirements in relation to the application are met. An ordinary application for registration (excluding special category electors) must contain the following information: 1 the applicant's full name the address where the applicant is resident on the date of the application and in respect of which they are applying to be registered any address where the applicant has ceased to reside in the 12 months

prior to the date of the application and, where that address is not in the UK, an indication of whether that person was registered as an overseas elector during this period an indication of whether the applicant is resident at any other address, including any address where the applicant is currently registered and claims to be entitled to remain registered the applicant's date of birth or, if unable to provide it, the reason why they are not able to do so and a statement as to whether aged under 18 years old or 76 or over the applicant's National Insurance number or, if they are not able to provide it, the reason they are not able to do so the applicant's nationality or nationalities or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason why they are not able to do so an indication of whether the applicant requests their name to be omitted from the edited register a declaration that the contents of the application are true (in practice, on paper, this involves a signature or at least a mark on the form that shows that they have made the declaration) the date of the application If any of the above is not provided, the application is incomplete and cannot be processed. You should follow up on the missing information with the applicant. The application form must provide space for the applicant to provide their most recent previous name (if they have one) 2 and an explanation that providing this information is not mandatory but may help in verifying their identity and if not provided, additional personal information may be required. The register to vote website allows anyone over 16 to submit an application. You may also receive a paper form from those not old enough to be an attainer. If you receive such an application, you should contact the applicant and explain that you cannot process their application at this time, but that you will keep their details on file and invite them to register once they become eligible. Keep a record of their name, address, any other contact information, and the date on which they would become eligible for registration based on their age and put in place a mechanism to alert you to send an invitation to register at the appropriate time.

1. Regulation 26(1) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26(3)(ea) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 21 August 2020 Book traversal links for What information must an application to register to vote contain? Telephone and in-person applications Incomplete applications Incomplete applications If any required part of the application is missing or incomplete, it will not constitute a complete application, and you will need to contact the applicant and request the information that is missing. You can also require additional evidence where you consider it necessary to verify identify, or to determine an applicant's entitlement to register. In some cases, an applicant may not be able to give you their date of birth, National Insurance number or nationality. If they are unable to provide this information they must, as part of the application, provide a statement of the reasons why. 1 Where no statement is included, you cannot assume that the person cannot provide this missing information and should contact the applicant and ask them to supply it. The application will be on hold until the required information has been returned. The missing information does not need to be provided in writing – it can be provided over the phone, via e-mail or in person. You must, however, keep a written record of the missing information that has been provided, and ensure that is transferred to the written application. If unable to state their nationality, you can require the applicant to provide evidence about their nationality and immigration status in order to determine whether they are a qualifying Commonwealth citizen. This includes, if applicable, the applicant's biometric immigration document issued in the UK. The fact that you may require additional evidence of an applicant's nationality, and may request checks of a

person's immigration status against Government records is included on the registration application form. Where the required information has not been provided but the statements of reasons are completed (and their identity could not be verified using local data matching) you can use the exceptions process to verify the applicant's identity. You should keep a record of any incomplete applications or applications where you have requested further information, so that you can follow up with the applicant if they do not respond to your initial request for information. You should give the applicant a date to respond by with the information requested. Where you do not receive a response within a reasonable time (the 28-day maximum, but potentially earlier if there is an election), and you consider that the person is resident and may be eligible to register, you must give them a new invitation to register.

2 1. Regulation 26(1)(f) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Section 9E(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 15 October 2020 Book traversal links for Incomplete applications What information must an application to register to vote contain? Listing applications and objections Listing applications and objections You are required to maintain three separate lists for: 1 applications received any objections made prior to the person being added to the register any objections made after the person has been added to the register As soon as any application or objection is received, the appropriate details must be recorded as follows: details of the application (the name and nationality of the applicant, and the address given as their qualifying address) must be entered in the list of applications 2 details of the objection (the name and qualifying address of the objector, plus details of the application (as above) or register entry) must be entered in the relevant list of objections 3 where an objection is received before a person has been entered on the register, the particulars of the objection must be entered in the list of applications 4 Applications to register anonymously are not subject to objections and are therefore not included on any of these lists. The lists of applications and objections are open for inspection until determined, i.e. until you have made the final decision as to whether an entry or alteration to the register is required. 5 These lists are usually produced by software packages or, alternatively, they could be handwritten or typed manually.

1. Regulation 29(2) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Regulation 29(2A) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 2
3. Regulation 29(2D) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 3
4. Regulation 29(2C) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 4
5. Regulation 28 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 21 August 2020 Book traversal links for Listing applications and objections Incomplete applications Retention of documents supplied as part of an application Retention of documents supplied as part of an application You must retain the following documents and information if supplied as part of an application, including any copies taken of original documents, until the application has been determined: 1 the application form itself the information that you receive as a result of an online application the information from an application made by telephone the information from an application made in person any evidence you receive under the documentary exceptions process You may keep these documents or information after your determination of the application.

2 Data protection legislation does not specify maximum periods for retention of personal data, but says that personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose. You will therefore need to consider whether it would be appropriate for you to hold on to the information for a specific period to take account of the possibility of a legal challenge and any analysis the police may need to carry out if there are any integrity concerns. It is

important that your document retention policy sets out the period you will retain documents and your reason for doing so. Unless there is a legal challenge or investigation, you should not retain any documents relating to a particular elector for more than 12 months after they have been removed from the register, as this is the usual time limit for any prosecutions. In any case, unless there is a legal challenge, make sure that you do not retain documents for longer than the period specified in your document retention policy and securely destroy them at the appropriate point. This should include ensuring that you have processes in place to manage any scanned images held on your EMS software. The Information Commissioner's Office provides general advice on the retention of personal data. Where you decide to keep any application-related documents beyond the point of determination, you must redact the applicant's National Insurance number from any documentation you have, including the application form, within a period of 13 months from the date the application was determined. 3 You need to ensure that you can carrying out such redactions, which may include using special redaction software. The council's Data Protection Officer should be able to give you advice on redaction of personal information. You also need to keep a record of the day on which you have made your determination on an application, so that you can accurately calculate the 13month period. Your EMS system may facilitate this. National Insurance numbers will only be available on paper applications, or where someone has applied in person or by telephone; for applications made online, you will not receive the National Insurance number. The requirement to redact the applicant's National Insurance number does not apply where this documentation is required for the purpose of any civil or criminal investigations or proceedings. 4 While not a legal requirement, you should consider following a similar approach for redacting dates of birth. Your policies on redaction should also be detailed in your document retention plan. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further information the storage of personal data and on document retention, including what should be included in a document retention policy.

1. Regulation 29ZB(2) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29ZB(3) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 29ZB(3) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 29ZB(4) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 5 June 2023 Book traversal links for Retention of documents supplied as part of an application Listing applications and objections Notifying a previous ERO about an application Notifying a previous ERO about an application An application to register must contain any address where the applicant has ceased to reside in the 12 months prior to the date of the application and, where that address is not in the UK, an indication of whether that person was registered as an overseas elector during this period. 1 You have a duty to notify the relevant ERO where you have been given a previous address in the UK. 2 This process is automated through a link between your EMS system and the IER Digital Service and the notification triggered once you have allowed the application. However, a person may be entitled to be registered at more than one address (e.g. students). If on their application they claim that they are entitled to be registered at more than one address, you should contact the elector and the other ERO to establish the details of their residence. Our guidance on residency requirements for registration purposes provides further information on a person's entitlement to be registered at more than one address. 1. Regulation 26(1)(c) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 37 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 21 August 2020 Book traversal links for Notifying a previous ERO about an application Retention of documents supplied as part of an application Identifying suspicious

registration applications Identifying suspicious registration applications You are uniquely placed to identify incidents and patterns of activity that might indicate electoral fraud in your local area. Applications for registration do not have to be taken at face value – you have the option of taking any application to a hearing . You can also require additional evidence where necessary to verify identity, or to determine an applicant's entitlement to register. Although there are no definitive signs of possible electoral registration fraud, and each specific case will be different, you should ensure that you have mechanisms in place to monitor indicators of possible fraud. These indicators and any trigger points for further action will need to be informed by: the context of your local area whether they are consistent or inconsistent with any other data available to you the specific circumstances surrounding an application or applications The following could, depending on the context, be indicators of possible fraud: any number of registration application forms completed in the same hand large numbers of registration applications submitted in respect of a single property, particularly where the number of forms does not reflect the type or size of the property (e.g. 10 applications for a small flat) applications which do not appear to match the usual pattern of previous or existing registrations at a particular property unusual number of applications failing verification, for example, if all applications from a property or neighbouring properties fail verification large numbers of attestations in any particular area information from the IER Digital Service on: whether the National Insurance number supplied with an application has been given in any other applications in the previous 12 months and in which local authority areas the originating IP address for each online application You should put in place mechanisms that will help you to identify suspicious registration applications including: training for canvassers and office staff on what to look out for review returns data regularly to identify patterns consider how best to share data about patterns of registration applications with local political parties and elected representatives, to improve transparency and confidence, and so that they can help identify any specific register entries which might be suspicious Working with your local police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Your local police SPOC is a key partner in ensuring that possible instances of registration fraud are quickly identified and dealt with. Prompt action to address possible electoral registration fraud could help avoid costly police investigations or legal challenges to the results of elections. Make sure you know who your SPOC is and how to contact them. If you have any problems establishing contact with your SPOC, please contact your local Commission team . You should have an agreement in place with your SPOC outlining the division of responsibilities, so that there is clarity about each other's roles. Your early discussions should cover: processes for identifying possible fraud and what actions should be taken where any suspicions arise an agreed approach for referring allegations of fraud for further investigation where appropriate establishing a process for handling evidence, so that the police can carry out any forensic analysis Documentation that you would need to provide to the police for their investigation is likely to include: all papers received (including envelopes), sealed in a packet or envelope copies of the internal documents used to conduct internal checks (e.g. council tax records) You should also agree a mechanism for handling evidence, following advice from your SPOC, so that the police can carry out any forensic analysis, where necessary. The police will investigate any allegations of fraudulent electoral registration until, following consultation with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) or the Crown Office, either they are satisfied that no further action is necessary or appropriate, or they

forward the case file to the CPS for prosecution. The police should keep you, and where appropriate the RO, informed of the progress of the case. Last updated: 15 October 2020

[Book traversal links for Identifying suspicious registration applications](#)

[Notifying a previous ERO about an application](#)

[Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - How can individuals register to vote?](#)

[Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - How can individuals register to vote?](#)

[Guidance for care staff in England and Wales \(DOC\)](#)

[Guidance on assisted applications in England and Wales \(word\)](#)

Last updated: 5 June 2023

[Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - How can individuals register to vote?](#)

[Identifying suspicious registration applications](#)

[Processing applications and other amendments to the register throughout the year](#)

[Processing applications and other amendments to the register throughout the year](#)

[Processing applications and other amendments to the register throughout the year](#)

This section contains guidance on the actions you should take as ERO to process applications to register. It includes guidance on verifying applicants' identity, through the IER digital service and local data matching, and how the exceptions and attestation process should be administered. Following the processing of an application, as ERO you must determine the application as soon as possible, and the guidance describes the actions you must take in allowing or rejecting an application. This section also covers amendments to the register during the year, including how you should action changes to an elector's nationality, name or address. The guidance also explains how to undertake reviews of registration, how to deal with objections to applications or entries in the register and how to delete entries from the register. Last updated: 24 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Processing applications and other amendments to the register throughout the year](#)

[Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - How can individuals register to vote?](#)

[Verification of an applicant's identity](#)

[Verification of an applicant's identity](#)

Verification of an applicant's identity One of the aspects of entitlement to register is that the application is made by someone who appears to be the person named on the application.

1 Any person making a new application for registration must provide personal identifiers which are used to verify the applicant's identity against DWP records. If the applicant's identity cannot be verified using DWP records, their identifiers may also be matched against local data sources. The results of these checks must be taken into account in determining the application.

2 Regardless of when an application for registration is received, you must send the relevant information for verification matching against DWP data and take the results into account when deciding whether to allow the application. If you are still unable to verify the applicant's identity using local data sources, you should follow the exceptions process .

1. Section 10Z(1)(a) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■

[Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulation 29ZA Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■

[Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 24 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Verification of an applicant's identity](#)

[Processing applications and other amendments to the register throughout the year](#)

[Personal identifiers](#)

[Personal identifiers](#)

[Personal identifiers](#)

An applicant's personal identifiers are their full name, National Insurance Number (NINo), and date of birth (DOB). These are used in order to perform the data match with DWP to verify an applicant's identity. This section provides guidance on what NINos look like, and what to do if an applicant does not have or cannot submit a NINo or DOB. Last updated: 24 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Personal identifiers](#)

[Verification of an applicant's identity](#)

[National Insurance numbers](#)

[National Insurance numbers](#)

National Insurance numbers National insurance numbers (NINo) should appear in the

following combination of letters and numbers - two letters, six numbers, one letter. For example: QQ 123456 C. The table below gives some other examples of things that may be submitted in place of the usual NINo with some guidance on sending these applications for verification. Format of National Insurance number Should I send the application for verification? NINo does not contain a final letter Yes – this is a valid submission and should be sent for verification as normal Temporary reference NINo - Two numbers (which can sometimes be found in correspondence from HMRC described as “National Insurance number”) No – you are not required to submit a temporary reference for verification - proceed straight to the exceptions process The letters OO No – you are not required to submit a temporary reference for verification - proceed straight to the exceptions process The letters TN No – you are not required to submit a temporary reference for verification - proceed straight to the exceptions process You are not required to filter applications with temporary NINos manually, if an application is sent for verification as normal, it will fail, and you will proceed to the exceptions process. When completing a paper form, some electors may mistakenly provide numbers other than their NINo. The most common are likely to be: NHS Number - these are 10 digits long, feature numbers only, and are normally laid out in a 3 – 3 – 4 format; and passport number - these are in varying formats, but not the same as either the NHS number or the NINo In cases where the applicant has clearly provided the wrong number you should contact the applicant by any means of communication including email and telephone if you have the contact details, and ask them to provide the correct number. An application which does not contain a correct NINo, is missing the applicant’s NINo, or does not give a reason why a NINo cannot be provided is not a complete application and you cannot determine it for purposes of being included on the electoral register until a NINo or a statement as to why a NINo cannot be provided has been given. Who should have a National Insurance number? Most eligible electors will have a NINo. NINos are ordinarily, but not always, issued to: those who legally work in the UK those who claim benefits in the UK (including those who have had a Student Loan) those who are present in the UK just before their sixteenth birthday and whose parents are claiming child benefit for them Who might not have a National Insurance number? A small number of people may not have a NINo. A number of applicants are Individuals who are eligible to vote in the UK but will not be in possession of a NINo might include (this list is not exhaustive): a European citizen who is studying in the UK and who is financially self-sufficient a European citizen who has been posted to work in the UK but who continues to pay tax in their home country a British young person who was not issued a NINo by HMRC’s automatic issuing process a Commonwealth citizen who lives in the UK and who is financially self-sufficient a European citizen who has never worked or claimed benefits in the UK a British citizen who has never worked Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for National Insurance numbers Personal identifiers What if an applicant does not have a National Insurance number or cannot submit one? What if an applicant does not have a National Insurance number or cannot submit one? What if an applicant does not have a National Insurance number or cannot submit one? DWP are not allowed to issue NINos for the purposes of registering to vote, and you must not ask applicants who do not have a NINo to apply for one. Applicants who do not submit a NINo are asked to explain why they are not providing it and you should be satisfied with the reason given for non-provision of a NINo. There is no definitive list of those individuals who should hold NINos. It is therefore not possible to give a definitive list of satisfactory reasons why a NINo cannot be provided. Some reasons you may be provided with are: the applicant was never issued one the applicant refuses to give

it the applicant cannot find their NINO If the applicant makes a statement on their application form that they have never been issued a NINO, and you have no evidence to contradict the claim, you should direct the applicant to the exceptions process . If an applicant makes a statement on the application form that they refuse to provide their NINO, you have the discretion to determine whether to reject the application or to direct the applicant to the exceptions process . The applicant is required 1 to provide their NINO, and can be reminded of this fact. If the applicant makes a statement on the application form that they have lost or forgotten their NINO, you should either ask the applicant to locate their NINO or direct the applicant to the exceptions process . Although most paper communications from HMRC and DWP will feature an applicant's NINO, there is no definitive list of places where an applicant can find it. Below is a list of places the NINO is most likely to be found, depending on the circumstances of the applicant: For people over 16 but not yet working A registration letter from HMRC telling them what their NINO is (their parents may have this) For employed people Pay slips from their employer P60 (end of year statement of pay and tax from their employer) P2 (notice of tax coding from HMRC) P45 (from their employer when they left a job) P11D (from their employer if they get any benefits in kind) P800 (from HMRC if they have over or underpaid tax at the end of the year) Notice to file a Tax Return (SA316) or Tax Return (if they are in Self-Assessment) Self-employed people Notice to file a Tax Return (SA316) or Tax Return Statement of Account Retired people the letter issued each year by DWP in February or March telling you how much your pension will be Other A plastic NINO card (these stopped being issued in 2011) You may be provided with other reasons as to why a NINO cannot be provided. You should assess the validity of the reason given on a case by case basis, bearing in mind this guidance. 1. Regulation 26(1)(f) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for What if an applicant does not have a National Insurance number or cannot submit one? National Insurance numbers Dates of birth Dates of birth Dates of birth A small number of people who are eligible to vote cannot provide a date of birth (DoB). Those individuals who have never known their actual DoB will most likely have been given an official DoB over the course of time; this might include a DoB on an adoption certificate, a naturalisation certificate, a passport or a driving licence. These suffice for the purpose of making an application, and they are likely to match the DoB on record with the DWP. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Dates of birth What if an applicant does not have a National Insurance number or cannot submit one? What if an applicant does not have a date of birth or cannot submit one? What if an applicant does not have a date of birth or cannot submit one? On both the digital and paper application forms, applicants who do not or cannot submit a DoB are asked to explain why they are not providing it. You should be satisfied with the reason given for non-provision of a DoB. Applications without a DoB must also be accompanied by a statement that the applicant is over 18 and whether the applicant is aged 76 or over. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for What if an applicant does not have a date of birth or cannot submit one? Dates of birth How to interpret DWP match results How to interpret DWP match results How to interpret DWP match results Applications to register are matched against the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Customer Information System (CIS) database. CIS is an amalgamated data source, containing data received from internal DWP systems, as well as other government sources, such as Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). DWP use the CIS as the main source of customer

information. In order to perform the data match, DWP have developed an algorithm which matches an applicant's personal identifiers sent to them via the IER Digital Service against the CIS database. The DWP matching algorithm works like a filter. The stages are broadly summarised below: The personal identifiers are standardised by DWP to make them more consistent with the DWP dataset (e.g. removal of spaces and hyphens from NINOs) The personal record is then compared to the records in the DWP dataset in the following matching sequence Is there a record in the DWP dataset with a NINO that matches the NINO provided by the applicant? If not, the personal record is flagged as No Match and no further matches are attempted. Does the DWP record identified at step 1 have a DOB that matches the DOB provided? If not, the personal record is flagged as No Match. Do the names on the DWP record identified at step 1 match the names provided? A series of name matches are carried out until the best match is obtained. These are described in Table 1. At the end of the matching process, the match level is sent back to the IER Digital Service. The IER Digital Service assigns a score to the results, showing either a successful match or failed match. The match results plus the score assigned to them are sent back to your EMS where they are displayed to you. At the end you will have a set of match statements in your EMS that describe the levels at which an applicant's record has passed or failed against a number of matching criteria. You will need to assess whether the applicant's identity has been established according to the rating supplied. Where a NINO matches against a DOB at any other levels set out in the table below, a positive match will be assigned to that record. Table 1 - Combinations resulting in positive matches You are not limited to using the match rating to decide whether the identity of the applicant has been established. For example, you may have local data which is different to the DWP match. However, where you make an assessment which does not accord with the match rating (for example local data which contradicts the DWP match) you should record the reasons why you have reached your assessment and the evidence used. Last updated: 24 August 2020

Book traversal links for How to interpret DWP match results

What if an applicant does not have a date of birth or cannot submit one?

Action to take following the return of data from DWP

Action to take following the return of data from DWP

When your matched data is returned from DWP, you will need to assess whether the applicant's identity has been established according to the pass/fail rating supplied.

Pass matches Where a pass rating is returned by DWP for an applicant's identity, you can be confident that the applicant is the person they claim to be on their application. You will also need to establish that the applicant fulfils their other eligibility criteria (age, nationality, residence) before determining the application. You may have already done this before receiving the match results from DWP.

Fail matches If a fail rating is returned by DWP, this indicates that it has not been possible to establish that person's identity and you cannot be satisfied that the applicant is the person that they claim to be on their application at this stage. You may contact the applicant to query the information given on the application using any communication channel that you have contact details for. You should ask the applicant to supply their full application information - name, address, DOB and NINO (which will only be held if the application was made by paper form). These details should be checked against the original application. You should not supply any details of any information given in an application to the applicant. What if an applicant has made an error on their application? If the applicant has made an error on their application, you should: resubmit their personal identifiers to the IER Digital Service for a further check write to the applicant to tell them that based on additional information supplied by

them, a change has been made to their application. You should not include any personal identifier information (NINo and DoB) in the letter. What if an applicant has not made an error on their application? If no error has been made on the application and local data sources cannot be used (or have not been used) to be able to establish the applicant's identity, you should write to the elector to inform them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and request they supply documentary proof of their identity. This is known as the exceptions process. Applicants whose identity can be verified through either the DWP match or local data matching should be added to the register of electors at the next available update, providing the eligibility criteria have been met and the applicant has been positively determined. A confirmation letter should be sent if appropriate. Applicants whose identity cannot be verified by either the DWP check or by local data matching should be directed to the exceptions process. Last updated: 24 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Action to take following the return of data from DWP](#)
[How to interpret DWP match results](#)
[Using local data matching for verification purposes](#)
[Using local data matching for verification purposes](#)
[Using local data matching for verification purposes](#)
[Local data matching can provide you with further information which you can use to make a determination as to whether to allow a new application. You must disclose the details of an application to the IER Digital Service upon receipt, 1 and you should not carry out any local data matching for the purposes of verifying an applicant's identity until you have received and considered DWP match results. You can use local data matching to verify applicants whose personal identifiers fail to be matched against DWP records. You can also use local data to verify an applicant's identity where an applicant has been unable to provide a National Insurance number, provided that the reason given for not providing a National Insurance number is valid. Matching against local data allows you to use data sources available to you 2 to verify that the person making the application is the person they claim to be. If you do not normally carry out local data-matching for verification purposes, this option should only be used if you are satisfied that the data sources available to you can satisfy the requirements of the task.](#)

1. Reg 29ZA (1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)
2. Regulation 35 RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 24 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Using local data matching for verification purposes](#)
[Action to take following the return of data from DWP](#)
[Deciding whether to use local data for verification](#)
[Deciding whether to use local data for verification](#)
[Deciding whether to use local data for verification](#)
[The use of local data for verification matching is not compulsory. Your decision on whether to use local data matching should be taken after consideration of the benefits that local data matching can have in terms of reducing the burden on the applicant to provide evidence and follow-up costs. You should also consider the suitability of available data sets for this work and evaluate the potential costs and benefits of local data matching. Before using local data to inform the determination of an application, you must ask the following questions:](#)

1 what sources of local data are available to me? is the data record I intend to use accurate? what benefit will I gain from using local data matching for a particular task? what resources will I need to be able to use local data effectively? what are the costs involved in developing/using local data matching capacity? can I achieve beneficial results in sufficient time to meet the needs of the task? You may decide that the local data sets available cannot be used to verify the identity of the applicant or that directing the applicant to the exceptions process would be a more effective way of establishing identity.

1. Regulations 23, 35, and 35A

Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Deciding whether to use local data for verification Using local data matching for verification purposes Potential data sources for local data matching Potential data sources for local data matching Potential data sources for local data matching You can require any person to supply you with information required for the purpose of your duties in maintaining the register of electors. 1 You are therefore entitled to request data sets from organisations where you deem it necessary for the purpose of verifying the identity of an applicant. There are a wide variety of data sources that may be available including, but not limited to: council tax data adult social care data local authority billing and payments data parking permits data school admission data blue badge data customer service records payroll data registrar data on births, deaths and marriages Each data source must be assessed against the criteria found in our guidance on evaluating local data sources before being used for local data matching. Where a data set has limited coverage you may wish to consider using that data set alongside another to provide greater coverage across your registration area. Data sets with limited coverage may have additional value where they match with groups identified by you as part of your engagement strategy. As ERO, you are legally entitled to access local data sets and to inspect and make copies of records kept in whatever form by: 2 the council which appointed you (and where you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier area, the county council) any registrar of births, deaths and marriages, including any superintendent any person, including a company or organisation, providing services to, or authorised to exercise any function of the council; this includes those providing outsourced services under any finance agreement. For example, a private contractor appointed to collect council tax on behalf of the local authority Where EROs are appointed by a lower tier authority in a two-tier structure request relevant data from their County Council, it is at the discretion of the upper tier authority as to whether to supply this data and EROs should ensure that they have appropriate data sharing agreements in place where this data is supplied. Legislation gives express permission for local authorities which have not directly appointed an ERO, to provide data to this ERO, but requires a written agreement between the ERO and the authority to be in place before any transfer of data occurs. 3 The written agreement should regulate the processing of information including its transfer, storage, destruction, and security. While you have a legal entitlement to your local authority's data, you should conduct any data matching activities in accordance with current data protection legislation, relevant guidance and good practice available on the Information Commissioner's Office website . Information supplied as part of ■an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document You may not use any■ information supplied as part of an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document, such as a National Insurance number, for any other purpose than the processing of that application. 4 This means that you may not use the information provided with an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document to complete a registration application for the same elector where the registration application is incomplete or the information supplied with the registration application has not matched with DWP records. The registration process is prescribed and requires the elector to provide a declaration that the information on the application is true. 5 1. Regulation 23 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 35 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 35A RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at

footnote 3 4. Regulation 14 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 26 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 6 March 2023 Book traversal links for Potential data sources for local data matching Deciding whether to use local data for verification Methods of local data matching Methods of local data matching Manual Manual data matching is likely to be the main form of data matching used for verification. It involves visually checking records from a local data source against the electoral register. There may be cost implications for both staff resources and the time it takes to deal with large volumes of data. However, manual data matching allows you to interpret and make a judgement on complex data, for example written notes attached to a council tax record, which may mean you get a more accurate result. Manual data matching would also be suited to dealing with small scale local data sources, such as the lists of recently deceased persons provided by Registrars. Automated Automated data matching is the use of a computer programme or algorithm to match two or more sets of data, for example the local data source and a list of applications, against one another to produce a list of matches and mismatches. This form of matching is suited to matching large volumes of records. It may be useful for verification where a number of applications are to be verified at the same time, for example during the canvass or a pre-election period when a large volume of applications are being received. This form of matching does not require a person to check every record, but you should ensure that matching software and/or algorithms are thoroughly tested before being used. You should examine what capacity for undertaking this kind of work already exists within your local authority, for example, a local authority may be matching benefits data against other data sets to prevent and detect fraud. Automated matching would still require an element of decision making by you to ensure that matching undertaken is to the expected standard and to resolve queries. There are a variety of sources that may be able to provide you with automated data matching capability. Your authority may have the capacity to develop new processes or adapt existing processes to achieve this, and there are also a number of private companies who offer data matching services. If you are considering carrying out automated data matching for verification purposes, you should investigate all possibilities to achieve a cost effective solution. If you choose to outsource any local data matching activities, to either a private company or another part of their local authority, you should ensure that whoever is conducting the data matching, they are fully aware of both data protection legislation and the rules governing supply of the electoral register. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Methods of local data matching Potential data sources for local data matching Evaluating local data sources for verification purposes Evaluating local data sources for verification purposes Verification matching requires you to establish the identity of the person applying. This means that local data sets which can be used for this purpose will be limited to those where the resident's identity has already been established, such as council tax benefit, or housing benefit. You should assess the data record you are considering using against the following criteria before using it to conduct local data matching as part of the verification process: Criteria Notes Has the applicant provided identity evidence to the data holder? The data source must record that the applicant has provided documentary evidence to prove their identity to the local authority. This could be; a) a passport or similar photo ID; b) a range of trusted government documents and/or financial and social history documents such as, birth certificate, adoptions certificate, financial statements, utility bills etc. Has the applicant's evidence

been confirmed as valid by the data holder? The data source should record that the evidence provided by the applicant has been validated by checking with the issuing authority or against guidance provided by the issuing authority. Has the data holder ensured that the evidence provided belongs to the person applying? The data source should record that the identity of the applicant has been verified by comparison of the applicant to the strongest piece of identity evidence. Does the data holder check that the evidence provided is not fraudulent? The data source should record that the identity of the applicant has been subjected to counter fraud checks and that the document has been confirmed as genuine. Before a data set can be considered suitable for matching, all of the above criteria must be fulfilled.

General considerations for using local data

There is a key difference between data which an organisation has gathered itself, for example its payroll data, and data based on information provided by individuals about themselves. Data controllers are responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of the data they hold and, in the context of which the data is being processed, ensure that data which is inaccurate or incomplete is erased or rectified without delay. You should consider if the data you are using is reliant on information provided by individuals and assess whether that information is likely to be accurate. For example, applications for library membership may be based entirely on information provided by the service user, with no checks carried out by the local authority on the accuracy of the information. You may conclude that, because of this, their library data is not suitable for local data matching. You should also ask the data controller whether data standards or good practice exist for the data sources you intend to use and then make a decision as to whether the data controller meets these standards or if it follows good practice. For example, the Department for Work and Pensions has set out detailed guidance on good practice for the processing and use of council tax benefit and housing benefit, which includes guidance on the checking of evidence provided to local authorities and how to deal with fraud. If you are an ERO from an authority that delivers its benefits service to these standards you should be confident in using benefits data for local data matching. Information requested under Regulation 35 or 35A of the 2001 Regulations is exempt from any other statutory or other restriction on its disclosure. ¹ This exemption does not extend to data supplied under Regulation 23 of the 2001 Regulations. This means that the provisions of data protection legislation will apply to data gathered in this way. You should seek further guidance from your data protection officer on what you will need to do in order to ensure that any data transactions are compliant with data protection legislation.

Reviewing your local data matching practices

You should undertake evaluation of any existing local data matching practices. You should be conducting ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the costs and benefits of local data matching, and keeping under review the data sets used. Your evaluation should also take into account the other potential uses of local data matching apart from in verification – for example, in identifying potential electors to invite to register, or in sourcing one piece of evidence towards the deletion of an elector who is no longer eligible. ¹ Paragraph 1(5) of Schedule 2 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 ■

Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 24 August 2020

Book traversal links for Evaluating local data sources for verification purposes

Methods of local data matching

Using local data matching results

Using local data matching results

Using local data matching results

The purpose of local data matching is to provide you with further information, beyond the DWP data match, with which to make a determination as to whether to allow a new application. There are three principles that you should consider in making a

determination based on local data: You should take into account the results of the data match against the DWP database prior to local data matching, where this takes place, for any determination you make. You should be capable of defending any decision you make in the event of challenge, with a clear audit trail. You should be confident that the local information you use verifies the identity of a new applicant – where you have any doubt you should proceed to the exceptions process. Where local data matching is successful, it is not necessary to resubmit the application for matching against DWP data. In all cases, if you cannot locate the applicant on local data or you cannot be certain that local data verifies the applicant's identity, you must direct the applicant to the exceptions process. When can the applicant be added to the register of electors? Applicants whose identity can be verified through local data matching should be added to the register of electors at the next available update, providing the eligibility criteria have been met and the applicant has been positively determined. A confirmation letter should be sent if appropriate. Applicants whose identity cannot be verified by local data matching should be directed to the exceptions process. . Last updated: 24 August 2020

[Book traversal links for Using local data matching results](#) [Evaluating local data sources for verification purposes](#) [Managing the verification of applications received close to an election registration deadline](#) [Managing the verification of applications received close to an election registration deadline](#) [Managing the verification of applications received close to an election registration deadline](#) [A complete registration application \(i.e. an application containing all the information required for an application\) must be made by midnight, 12 working days before the poll](#) [1 to be valid for an election. Even when an application for registration is received near to the application deadline for inclusion on the register for an election, you must still send the relevant information for verification matching against DWP records and take account of the result when determining the application. You can expect to receive the results of the verification matching from the IER Digital Service within 24 hours. However, if an applicant cannot be verified, you will have limited time to undertake the additional steps required to get them verified before the determination deadline. These steps include carrying out local data matching and advising the applicant to provide documentary evidence under the exceptions process if necessary. In the run up to an election, you may choose to take steps to minimise length of time required before being able to determine an application. For example, you could choose to proceed with local data matching before the results of the DWP match have been returned. If the identity of the applicant can be verified using local data, and then a negative match result is then returned by the IER Digital Service, you can use the local data match in order to determine the application without any further input from the elector. If local data matching does not verify the applicant's identity and you have still not received the results of verification from the IER Digital Service, you could advise the applicant that it might be beneficial to their application for them to voluntarily supply the necessary evidence for the documentary exceptions process at that stage, in advance of the verification result being received. If the applicant does voluntarily choose to provide the evidence at this point, in the event that the IER Digital Service returns a negative match result, you can use the documentary evidence to determine the application. You must have processes in place to securely record and store any documentary evidence that you receive. You are only permitted to continue to hold the documentary evidence that has been provided in these circumstances if it is used to determine an application in the event of a negative match result, 2 if the IER Digital Service returns a positive match, the documentary](#)

evidence is unnecessary and must be destroyed. You will therefore also need to have processes in place to securely destroy documents where necessary. If the results of the applicant's identity verification are not returned by the IER Digital Service by midnight on the day before the election determination deadline (by midnight, seven working days before the poll), then you should refer to the contingency guidance . You will need to consider the benefits and risks of requesting evidence in these circumstances. You will need to take into account the potential for voter confusion balanced against doing what you can to ensure that everyone who has applied by the registration deadline can be registered in time to be able to vote in the election. In no circumstances should you ask for documentary evidence to be submitted with a registration application - this may discourage applications from being made, and could cause confusion about the registration process.

1. Section 13B(1) – (3) Representation of the People Act 1983 and Regulation 29(4) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 29ZB(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 24 August 2020

Book traversal links for Managing the verification of applications received close to an election registration deadline

Using local data matching results

Dealing with processing errors

Dealing with processing errors

Dealing with processing errors

In some cases, you may make a processing error which results in an applicant who has properly submitted an application not having their identity verified before the determination deadline for publication of the register for an election. For example, a paper application form may be received but misplaced and not properly dealt with, or an online application may be incorrectly processed, resulting in you not requesting documentary evidence for an application made without identifiers. On discovering this type of processing error, before you can add the applicant to the register, you must still:

- be satisfied that the application is made by someone who appears to be the person named on the application
- be satisfied that the application was submitted before the deadline (for example, it was time- and date-stamped upon receipt)

send the applicant's personal identifiers to be verified

Depending on the point at which a processing error is identified, it may be the case that the results of the DWP matching process may not be returned in time to be able to be used to verify the identity of the applicant so that they can be added to the register in time to vote, or in the event that the DWP match cannot verify the applicant's identity, there will be insufficient time for local data matching and/or the documentary exceptions process to take place. In these circumstances you may also proceed to local data matching and/or the documentary exceptions process before you receive the result of the DWP match. If you use the documentary exceptions process and an applicant provides you with evidence, you are only permitted to retain this if it ends up needing to be kept as evidence used to determine an application which eventually returned a negative match result.

1 Where the IER Digital Service returns a positive match, the documentary evidence is unnecessary and must be destroyed. You will therefore also need to have processes in place to securely destroy documents where necessary. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains more information on document retention.

1. Regulation 29ZB(3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 5 June 2023

Book traversal links for Dealing with processing errors

Managing the verification of applications received close to an election registration deadline

The exceptions process

The exceptions process

The exceptions process

There will be some applicants who cannot supply the required personal identifiers or cannot be matched against DWP records or against local data sources. Applicants who cannot supply some

or all of the required personal identifiers and cannot be matched must be asked to provide documentary evidence to prove their identity, this is known as the exceptions process. The exceptions process must be followed where applicants cannot supply some or all of the required personal identifiers and cannot be matched, or if an applicant cannot be matched against local data or the ERO chooses not to use this option. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for The exceptions process Dealing with processing errors How to use the exceptions process How to use the exceptions process How to use the exceptions process Where you require an applicant to provide documentary evidence, you should write to the applicant informing them that it has not been possible to establish their identity as required by law and asking them to supply documentary evidence to prove their identity in order to register. 1 You should be mindful of the impact of this on the applicant, for example, the elderly or vulnerable or those for whom is not their first language. The letter should list the types and quantity of evidence that must be provided. It may also set a deadline date for the applicant to respond. A deadline will be helpful when deciding to reject an application because no response has been received. The time given to respond is at your discretion; however, it should allow the applicant reasonable time to locate and provide the documents required. 1. Regulation 26B Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for How to use the exceptions process The exceptions process Should applicants submit copies or original documents? Should applicants submit copies or original documents? Should applicants submit copies or original documents? In the first instance, you should request that the applicant provide photocopies of the evidence. Any copies of documents provided by applicants or taken by you of original documents should be stored securely in the same way as application forms. Applicants may bring either copies or original documents to your office in person if they don't want to send them through the post. You must be satisfied that the documents or copies provided to you appear to be genuine. Where you have a doubt as to whether a copy is genuine or where the copy is of such poor quality that you cannot make an assessment of the document, you may ask the applicant to present the original document(s) in person at your office or to send original documents to you to be copied and returned. You should be aware that you would become responsible for the secure transit of the document in the latter case. Where you have doubt as to whether an original document is genuine, you may ask the applicant to provide alternative documentary evidence in the first instance. Where alternative documentary evidence is not available, you should direct the applicant to the attestation process or reject the application. Where documentary evidence does not appear to be genuine, you should advise the applicant of the penalties for supplying false information and inform your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) that false information may have been supplied. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Should applicants submit copies or original documents? How to use the exceptions process Acceptable document types for the exceptions process Acceptable document types for the exceptions process Acceptable document types for the exceptions process In all cases the documents required to successfully establish an applicant's identity should refer to the applicant by name. The types and quantities of documents required to successfully establish an applicant's identity are as follows: any one document from table 1 one document from table 2 and two additional documents from either table 2 or table 3 four documents from table 3 Table 1: Primary identification documents Document Notes Passport Any current passport Biometric residence permit UK issued only EEA Identity Card Must still be valid Photo card part of a current driving licence UK/Isle of

Man/Channel Islands (full or provisional) Northern Ireland Electoral ID card Table 2: Trusted Government Documents Document Notes Old style paper version of a current driving licence UK only Current photo driving licence Any other than UK and Crown Dependencies Birth certificate UK and Crown Dependencies only Marriage/Civil Partnership certificate UK and Crown Dependencies only Adoption Certificate UK and Crown Dependencies only Firearms Licence UK and Crown Dependencies only Police Bail Sheet UK and Crown Dependencies only Table 3: Financial and Social History Documents Document Notes Issue Date and Validity Mortgage Statement UK, Crown Dependencies or EEA Issued in the last 12 months Bank or Building Society Statement UK, Crown Dependencies or EEA Issued in the last 3 months Bank or Building Society account opening confirmation letter UK and Crown Dependencies Issued in the last 3 months Credit card statement UK, Crown Dependencies or EEA Issued in the last 3 months Financial statement, e.g. pension or endowment UK, Crown Dependencies or EEA Issued in the last 12 months Council Tax statement UK and Crown Dependencies Issued in the last 12 months Utility Bill – not mobile phone bill UK and Crown Dependencies Issued in the last 3 months P45 or P60 statement UK and Crown Dependencies Issued in the last 12 months Benefit statement e.g. Child Benefit, Pension UK and Crown Dependencies Issued in the last 3 months Central or local government, government agency, or local council document giving entitlement, e.g. from DWP, Job Centre Plus, HMRC UK and Crown Dependencies Issued in the last 3 months For information on the document retention period for documents received as part of an application, including under the exceptions process and for what should be reflected in your document retention policy see our guidance on document retention . We have produced template notices and letters which you may use when undertaking the exceptions process. Last updated: 5 June 2023 Book traversal links for Acceptable document types for the exceptions process Should applicants submit copies or original documents? Document authenticity checks Document authenticity checks Document authenticity checks The purpose of documents being provided in support of an application is to allow you to satisfy yourself as to the identity of the person making the application and that they are the person named in the application. You will therefore need to be satisfied that a document provided to you for this purpose is genuine. The Home Office has produced guidance on examining identity documents. It covers: the security features in identity documents how identity documents are forged how to detect basic forgeries General tips on what to look for when determining if a document is genuine can be found on the website of the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure. The following table provides information on where guidance for checking particular documents that may be used for the verification of an applicant's identity can be found. It only covers the documents for which guidance is available: Table 1: Primary identification documents Document Resources Any current passport Images and security features of all EU passports can be found on: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/prado/en/prado-start-page.html> Images of passports issued by the majority of countries are available on the following website: <http://www.edisontd.net/> Biometric residence permit (UK issued only) Images and security features are included in the following guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biometric-residence-permits-applicant-and-sponsor-information> EEA identity card Images and security features can be found on: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/prado/en/prado-start-page.html> Current driving licence – photo card with counterpart; full or provisional (UK/Isle of Man/Channel Islands) A guide to the photo card part of the licence can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/changes-to-the-driving-licence-and-categories#your->

licence-explained Table 2: Trusted Government Documents Document Resources Current photo driving licence (Any other than UK and Crown Dependencies) Images and security features for EU licences can be found on:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/prado/en/prado-start-page.html> Birth certificate (UK and Crown Dependencies only) A guidance document on UK birth certificates is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/birth-certificates-and-the-full-birth-certificate-policy/birth-certificates-and-the-full-birth-certificate-policy> Adoption certificate (UK and Crown Dependencies only) Examples are included in the HM Passport Office Adoption Order Note for Parents Firearms licence (UK and Crown Dependencies only) The format of firearms certificates can be found in The Firearm Rules 1998 Police bail sheet (UK and Crown Dependencies only) There is no standard police bail sheet. If you have doubts as to the authenticity of the document, you can contact the issuing police force. You could also contact the local police force(s) for your area to obtain sample bail sheets. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Document authenticity checks Acceptable document types for the exceptions process Determining applications made through the exceptions process Determining applications made through the exceptions process Determining applications made through the exceptions process An application cannot be determined until a complete application has been made. An application using the exceptions process is not complete until the applicant has provided satisfactory documentary evidence to you. Once satisfactory documentary evidence has been provided you should determine the application, provided they have satisfied the other eligibility criteria for registration. If an applicant does not respond to your request to supply documentary evidence, you may reject the application and inform the applicant of this in writing. An applicant who has established their identity to the ERO through the use of documentary evidence according to the framework set out in this guidance should, provided they have satisfied the other eligibility criteria for registration, have their application positively determined. You have the discretion to reject applications where the application is obviously false (e.g. the applicant has given an address which has clearly been fabricated or does not exist). In these cases you do not need to undertake the exceptions process. Where an applicant provides documentary evidence that appears to be false, you may either ask the applicant to provide an attestation in support of their application or reject the application. If an applicant cannot provide the quantity and types of documentary evidence set out in this guidance, they should be asked to provide an attestation in support of their application. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Determining applications made through the exceptions process Document authenticity checks The attestation process The attestation process The attestation process Where an applicant cannot prove their identity by providing documentary evidence to the type and quantity required by the exceptions process, you should write to them informing them of this and asking them to provide an attestation in support of their application. Attestation is the final option in the verification of identity process. Applicants can only use attestation to establish their identity once all the other verification stages of DWP matching, local data matching (where appropriate) and the exceptions process have been undertaken and it has not been possible to verify their identity. 1 1. Regulation 26B(5) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for The attestation process Determining applications made through the exceptions process How to use the attestation process How to use the attestation process How to use the attestation process You must communicate the legislative

requirements for an attestation to the applicant. 1 You could either design a form containing the necessary legal statements and requirements for an attestation or set the detail out in the letter to the applicant. You should also provide examples of a person of good standing to help the applicant to identify a suitable attester. You should advise the applicant that an attester is not permitted to charge for providing an attestation. If an applicant submits an attestation which contains all of the required information for an attestation you should accept it as valid. You may wish to consider setting a deadline date for the applicant to respond. This will help you if you decide to reject an application because no response has been received. The period of time given to applicants to respond is at your discretion. However, you should allow a reasonable amount of time for the applicant to source and return their attestation. You should not determine an application until a complete application has been made. An application requiring the use of the attestation process is not considered complete until the applicant provides a satisfactory attestation establishing their identity. An attestation may be delivered to your office by hand or by post. Delivery by electronic means, such as email is not acceptable. Where an applicant is not physically able to deliver their attestation to you, you may choose send a member of staff to the applicant's registered address to collect the attestation in person. The attester is required to supply their electoral number as part of their attestation. 2 You should be aware that you may receive requests from potential attestors to supply this information. 1. Regulation 26B(6) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26B(6)(d) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 2 September 2020 Book traversal links for How to use the attestation process The attestation process The requirements of the attestation process The requirements of the attestation process The requirements of the attestation process When you receive an attestation, you should ask the following questions to assess whether the attestation meets the requirements of legislation: Question – Has the attester: Notes Answer stated the applicant is the person named in the application? this would be confirmed by written statement and attester signing the attestation Yes/No confirmed they are aware of the penalty for providing false information? this would be confirmed by written statement and attester signing the attestation Yes/No confirmed they are not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant? this would be confirmed by written statement and attester signing the attestation Yes/No given their full name? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their date of birth? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their electoral number? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their occupation? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No dated the attestation? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No signed the attestation? this should be written on the attestation Yes/No If the answer to all of these questions is yes then the applicant has provided a complete attestation. If one or more of the questions are answered with a no, then the attestation is not complete and the applicant must be directed to ask the attester to supply the missing information. If an attester cannot supply the missing information, the applicant should be told that they must seek an attestation from another source, otherwise their application will be rejected. You may wish to set a deadline date for this. Last updated: 11 August 2021 Book traversal links for The requirements of the attestation process How to use the attestation process Is the attestation valid? Is the attestation valid? Is the attestation valid? When a complete attestation is received, you must assess whether

the attestation is valid. To do this, you should ask the following questions. Is the attester a 'person of good standing in the community'? Is the attester registered to vote in a local authority area in England or Wales? Has the attester signed fewer than two attestations since, whichever is the most recent, either the last publication of the annual register, or the attester was first added to the register?

Good standing There is no precise definition of good standing; however, for purposes of an attestation, you should consider it to mean someone who has credentials that can be checked and would suffer professional or reputational damage if they were to provide a false attestation. The list in the table below is not definitive but is intended to illustrate which professions could be described as of good standing:

Examples of professions which could be described as of good standing
 accountant
 airline pilot
 articulated clerk of a limited company
 assurance agent of recognised company
 bank/building society official
 barrister
 chairman/director of limited company
 chiropodist
 commissioner of oaths
 civil servant (permanent)
 dentist
 director/manager of a VAT-registered charity
 director/manager/personnel officer of a VAT-registered company
 engineer (with professional qualifications)
 financial services intermediary (e.g. a stockbroker or insurance broker)
 fire service official
 funeral director
 insurance agent (full time) of a recognised company
 journalist
 Justice of the Peace
 legal secretary (fellow or associate member of the Institute of Legal Secretaries and PAs)
 licensee of public house
 local government officer
 manager/personnel officer (of a limited company)
 medical professional
 member, associate or fellow of a professional body
 Merchant Navy officer
 minister of a recognised religion (including Christian Science)
 nurse (RGN and RMN)
 officer of the armed services
 optician
 paralegal (certified paralegal, qualified paralegal or associate member of the Institute of Paralegals)
 person with honours (an OBE or MBE, for example)
 pharmacist
 photographer (professional)
 police officer
 Post Office official
 publically elected representative (MP, Councillor, MEP, etc)
 president/secretary of a recognised organisation
 Salvation Army officer
 social worker
 solicitor
 surveyor
 teacher, lecturer
 trade union officer
 travel agent (qualified)
 valuer or auctioneer (fellows and associate members of the incorporated society)
 Warrant Officers and Chief Petty Officers

It is important to note that an unemployed/retired person who is of good standing in the community is not precluded from attesting an application. You must judge each attestation on its individual merits rather than apply a blanket policy. You must assess whether the attestation satisfies the relevant requirements, by answering two further questions:

Is the attester registered to vote in a local authority area in England or Wales? If the applicant's address is situated in a local authority in England or Wales, the attester must be registered to vote in a local authority area in England or Wales. 1

If the attester's address is in the same local authority area as the applicant, you should check your electoral register and your electoral management software to check that the attester satisfies this condition. If the attester's address is not in the same local authority area as the applicant, you should contact the attester's ERO to check if the attester fulfils these conditions.

Has the attester signed fewer than two attestations since either the last publication of the register or since the attester was added to it, whichever is the most recent? Attestors are limited to signing no more than two attestations in any one electoral year (normally from 1 December to 30 November), or since their entry was added to the register in that local authority area, whichever is the shortest period. This allows the attester's ERO to confidently supply the required information without being required to account for attestations made whilst the attester was registered elsewhere. Election management software should record each time an elector has signed an attestation.

Where the limit has been reached, you should reject the attestation for this reason. This does not prevent the applicant from seeking another attestation from a different elector. You should process attestations in the order they are received. This means that if the attester fulfils all the conditions, the attestation will be accepted, and so the attester's ERO will be able to record this against the elector's record. This will then count towards this elector's total allowable attestations, in case they sign another attestation in the future. 1. Regulation 26B (6)(c)(ii) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 11 August 2021 [Book traversal links for Is the attestation valid?](#) The requirements of the attestation process Determining an application made through the attestation process Determining an application made through the attestation process Determining an application made through the attestation process If you have answered yes to all three of the conditions for an attestation to be valid and therefore successfully established the identity of the applicant, you should determine the application provided they have satisfied the other eligibility criteria for registration. If the answer is no to one or more of the questions, then the application is not valid and the applicant cannot be registered. The applicant should be told that they must seek an attestation from another source, otherwise their application will be rejected. You may wish to set a deadline date for this. For information on the document retention period for documents received as part of an application, including under the attestation process, and for more information on document retention policies see our [guidance on document retention](#) . We have produced template notices and letters which you may use when undertaking the attestation process. Last updated: 23 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Determining an application made through the attestation process](#) Is the attestation valid? What happens if the IER Digital Service is unavailable? What happens if the IER Digital Service is unavailable? What happens if the IER Digital Service is unavailable? The ERO must, where it is possible to do so, use the IER Digital Service to verify an applicant's identity. However there may be times where the system fails, or some other scenario prevents the ERO from accessing this service either to send or receive information. You need to be able to receive and process applications made online in the event of a service outage. You should have a contingency plan in place and this should be incorporated into your existing business continuity plans and your organisational disaster recovery plans. Both your business continuity plan and your organisational disaster recovery plans should include the requirement to maintain contact with the IER Digital Service as appropriate and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The most appropriate course of action will be to wait until the service becomes available again. However, where you need to make an urgent determination of applications, for example immediately prior to a registration deadline and you have made reasonable efforts to access the IER Digital Service and not been successful you should contact the IER Support Centre who will advise on the available options for accessing application data. Following advice from the IER Support Centre, you should consider whether or not to undertake local contingency actions. Last updated: 24 August 2020 [Book traversal links for What happens if the IER Digital Service is unavailable?](#) Determining an application made through the attestation process Actions to take if you cannot access the IER Digital Service Actions to take if you cannot access the IER Digital Service Actions to take if you cannot access the IER Digital Service Determine the source of the outage You should contact your organisation's IT department in the first instance. If the issue does not appear to be a local one, you should contact the IER Digital Service to access

information on the status of the IER Digital Service. Assess the problem You should determine if the service outage will have a critical impact on voter registration. Factors to consider include: the proximity of any registration deadlines the volume of outstanding applications to be processed the projected resolution time of the service outage what resources are available to them to carry out the registration process in a timely fashion For example, an outage during the ordinary rolling registration monthly cycle where an election deadline is not imminent may not be deemed to have a critical impact, therefore applications could be determined after the service has been resumed. Report the problem You should report local issues to your organisation's IT department or your EMS supplier if the problem appears to be EMS based. You should check for any communications from the IER Support Centre and, if no information on your issue, report it to the IER Support Centre. The Support Centre will discuss with you the potential solutions and will have measures in place to resolve many of the most likely issues around local connectivity to the IER service. Decide whether to deploy contingencies You should use the information you have gathered under the previous steps to decide whether to invoke your contingency plans. Record your actions You should make a record of any issue, whether you implemented contingency plans, what actions you took, and what the outcomes were. This information may prove useful in the event of any challenge to your decisions. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Actions to take if you cannot access the IER Digital Service What happens if the IER Digital Service is unavailable? Contingency planning for verifying identity Contingency planning for verifying identity Contingency planning for verifying identity If you cannot access the IER Digital Service in time to determine applications before a deadline, you will need to use a local method of verification these are: matching applicants against local data the exceptions process the attestation process (only where an applicant cannot prove their identity by providing documentary evidence required by the exceptions process) You should decide which approach is most appropriate in the individual circumstances. Whichever approach is taken, you must be satisfied as to the applicant's identity before they can allow an application. You should establish in advance which contingency method(s) you intend to employ and what resources they require to enable them. This should be documented in your contingency plans. Resource and IT requirements should be logged as critical requirements in your organisation's disaster recovery plans and you should make provision for the necessary resources to implement them. You should continue to check the progress and resolution time for the problems which initiated the contingency process, in order that you can revert back to the IER Digital Service as soon as these are resolved. Last updated: 24 August 2020 Book traversal links for Contingency planning for verifying identity Actions to take if you cannot access the IER Digital Service Contingency plans for receiving online applications Contingency plans for receiving online applications Contingency plans for receiving online applications If you experience difficulty with retrieving or viewing online applications, you should notify your EMS supplier and if necessary, the IER Support Centre . You should inform the IER Support Centre of any registration deadlines that are imminent. They will make an assessment of the potential impact and will make every effort to provide you with alternative means of accessing application data. The nature of this assistance will be dependent on circumstances and the Support Centre will provide full advice on the implementation of the proposed solution. You should be aware that circumstances may mean that it is not possible for online applications to be verified against DWP data in the event of a service outage and you should ensure that your contingency plans are also capable of being used for

the receipt of online applications from the IER Support Centre as, for example, there may be the need to use the exceptions process to check the identity of online applications. Last updated: 24 August 2020 [Book traversal links for Contingency plans for receiving online applications](#) [Contingency planning for verifying identity](#) [Determining applications to register](#) [Determining applications to register](#) [Determining applications to register](#) When you receive an application, you must make a decision on whether the applicant is entitled to be registered on the relevant date . This is called determining an application. Your decision on an applicant's entitlement to register must be based on the following: Are you satisfied that: the application has been made by the person named on the application? the application includes all of the statutory requirements? 1 the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for registration and is not disqualified? You should make a decision on an applicant's entitlement to be registered as soon as you can after the application is received. More information on the statutory requirements can be found in our guidance on how individuals can register to vote , and special category electors . 1. Regulation 26 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 6 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Determining applications to register](#) [Contingency plans for receiving online applications](#) When is an application deemed to be made? When is an application deemed to be made? When is an application deemed to be made? You must determine applications for registration based on whether an applicant meets the requirements for registration and whether or not they are disqualified from registration on the relevant date. 1 The relevant date varies depending on the way the application is made. For an application on a paper form it is the day the application is made, 2 i.e. when the form including all the required information is completed by the applicant. For online applications it is the date the IER Digital Service records the application as being made, the electronic date stamp will be included on the information sent to you. For telephone and in-person applications, which are allowed at your discretion, it is the time that all the information required for the application has been recorded and the applicant has declared the truth of the information. Regardless of the relevant date on a paper form, you must have received the application to register by the appropriate deadline for it to be included in the next update to the register. 1. Section 10ZC(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 4(6) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 6 October 2020 [Book traversal links for When is an application deemed to be made?](#) [Determining applications to register](#) What action can I take if I am unsure about the information in an application? What action can I take if I am unsure about the information in an application? What action can I take if I am unsure about the information in an application? You may have reason to doubt the authenticity of the information provided in the application or of any documentary evidence supplied in support of the application. You do not have to take an application at face value. You can: ask the applicant for additional evidence if you consider it necessary to verify their identity or make a decision on an applicant's entitlement to register 1 take an application to a hearing Asking an applicant for additional evidence Types of evidence you could request include: to verify identity: 2 documents such as a passport, identity card, photocard driving licence further examples are included in our guidance on verification, exceptions and attestation processes to verify age and nationality: 3 birth certificate certificate of naturalisation citizenship certificate statutory declaration to verify residence: 4 evidence to satisfy you that the applicant is resident at the qualifying address on the relevant date If you doubt

whether an applicant or elector is legally resident, you should request checks of a person's immigration status against Home Office records. The fact that you may request checks of a person's immigration status against government records is included on the registration application form. Further guidance on this process and contact details are available by contacting the Home Office: ICESSVECWorkflow@homeoffice.gov.uk . You will be asked to complete a template which will be provided – please complete and return the section below the heading 'Subject 1' to the same email address. The Home Office have requested one template per subject per email, and that ER be added to the subject header for each email to ensure that it goes into the correct folder for a response. The Home Office will respond within five working days unless a file is required, in which case it will respond within ten working days. Special categories of data Applicants must provide their nationality or nationalities, or, if they are not able to, the reason they are not able to do so. Under data protection legislation, nationality data is classed as a special category of personal data because it may reveal an individual's racial or ethnic origin. In order to process nationality data, you must have in place a policy document to allow you as data controller to process special categories of personal data. This document will need to reflect your local processing procedures for complying with data protection principals and your policies for the retention and erasure of personal data. This must be kept until six months after processing ceases. This policy document should be reviewed and updated at appropriate times and be made available to the ICO on request. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further information on special categories of data and the need for a policy document. Taking an application to a hearing If you are unable to resolve these doubts through the process of verifying the identity of the applicant or any further correspondence with the potential elector, including through the supply of any evidence obtained under your power to require evidence of age and nationality, you should proceed to a hearing. Hearings may also be required by a person who objects to an application or by an applicant who receives notice that their application is to be disallowed. 5 Further information on the process can be found in our guidance on hearings . 1. Regulation 26B(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26B (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 24 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 26B(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulations 29(5C) and (7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 23 June 2023 Book traversal links for What action can I take if I am unsure about the information in an application? When is an application deemed to be made? When can entitlement to be registered be determined? When can entitlement to be registered be determined? When can entitlement to be registered be determined? You should determine entitlement as soon as is practicable. If possible, you should make your decision by the relevant deadline for the next register update. This will either be a notice of alteration or the publication of the revised register. Making a decision quickly will ensure that your register is kept as up-to-date as possible. If you decide that a person is entitled to be registered, the application must be listed and made available for objections for five working days. Further information can be found in our guidance on the objections process . You must not list any applications accompanied by an application for anonymous registration . This is because an anonymous registration application cannot be objected to. 1 You can therefore allow an anonymous registration application as soon as you have made a decision that the application meets all of the requirements for registration. What happens after the five day objection period?

After five clear working days have passed from the day the application was listed, and if no objections have been received, you can determine/allow the application without a hearing. If an objection has been made you must consider it before determining/allowing the application. If you decide an objection to be without merit you can determine/allow the application. 2 If you decide that the objector is not entitled to object, you can disallow the objection. You must inform the objector that you have not allowed their objection. 3 If not, the determination of the application will be made alongside the determination of the objection. Further information on the process can be found in our guidance on objections . Do applications to register to vote have to be acknowledged? There is no legal requirement for an application to be acknowledged. However, you do have discretion to send an acknowledgement. In all cases, you are required to send a confirmation if the application is successful. 1. Regulation 29(4A) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 29(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for When can entitlement to be registered be determined? What action can I take if I am unsure about the information in an application? Allowing applications for registration Allowing applications for registration Where a successful application is made in response to an ITR Where you determine that a person is entitled to be registered, you must add the person to the register at the next opportunity. This will either be a notice of alteration or the publication of the revised register. You must send them a written confirmation letter which includes: the date that they will be added to the register confirmation that they will be removed from the register at any previous address they have lived at, if that address was included on the application You must use the prescribed letter 'Confirmation of a successful application (made in response to an ITR)' approved by the Minister for the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and made available by the Commission. The letter must not be amended. 1 The letter templates are available on our registration forms and letters webpage. You must send the confirmation letter before the applicant is added to the register (for example, before publication of the next notice of alteration or before publication of the revised register, whichever applies). 2 You can deliver the confirmation letter to the applicant: by hand by post, or by e-mail 3 Where an unsolicited application is successful (not in response to an ITR) You must add the person to the register at the next opportunity. This will either be a notice of alteration or the publication of the revised register. You must send them a written confirmation letter which includes: the date that they will be added to the register confirmation that they will be removed from the register at any previous address they have lived at, if they included that address on the application the contact details of the ERO and a request that the ERO is told if the person named as the applicant is not resident at the address You must use the prescribed letter 'Confirmation of a successful application (unsolicited)' approved by the Minister for the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and made available by the Commission. The letter must not be amended. 4 The letter templates are available on our registration forms and letters webpage. You must send the confirmation letter before the applicant is added to the register (i.e. before publication of the next notice of alteration or before publication of the revised register, whichever is appropriate). 5 You can deliver the confirmation letter to the applicant: by hand, or by post 6 This letter cannot be delivered electronically. For further information on the deadlines for inclusion in a notice of alteration or the revised register see our

guidance on maintaining the register throughout the year. 1. Regulation 29(2BF) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29(2BA) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 29(2BB) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 29(2BF) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 29(2BA) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 29(2BC)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 10 March 2022 Book traversal links for Allowing applications for registration When can entitlement to be registered be determined? Disallowing applications for registration Disallowing applications for registration Disallowing applications for registration You must disallow an application where: it contains information meaning that it cannot be successful – for example, the applicant does not qualify, or there is insufficient information in the application to allow it after you have taken all the necessary steps to obtain it – for example, the application is incomplete or there is information missing, or the applicant's identity could not be verified If you make a decision that an application for registration cannot be allowed, you must send a notice to the applicant stating that, in your opinion, the application cannot be allowed because: 1 the particulars of the application are such that they do not entitle the applicant to succeed, or the matter has been concluded by a court decision If you have not allowed an application, you must also give the applicant the opportunity to ask for a hearing. You must inform the applicant that unless notice is received from them within three working days requesting a hearing, the application may be disallowed. If you receive no request for a hearing, you may disallow the application and no further action is required. 2 If you do receive a request, a hearing must be held. Further information on the process can be found in our guidance on hearings . 1. Regulation 29(6) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 6 October 2020 Book traversal links for Disallowing applications for registration Allowing applications for registration Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Processing applications and other amendments throughout the year Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Processing applications and other amendments throughout the year Table 1 - Combinations resulting in positive matches Last updated: 23 June 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Processing applications and other amendments throughout the year Disallowing applications for registration Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year You are required to maintain the register throughout the year. A proactive approach is required to ensure that the register is accurate and complete, all eligible persons are on the register and that ineligible people are removed. This section of the guidance covers how you should deal with amendments to entries in the register, reviews of registration, objections to registrations, the hearings process and deleting entries from the register. Any elector's circumstances may change after they have been added to the register. For example, they may gain or lose a nationality that affects their entitlement to vote in certain polls, or they may change their name. This section will explain how to process these changes and how to proactively identify when these changes occur. Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Processing applications and other amendments throughout the year Processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register preference Processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register

preference An elector can change their opt-out preference at any time by making a request to you. The request must contain their full name, address and an indication of whether they wish to be included in or omitted from the edited register. 1 The request can be made verbally or in writing. Where the information is provided verbally, you should make a written note of this for your records. If a request is made in person or by telephone, you can confirm the change verbally. However, if the request is made in writing, you can choose to write back to the elector confirming that the change has been made but you are not required to do so. If you decide to confirm a change to an elector's preference in writing, you should also tell the elector when a revised version of the edited register reflecting the change will be published, and how to contact you if the information in the notice is not correct. 2 A request to change an edited register preference can be made at any time, but it must be received 14 calendar days before publication to be included in the next update. 3 What is an Article 21 request? If you receive an Article 21 request you should treat it as a request to opt out of the edited register on a permanent basis (or until further notice). Article 21 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) gives individuals a right to object to processing for direct marketing purposes and you are under a legal duty to comply with a valid request. The request has to be made by the elector themselves. A request should not be treated as valid if you receive it from a third party, such as a friend, family member or company alleging to be acting on the elector's behalf, unless you are satisfied that the elector has authorised the third party to make an Article 21 request on their behalf. If you are not satisfied, you should contact the third party and ask them to provide evidence that they have authorisation from the elector to make a request under Article 21 on their behalf. If this is not provided, you should make enquiries to the elector in question and should obtain the elector's confirmation of authorisation. Only once you are satisfied that the elector themselves has authorised the third party to send the Article 21 notice can you treat the request as valid. 1. Regulation 93A(2) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 93A(4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 93(3B)(a) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 10 March 2021 Book traversal links for Processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register preference Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year Processing a change to an elector's nationality Processing a change to an elector's nationality Where an elector indicates that their nationality has changed, you should check whether this affects their entitlement to vote. If the change does impact on their entitlement, they would need to make a fresh application to register. For example, if an elector who becomes a British citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of another Commonwealth country was previously registered only in the register of local government electors, they must make a new application in order to be added to the register of UK Parliamentary electors. As this constitutes a new application, the elector's details will need to go through the whole application, verification and determination process again. If you are informed of such a change in response to a canvass communication, you should invite the person to make a fresh application to register, as a person cannot be registered through a canvass communication. If you are not satisfied as to any applicant or elector's nationality, you have the power to require the applicant or elector to provide documentary evidence confirming their nationality. 1 In the circumstance set out above, where a change in nationality

positively affects an elector's entitlement to vote, you should request documentary evidence of the change of nationality. Citizenship ceremonies You should regularly inspect lists held by the registrar for information on who has become a British citizen through citizenship ceremonies, as part of your power to check local records. You are entitled to inspect and make copies of these records, and could use them, for example, to identify potential new electors and issue them with an invitation to register. Information on applying to register to vote could also be given to the registrar to include in the pack they make available to those receiving British citizenship. In order to demonstrate that all information obtained complies with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner, you should maintain records of the local records you have inspected and the action you have taken on the basis of the information you have received. We have produced guidance on inspecting records, including what details should be recorded to help you demonstrate that you are complying with your obligations under data protection legislation. Under data protection legislation, nationality data is classed as a special category of personal data because it may reveal an individual's racial or ethnic origin. Data protection legislation prohibits the processing of special categories of personal data unless an additional lawful basis, beyond those for the main purposes of processing data, is met. The appropriate lawful basis for processing special categories of personal data for electoral purposes would be that it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest and with a basis in UK law. The Data Protection Act 2018 requires that, in order to process nationality data, you must have in place a policy document which, amongst other things, must explain your local processing procedures and your policies for the retention and erasure of personal data. This policy document must be reviewed and updated at appropriate times, kept until six months after the processing ceases, and made available to the ICO on request.

1. Regulation 24(1) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 23 June 2023 Book traversal links for Processing a change to an elector's nationality Processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register preference Processing a change to an elector's name Processing a change to an elector's name An existing elector can apply to change their name on the register in two ways, either by submitting a change of name request 1 or by making a new application to register. If the elector submits a change of name request they must do so using the form approved by the Minister for the The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and made available by the Commission. This is available on our registration forms and letters webpage . The request must be in writing and include:

2 the applicant's full name the full name under which they are currently registered the date of the change of name the registration address a declaration by the applicant that the information provided in the application is true the date of the application documentary evidence in support of the change If a person is unable to provide suitable documentary evidence they must provide their date of birth and National Insurance number as part of their application. If they are not able to provide their date of birth or National Insurance number, they must provide the reason why they are not able to do so. 3 1. Regulation 26A Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 26A(1) and (4) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 26A(5) Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 10 March 2022 Book traversal links for Processing a change to an elector's

name Processing a change to an elector's nationality Documentary evidence to support a change of name Documentary evidence to support a change of name Documentary evidence provided by an elector should show a clear link between the name under which an applicant is currently registered and the name to which they wish to change the entry. Acceptable documents may include: marriage or civil partnership certificate overseas marriage or civil partnership certificate enrolled deed poll unenrolled deed poll or change of name deed statutory declaration or affidavit baptismal or confirmation certificate (for first names only) birth certificate certificate of naturalisation or registration adoption order/certificate This list is not exhaustive and it is for you to decide whether a document constitutes satisfactory proof of the change of name of the elector. Other documents that may be considered include: an amended birth certificate, this may occur if the holder had their forename changed within the first twelve months of their birth, or under some other circumstances an amended certificate of naturalisation, this may occur if the holder subsequently changed their name registration, or an adoption order/certificate if the document has been amended and includes both the former name and the newer altered name You should request copies of the evidence either by post or by electronic means. The applicant may attend your offices in person with either copies or original documents if they do not wish to send copies. Copies of documents provided by applicants, or taken by you of the original documents, must be stored securely in the same way as application forms. You must be satisfied that the documents or copies provided appear to be genuine. If you have any doubts, or if the copy is of such poor quality that you cannot make an assessment, you may ask the applicant to present the original document(s) to you in person or to send original documents to be copied and returned. However you should be aware that you would become responsible for the secure transit of the document. Where there has been more than one change of name, the applicant should provide sufficient documentary evidence to show a clear link between their name as currently shown on the register and the name to which they wish to change the entry. The following are examples of decisions that an ERO might take in determining a change of name application: An elector registered as John Smith would like to change his name on the register to John Smith-Brown. He provides a copy of a marriage certificate recording the marriage of John Smith and Alice Brown. The ERO considers this sufficient evidence, as the link can clearly be made between John Smith and John Smith-Brown from the surname of his wife. An elector registered as Lucy Jones would like to change her name on the register to Lucy Lewis. She provides a marriage certificate recording the marriage of Lucy Jones and Mike Green, and a deed poll proving Lucy Green's change of name to Lucy Lewis. The ERO considers this sufficient evidence, as while there is no direct link between Lucy Jones and Lucy Lewis, the link between each of these and Lucy Green has been made. An elector registered as Jane Grey would like to change her name on the register to Jane Walsh. She provides a marriage certificate recording the marriage of Jane Walsh and Thomas Grey. The ERO considers this sufficient evidence, as the link can clearly be made between Jane Grey and Jane Walsh from her maiden name. An elector registered as James Osborne would like to change his name on the register to James Smith. He provides a passport in the name of James Smith. The ERO does not consider this sufficient evidence, as it does not demonstrate the link between the two names. An elector registered as Michael Giggs would like to change his name on the register to Arthur Lucas. He provides a deed poll affirming the change of name of Michael Giggs to Arthur Lucas. The ERO considers this sufficient evidence, as the link between the two names is demonstrated. Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Documentary

evidence to support a change of name Processing a change to an elector's name
Processing an elector's change of address Processing an elector's change of address
To change the address at which they are registered, an elector needs to make a new application to register. What if the elector has moved within my registration area?
If you are notified directly by an elector of a change of address within your registration area you should provide them – and any other electors who have moved with them – with information about how to make a new application to register. You should also make enquiries to establish whether there are other new residents, or whether any previous residents have moved out. Once you have identified the name and address of a person who is not registered and you have reason to believe that they may be eligible, the invitation to register requirements apply. 1 If you are notified on an application to register that the applicant has ceased to reside at another address in the same registration area, and the application at the new address is successful, you should remove them from the register at their previous address. The confirmation letter you are required to send in response to a successful application to register must, in all cases where a previous address at which the applicant no longer resides has been given, confirm that their register entry relating to that address will be removed. 2 What should I do if the elector has moved into another registration area? If an elector has made an application for registration in another area, and has indicated that they no longer reside at an address in your area, you will receive a notification from the IER Digital Service when the new ERO has allowed the application. You can then follow the deletions process . Once you have identified the name and address of a person who is not registered and you have reason to believe that they may be eligible, the invitation to register requirements apply. 3 1. Regulation 31J(2)(a), Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29(2BD)(b)(i), Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 9E(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 16 November 2020 Book traversal links for Processing an elector's change of address Documentary evidence to support a change of name Deleting an elector from the register Deleting an elector from the register A person who is registered stays registered unless the ERO determines that: 1 the person was not entitled to be registered in respect of the address the person has ceased to be resident at the address or has otherwise ceased to satisfy the conditions for registration the person was registered as the result of an application for registration made by someone else (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided and who has declared that the information on the application is true) or the person's entry has been altered as the result of an application for a change of name made by someone else If you become aware of information that causes you to suspect that one of the conditions in the list above may be met, or if you receive a valid objection to a person's registration, 2 you must consider whether to remove a person's entry on the register. Where you have determined that someone is no longer entitled to be registered, they must be deleted from the register. 3 You should not retain any documents relating to a particular elector for more than 12 months after they have been removed from the register unless there is a legal challenge or investigation, as this is the usual time limit for any prosecutions. Special provisions apply to special category electors 1. Section 10ZE(1) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 10ZE(5) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 10ZE(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Deleting an elector from the register Processing an elector's change of address Making deletions from the register without

a review Making deletions from the register without a review In order to remove a person's entry from the register you must make a determination that they are no longer entitled to be registered. You may proceed to make this determination without any further evidence or review only in one or more of the following circumstances. 1 you receive notification via the IER Digital Service that a person registered in your area has made an application for registration elsewhere and has indicated that they have ceased to reside at the address in your area, and the new ERO has allowed the application you receive notification from another ERO that a person registered in your area has made an application for registration elsewhere and has indicated that they have ceased to reside at the address in your area, and the new ERO has allowed the application you have information from at least two sources that supports a determination that a person is no longer entitled to be registered at the address you have been given a death certificate in respect of the elector the registrar of births and deaths has notified you that the elector has died you are satisfied the elector is deceased after receiving information: as a result of the canvass (for example, a returned canvass communication with an elector marked as deceased) from a close relative (spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the elector). This can be provided in person, by telephone or in writing but must include: the full name and address of the elector who has died; the full name and address of the person providing the information; their relationship to the deceased; and a statement that the person providing the information is aware of the penalty for providing false information 2 from a care home manager of a registered care home. 3 This can be provided in person, by telephone or in writing but must include: the full name and address of the elector who has died; the full name and address of the person providing the information; and, a statement that the person providing the information is aware of the penalty for providing information 4 from the records of the council that appointed you (and, if you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier authority, the records of the relevant county council) from a person or organisation providing services to the council that appointed you (including, if you are an ERO for the district council in a two-tier authority, the relevant county council). you are notified on an application that an elector has ceased to reside at another address in the same registration area, and the application at the new address is successful, you must amend the elector's entry to remove them from the register at their previous address. 5 Where information is provided in person or by telephone, you must record the information in writing or in data form. In all other circumstances you must carry out a review before deleting a person's entry on the register. 6 1. Regulation 31C, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 13D, RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000 in England and Wales ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 13D, RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Section 10ZE(1)(a) and (2) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Regulation 31D(1), Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) Last updated: 27 March 2023 Book traversal links for Making deletions from the register without a review Deleting an elector from the register Deletions supported by information from at least two sources that an elector is no longer resident or eligible Deletions supported by information from at least two sources that an elector is no longer resident or eligible You may make a determination that a person's entitlement to be registered has ceased without carrying out a review where if you receive information which supports this from at least two sources. 1 However, even where you are in receipt of

two sources of information which are consistent, you should nevertheless still be satisfied that a person is not entitled to be registered before you make a determination. If you are in doubt as to whether a person's entitlement to remain registered has ceased, you still have the option of obtaining additional information, or carrying out a review, before making your determination. The sources of information that you use should be robust and you should maintain a clear audit trail of the steps taken as part of the deletions process. Acceptable sources could include: a response to a canvass communication information from another resident at the address, notifying you that the elector is no longer resident information from someone else connected with the address, such as a landlord, notifying you that the elector is no longer resident an invitation to register being returned as undeliverable/return to sender/not at this address Such information would count as one source of information. If this is supported by local data, such as the individual being removed from the council tax account at that address, then that would be information from a second source which could support a determination that the elector is no longer resident. If you have been provided with information from a source other than the elector themselves you can attempt to contact the elector directly including by phone, email or post to make enquiries. A lack of response to an attempt to make contact with the elector, such as a letter that is returned as undeliverable or indicating that the elector is no longer resident could be such a source of information. The information on which a decision to delete an entry without a review is based must be from different sources. For example, two pieces of mail returned as undeliverable are unlikely to be information from two sources. In this case information from a different source would also be required before a determination could be made. Information arising from the canvass could include a name crossed off/marked as no longer resident in a response to a canvass communication where the elector is not marked as deceased, or a canvass communication sent by post being returned as undeliverable/return to sender/not at this address. In these cases, you would have evidence from one source and information from a second source would also be required before a determination to delete the elector could be made. You should take steps to establish whether there is information from other sources which could support a deletion. This could include checking local data such as council tax records, or attempting to make contact with the elector. Further information on the records which you can inspect can be found in our planning for registration guidance . 1. Regulation 31C(2)(b)(i) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 15 October 2020 Book traversal links for Deletions supported by information from at least two sources that an elector is no longer resident or eligible Making deletions from the register without a review Deletions supported by evidence that an elector has died Deletions supported by evidence that an elector has died You may delete an elector's entry from the register without a review if you have: 1 been given a death certificate in respect of the elector been notified by the registrar of births and deaths that an elector has died received information: as a result of the canvass (for example, a returned canvass communication with an elector marked as deceased) from the records of the council that appointed you (and, if you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier authority, the records of the relevant county council) from a person or organisation providing services to the council that appointed you (including, if you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier authority, the relevant county council). from a close relative (spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the elector). from a care home manager of a registered

care home 2 Where the information is provided by a close relative it must include: the full name and address of the elector who has died the full name and address of the person providing the information their relationship to the deceased a statement that the person providing the information is aware of the penalty for providing false information 3 Where the information is provided by a care home manager of a registered care home it must include: the full name and address of the elector who has died the full name and address of the person providing the information a statement that the person providing the information is aware of the penalty for providing false information 4 Information provided by a close relative or care home manager can be provided in writing, in person or by telephone. Where information is provided in person or by telephone, you must record the information in writing or in data form. Where you delete an elector's entry from the register because they have died, you should maintain an audit trail of the reasons for your actions. In relation to notifications from the registrar of births and deaths, you should bear in mind that a death must only be notified to the registrar responsible for the area in which the death occurred, and if an elector registered in your area dies elsewhere you are unlikely to receive formal notification. If you are informed that a person has died in any circumstance other than those listed, you will need to obtain a second source of information before you can remove the elector. For example, you could contact the registrar to obtain formal notification of the death, which would allow you to delete the entry without further information or a review. For further information see our guidance on the records which you can inspect. 1. Regulation 31C(2)(b)(ii) and (iii) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000 in England and Wales ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section 13D, RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 13D, RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020

Book traversal links for Deletions supported by evidence that an elector has died

Deletions supported by information from at least two sources that an elector is no longer resident or eligible

When will deletions from the register take effect? When will deletions from the register take effect? Once you have determined that a person is no longer entitled to remain registered at the address in question, you must remove their entry from the register and give effect to this on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. When deletions take effect will depend on when you have made your determination:

Type of register update	Date for determining alterations
Monthly notice of alteration	14 calendar days before publication
1 Election notices of alteration	the day before publication
2 Revised register following the canvass	the last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published
3 Revised register between canvasses	14 calendar days before the end of the month preceding the month when the revised register is due to be published
4 Once you have given effect to a deletion, you do not need to send written confirmation of your determination to the elector where the deletion is made as a result of:	5 information from two different sources

information from an acceptable source that an elector is deceased a notification through the IER Digital Service or another ERO that the person registered in your area has made an application for registration elsewhere and has indicated that they have ceased to reside at the address in your area, and the new ERO has allowed the application You may still choose to confirm the deletion if you think it might be helpful to do so, which could be done by email if you hold their email address. You should consider whether to send a canvass communication to the property to enable you to identify any potential new electors who may be resident

at that address. 1. Section 13A(2)(a) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 13B(1) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Section 13A(2) and (3) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Section 13A(2) and (3) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 31C Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) Last updated: 11 August 2021

[Book traversal links for When will deletions from the register take effect?](#) Deletions supported by evidence that an elector has died How can an elector who has been deleted from the register appeal? How can an elector who has been deleted from the register appeal? Where someone has been removed from the register, they have 14 calendar days beginning from the date of the decision to remove them from the register to appeal the decision. 1 The notice of appeal must be submitted to you and any other relevant party, together with the grounds of appeal. 2 You must then forward the notice to the county court which should be accompanied by: 3 a statement of the material facts which, in your opinion, have been established in the case your decision on the whole case and on any point specified as a ground of appeal Should you consider that any appeals are based on similar grounds, you must inform the appropriate county court of this to enable the court to consolidate the cases or select one as a test case. 4 1. Sections 56 and 57 RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 32(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulation 32(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulation 32(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 25 May 2021

[Book traversal links for How can an elector who has been deleted from the register appeal?](#) When will deletions from the register take effect? Registration reviews Registration reviews There are some circumstances where you can remove someone from the register without the need for a review. For more information see our guidance on deletions without a review. However, you have a duty to undertake a review if circumstances do not allow you to remove someone from the register without conducting a review of the entry. 1 Registration reviews help to ensure the register is as accurate as possible. You should monitor any local records you use to help identify where electors are no longer resident at an address. You have a duty to ensure that, far as is reasonably practicable, persons who are not entitled to be registered are not registered. 2 This includes any ordinary, anonymous or other special category electors. You can also undertake a review at any other time if you have reason to believe someone may not be entitled to be registered. Our guidance on inspecting other records sets out the records you are entitled to inspect – including data protection considerations – and these records may give you an indication whether someone is no longer resident at an address. For information on, and examples of, how some EROs are using existing data sources to help ensure that registers are as accurate and complete as possible, see our resource on Effective use of available data. Sharing good practice - Effective use of available data 1. Regulation 31D(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Section 10ZE(5)(b) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020

[Book traversal links for Registration reviews](#) How can an elector who has been deleted from the register appeal? The different types of registration review The different types of registration review There are three types of review. Type A review Type B review Type C review The choice of which option to use is at your discretion and will depend on the particular situation. In all cases, you must send a notice to the elector, containing the relevant information for the review type as set out in the guidance

for each type of review. For each type of review, the form of the notice to be given is not prescribed but the content is. Irrespective of which type of review you are undertaking, you must inform the elector of the grounds on which you are reviewing their registration.

1 1. Regulation 31D(4) Representation of People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 14 October 2020

Book traversal links for The different types of registration review

Registration reviews

Type A review

Type A review

Type A reviews should be undertaken when you are of the opinion that the elector either: is not, or was not, entitled to be registered, or has an entry in the register which results from, or was altered as a result of, an application made by another person (i.e. not the individual whose details are provided and who has declared that the information provided on the application is true). For example, if you receive information that a person is no longer resident at a particular address, and you have not been able to obtain a second source of evidence to support a deletion, you could undertake a type A review. The notice to the elector must state that: in your opinion the person is or was not entitled to be registered or has an entry in the register which results from or was altered as a result of an application made by another person, and give the reasons for your opinion

1 if the elector does not request a hearing within 14 calendar days beginning with the date of the notice, you may make a determination and remove them from the register if they have not requested a hearing within the 14 calendar day period they will have no right of appeal against any decision to remove them from the register after the 14 calendar day period, they may contact you to find out if they have been removed from the register

The 14 calendar day period runs from the date of the notice, so you should date the notice on the date it is sent. If within 14 calendar days the elector does not ask for a hearing, you must determine the review using the information you have and any submitted by the elector or any other party.

2 If you determine the elector is or was not entitled to be registered, or has an entry in the register which results from or was altered as a result of an application made by another person, you must remove the entry.

3 Notification of the outcome of a type A review

If the elector did not request a hearing or make representations, you are not required to notify them of the outcome of the review, but may do so if you consider it appropriate. If you do notify the elector, you must state that there is no right of appeal. If the elector has made representations or requested a hearing you must notify them of the outcome of the review and state whether there is a right of appeal , including:

4 the time within which notice of appeal must be given any other information about the appeal that you consider appropriate

1. Regulation 31D(4)(a) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 31D(5) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Section 10ZE(1) and (2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 31FZA Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 25 May 2021

Book traversal links for Type A review

The different types of registration review

Type B review

Type B review

You should conduct a type B review when you have doubts as to whether the person meets one or more of the eligibility criteria but you are not able to substantiate these by, for example, using other council records, and the elector has not responded to any previous request for information. Type B reviews enable you to require the elector to provide evidence of the following: age nationality information on any other aspect in connection with the requirements for registration

The notice to the elector must state

1 : that you are not satisfied that the elector is entitled to be registered your reason for the

review a requirement for them to provide evidence of age or nationality as appropriate. The notice should state that the elector has 28 calendar days from the date of the notice to supply the required evidence and that if they do not, their entry in the register may be deleted. You should highlight that it is an offence to provide false information to you. If the elector has not submitted satisfactory evidence or information within 28 days, you should proceed to a Type A review. 2 If the elector has submitted evidence or information within 28 days, you must notify the elector of the outcome of the review and state whether there is a right of appeal, including: 3 the time within which notice of appeal must be given any other information about the appeal that you consider appropriate 1. Regulation 31D(4)(b) and (6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 31D(7) and (8) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 31FZA Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Type B review Type A review Type C review Type C review Type C reviews enable you to go directly to a hearing if your position and that of the elector or any other person is clear, and a hearing to decide the matter is more practicable than a type A or type B review by correspondence. Type C reviews can be completed in a shorter timescale than types A and B and so may be particularly appropriate close to a determination deadline, for example, ahead of an election. The notice to the elector must state all of the following: 1 your intention to hold a hearing the reasons for the review the time and place of the hearing Following the hearing, you must notify the elector of the outcome of the review and state whether there is a right of appeal, including: 2 the time within which notice of appeal must be given any other information about the appeal that you consider appropriate We have published a resource which summarises the review process. Summary sheet: deletions (DOC) 1. Regulations 31D(4)(c), 31F(1) and (2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 31FZA Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Type C review Type B review What information must I keep about registration reviews? What information must I keep about registration reviews? You must keep a list of reviews. 1 The list must contain the following information for each review, unless the review relates to an anonymous entry on the register. 2 the full name, qualifying address and elector number of the subject of the review the reason for the review The list must be available for inspection at your office. 3 You may keep the list electronically, such as on your EMS, and produce a paper copy for inspection on demand. You should maintain a clear audit trail of the reviews you have undertaken and the processes you have followed, including records of information taken into consideration in your decision-making. 1. Regulation 31E(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 31E(2) and (4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 31E(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for What information must I keep about registration reviews? Type C review Objections to a registration application or entry on the register Objections to a registration application or entry on the register An elector registered in your area may make an objection at any time to a person's registration, either before or after you have added that person to the register. Objections can be made to both applications for registration and to entries

already on the register. The grounds for objection are either: that the person does not meet one or all of the requirements for registration, namely the age, nationality and residence qualifications that the person has a legal disqualification to registering. Some electors may not wish to make a formal objection because they wish to keep their details anonymous. However, this does not prevent you from carrying out a review of entitlement to registration. Objections must:

- 1 be made in writing be signed and dated by the elector making the objection ('the objector') – the signature cannot be an electronic one include the name, address and electoral number of the objector – the address should be as it appears on the register if shown, if no such address appears or the objector wishes correspondence be sent to a different address, the correspondence address should be given give the name, qualifying address and electoral number of the elector who is objected to or, if not yet registered, their name and address as in the application give the reason for the objection You are entitled to ask for further information about the particulars of any objection. For example, if an objector has not given the qualifying address of the person they are objecting to, you should write to the objector to ask for this before taking any further action. Once satisfied you have all the details, you can continue with the objection process. Objections are open for inspection until determined.
- 2 You must maintain two separate lists of objections:
- 3 a list of objections to applications for registration before the person has been added to the register a list of objections to entries already in the register Anonymous applications and those registered anonymously cannot be subject to an objection.
- 4 1. Regulation 27(1) and (2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 28(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulation 29(2)(b) and (c) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulations 28(2) and 29(4A) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Objections to a registration application or entry on the register](#) What information must I keep about registration reviews? Determining the outcome of an objection Determining the outcome of an objection You can disallow an objection without the need for a hearing, where:

- 1 the objector was not entitled to object, for example, they were not a registered elector in your area the objection was clearly without merit the matter has already been settled by a court the particulars given in the objection do not entitle it to succeed Examples of objections that are clearly without merit or where the particulars given will not succeed are: objections based on the nationality of a person where it is an eligible nationality where the objector believes that the elector does not own the property they live in and should therefore not be registered If you reject an objection, you must inform the objector of this, setting out your reasons. The objector may require a hearing within three days of your decision to reject it.
- 2 The objector must be a registered elector in the local authority area, but does not need to be in the same ward.
- 3 If an objection is disallowed because the objector was not entitled to object you must inform the objector.

1. Regulations 29(5), (5A) and (6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulations 29(5), (5A), (5B), (5C), (6) and (7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Sections 10ZC(2), 10ZD(2) and 10ZE(6)(a) RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Determining the outcome of an objection](#) Objections to a registration application or entry on the register

Objections received within five working days of listing an application

Objections received within five working days of listing an application If you receive an objection to an application to register within five working days of listing it, you must suspend the application until you determine the objection. The only exception to this is if you are of the opinion that the objection is clearly without merit – in this case, you should continue to process the application. In making your determination you could:

- 1 Decide that the objection is clearly without merit. In such a case you must write to the objector and inform them of your decision. The application is not suspended and can be determined. The objector may still request a hearing.
- 2 If a hearing is requested, you should still determine the application and add the applicant to the register if appropriate, but must also conduct the objection hearing.
- 3 Inform the objector that they are not entitled to object. In such a case you must inform the objector of your decision. At that point, the objection is dismissed and you can determine the application.
- 4 Conclude that a decision of a court specifically covers the matters raised by the objection. In such a case the objection cannot be allowed and you must write to the objector and inform them of your decision. At that point, the objection is dismissed and you can determine the application.
- 5 Decide that the objection has or may have merit. In such a case the application is suspended and you must hold a hearing . You must determine the objection and the application based on the result of the hearing.

1. Regulation 29(5C) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 29(5D) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 29(5) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 29(6)(a) and (7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 14 October 2020

Book traversal links for Objections received within five working days of listing an application

Determining the outcome of an objection

Objections received after the five-day period

Objections received after the five-day period

Objections made after the five-day period do not suspend the application for registration.

- 1 If you are unable to determine an objection to an application received after the five-day period in time for the next register update, the application continues as normal and you can determine it. If you publish a notice of alteration and add an applicant subject to an objection, you should move the details from the objections to applications list onto the objections to registration list.
- 2 If you are able to determine the objection before the next register update and determine that the objection is allowed, then you must not add the applicant to your register.
- 3 If you receive an objection to an entry already on the electoral register, you must retain the elector on the register until you determine the objection. If you disallow an objection, then you should send a notice of your decision and your reasons for disallowing it to the objector in order to allow them the opportunity to request a hearing .
- 4 The notice to the objector must state the grounds on which the objection has been disallowed and inform them that, unless they give you notice within three working days that they require a hearing, you will disallow the objection.
- 5 The only time you are required to inform an elector who is subject to an objection that their application or registration has been objected to is where there is a hearing as a result of the objection.

6

1. Regulation 29(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Regulation 31A(3) and (4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2
3. Regulation 31A(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales)

Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulations 29(5), (5B), (5C), (6) and (7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulations 29(5B), (5C), (6) and (7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 30(1)(b) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Objections received after the five-day period Objections received within five working days of listing an application Types of hearings Types of hearings There are 3 different types of hearing: Application hearings Objection hearings Review hearings Hearings are quasi-judicial proceedings and should only be undertaken by you as ERO or by an appointed Deputy ERO . You may organise a hearing before determining any application or objection. You may also hold a hearing when you have put an existing elector under review. Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Types of hearings Objections received after the five-day period Application hearings Application hearings Applications for registration do not have to be taken at face value and you can take any application to a hearing. This process should be undertaken if you have any reason to doubt any application received based on any knowledge that you may have. If an application has been disallowed without a hearing, one may be required by the applicant. 1 This requirement must be made within three working days from the date of the notice. 2 Due to the timescales, you should accept notification of the requirement to hold a hearing by written note, email, fax, or orally. Once you have made a decision to reject an application, the notice to be sent to the applicant should be dated and sent on that same day. Where a hearing is to take place, a notice of hearing must be sent to the applicant stating the following: 3 the time and place of the hearing the grounds for the hearing 1. Regulation 29(7), Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29(7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 30(1)(a) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for Application hearings Types of hearings Objection hearings Objection hearings You must hold a hearing to determine an objection, unless you disallow an objection on one of the following grounds: 1 the objector is not entitled to object the objection is clearly without merit the matter has been concluded by a court the reasons for the objection are not valid reasons for an objection Additionally, if you disallow an objection without a hearing, a hearing may be required by the objector. This requirement must be made within three working days from the date of the notice informing the objector of your decision. 2 Due to the timescales, you should accept notification of the requirement to hold a hearing by written note, email, or orally. You should ensure that once a decision is made to reject an objection, the notice to be sent to the objector is dated and sent on that same day. Where a hearing is to take place, a notice of hearing must be sent to both the objector and the applicant or elector subject to an objection. The notice must state the following: 3 the time and place of the hearing the name and address of the objector the grounds for the objection The objector's details will be made available to the applicant or elector. 4 1. Regulation 29(5), (5A), (6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 29(5), (5A), (6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 30(1)(b) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 30(1)(b)(ii)

Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 14 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Objection hearings](#) [Application hearings](#) [Arrangements for an application or objection hearing](#) [Arrangements for an application or objection hearing](#) You must set the date of a hearing to take place no earlier than three working days and no later than seven working days after the date of the notice of the hearing. 1 The applicant, or, in the case of an objection, the objector and the applicant or elector subject to an objection, are entitled to attend the hearing, as is anyone who appears to you to be interested. 2 Any person entitled to attend may do so in person, or make a written representation or have someone else attend on their behalf. 3 You should ensure that as many relevant parties as possible have the opportunity to attend, in particular the applicant or, in the case of an objection, the objector and the applicant or elector subject to an objection. You may require that evidence be given on oath, because one of the people entitled to appear requests it, or because you think it is desirable. 4 While you may administer the oath yourself, you should seek advice from your legal team to ensure that the oath is in the correct form and that the appropriate religious and non-religious options are available. If the persons who are entitled to attend tell you they cannot attend a hearing on the date you have specified, you should attempt to rearrange the hearing if possible within the period allowed. You may still continue to have the hearing and determine the application/objection at the hearing even if the objector, the applicant or the elector subject to an objection fail to attend. You must consider any written evidence, such as a letter or form, supplied by the applicant, elector or objector in their absence. 1. Regulation 30(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 31(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulations 31(2) and (3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulation 31(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 25 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Arrangements for an application or objection hearing](#) [Objection hearings](#) [Review hearings](#) [Review hearings](#) Unlike the hearing of an application or objection, which must not be held earlier than the third working day or later than the seventh working day after the issue of the notice of hearing, there is no upper time limit on the conduct of a review hearing. The only requirement is that at least three working days need to elapse from the issue of the notice of hearing before it can be held. 1 Any person entitled to attend may do so in person, or make a written representation or have someone else attend on their behalf. 2 You may require that evidence be given on oath, because a person entitled to appear requests it, or because you think it is desirable. While you may administer the oath yourself, you should seek advice from your legal team to ensure that the oath is in the correct form and that the appropriate religious and non-religious options are available. If the person tells you they cannot attend a hearing on the date you have specified, you should attempt to rearrange the hearing if possible within the period allowed. If the subject of a hearing fails to appear, you may still determine that the subject of the review was not entitled or has ceased to be entitled to be registered. In making a determination, you must take into account any written representations from the subject of the review and other interested parties. 3 Once you have made a determination, you must notify the elector of the outcome of the review and state whether there is a right of appeal, including: 4 the time within which notice of appeal must be given any other information about the appeal that you

consider appropriate 1. Regulation 31F(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 31(2) and (3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 31F(7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 31FZA Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 10 August 2021 Book traversal links for Review hearings Arrangements for an application or objection hearing The appeals process following a hearing The appeals process following a hearing Where you make a determination at any hearing, the applicant, objector or elector has the right to submit a notice of appeal within 14 calendar days beginning from the date of the decision. 1 The process for making an appeal should be made clear to anyone attending a hearing. Where the applicant, elector or objector has failed to attend the hearing, you should write to inform them of the outcome and include details of their right of appeal. The notice of appeal must be submitted to you and any other relevant party, together with the grounds of appeal. You must then forward the notice to the county court which should be accompanied by: 2 a statement of the material facts which, in your opinion, have been established in the case your decision on the whole case and on any point specified as a ground of appeal You must inform the appropriate county court of any appeals you consider are based on similar grounds to enable the court to consolidate the cases or select one as a test case. 3 Anonymous registration appeals, which can only arise from reviews or the original application, will need to be heard in private unless the court decides otherwise. 1. Regulation 32(2)(a) Representation of the People (England and Wales) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 32(2) and (3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 14 October 2020 Book traversal links for The appeals process following a hearing Review hearings Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year Sharing good practice - Effective use of available data Summary sheet: deletions (DOC) Last updated: 23 June 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year The appeals process following a hearing Maintaining the register throughout the year Maintaining the register throughout the year Maintaining the register throughout the year This section contains guidance on the actions you should take as ERO to fulfil your responsibility to maintain the register throughout the year. It includes guidance on what registration activity you will need to undertake and when you can publish updates to the electoral register. A proactive approach is required throughout the year and not just during the canvass period in order to maintain accurate and complete registers . Last updated: 26 August 2020 Book traversal links for Maintaining the register throughout the year Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions throughout the year What electoral registration activity should continue throughout the year following the annual canvass? What electoral registration activity should continue throughout the year following the annual canvass? What electoral registration activity should continue throughout the year following the annual canvass? Maintaining the accuracy and completeness of the register throughout the year A year-round focus on registration is key to ensuring that you have confidence in, and continue to

maintain, the completeness and accuracy of the register . You should review your existing public engagement strategy and registration plans following the annual canvass to reflect any plans for the following year, such as household notification letters, obtaining regular data updates for attainers and care homes and any plans to tie local activity in with national events such as National Democracy Week. You can find more information in our guidance - Your public engagement strategy and registration plan .

Non-responding Route 2 and Route 3 properties You will need to decide what, if any, action you will take in respect of properties that have not responded to canvass communications where a response was required and all follow-up and reminder stages of the canvass have been carried out. You are able to consider non-response to a canvass communication where a response was required as one piece of evidence for the purpose of reviewing an elector's entitlement to remain registered . You should consider if you will make any further checks of local data for a second piece of evidence that an elector is no longer resident, to enable you to remove them from the register or if you will undertake any reviews of elector's entitlement to remain registered. You should also consider using your powers to access other local records and to request information to identify potential new electors at these non-responding properties.

Outstanding queries, documentary evidence and attestation processes You should continue to follow up any outstanding requests for documentary evidence or attestations that are needed to complete the application process and you should keep your plans for the follow up of non-responders to ITRs throughout the year under review. You will need to keep an audit trail to demonstrate what actions you take.

Last updated: 14 October 2020

Book traversal links for What electoral registration activity should continue throughout the year following the annual canvass?

Maintaining the register throughout the year

Publishing a revised register at any time during the year

Publishing a revised register at any time during the year

Other than the requirement to publish a revised register following the annual canvass you may revise the register at any time you consider it necessary. For example, you will need to publish a revised register following a review of local government boundaries or in order to implement a review of polling districts and places made by the local authority. If you decide to revise your register you must publish a notice 14 calendar days before the publication date.

1 Your revised register must incorporate all additions and requests for amendments to the register as a result of successful applications which have met the deadline for inclusion. Names of individuals from any other data sources or responses to canvass communications must not be included on the register unless an application for registration is successfully made and determined by you before the determination deadline for that register. You should also give effect to any deletions that you have determined in time to be reflected in the revised register since the publication of the last notice of alteration .

2 1. Regulation 36(1)(a) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Section 13(2) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 17 August 2021

Book traversal links for Publishing a revised register at any time during the year

What electoral registration activity should continue throughout the year following the annual canvass?

What are the deadlines for inclusion on a revised register when published between canvasses?

What are the deadlines for inclusion on a revised register when published between canvasses?

What are the deadlines for inclusion on a revised register when published between canvasses?

This table sets out the timetable for applications and determinations to be made in time for inclusion on a revised register published

between canvasses. 1 Timetable Publication date Chosen by you (provided you have given 14 calendar days notice of your intention to publish) Determination deadline; deletions deadline; deadline for receipt and determination of anonymous registration applications 14 calendar days before the end of the month preceding the month when the revised register is due to be published Deadline for receipt of applications (new applications and amendments to existing entries) 6 working days before the determination deadline For more information on the application and determination deadlines that apply to the publication of the revised register see our guidance – When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? 1. Section 13(3) Representation of the People Act 1983 and Regulation 36(1)(a) Representation of the people (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 11 August 2021 Book traversal links for What are the deadlines for inclusion on a revised register when published between canvasses? Publishing a revised register at any time during the year Notifying anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document Notifying anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document The elector number of an anonymous elector may change when you republish an electoral register during the year. If an anonymous elector's electoral number has changed and they have an Anonymous Elector's Document, you must notify them that their electoral number has changed, that their Anonymous Elector's Document is no longer valid and that you will issue them with a new Anonymous Elector's Document. For more information see our guidance on Replacement of an Anonymous Elector's Document where the elector number has changed. Last updated: 8 February 2023 Book traversal links for Notifying anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document What are the deadlines for inclusion on a revised register when published between canvasses? Monthly notices of alteration Monthly notices of alteration Monthly notices of alteration You must publish monthly notices of alteration on the first working day of each month, however you are not required to issue a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but may do so if you wish. 1 If the register is published in November this means you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in September, October and November. If it is published in December, you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in October, November and December. We have published a document showing when monthly updates must be published, and, based on those dates, when applications must be made and when they must be determined by you for inclusion in a particular monthly update, or in an election notice of alteration. Rolling registration dates 2023 (PDF) 1. Sections 13A(2) and (3) Representation of People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 November 2020 Book traversal links for Monthly notices of alteration Notifying anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document Election notices of alteration Election notices of alteration Election notices of alteration Interim election notices of alteration apply only to the specific register(s) for an election. These interim election notices add or remove entries on the electoral register for addresses in the electoral area affected by an election. For example, for a local government election taking place in only part of a registration area, the notices will only give effect to determinations made by the required deadlines for the election in that area, and will only apply those changes to, in this case, the local government register. Determinations relating to the parliamentary register, or those outside the area affected by the election, will only take effect on the next monthly notice of alteration or on a publication of the revised register, whichever is

sooner. There is a requirement to publish three interim election notices of alteration when an election takes place: 1 the first interim election notice on the last day on which nomination papers may be delivered to the Returning Officer the second interim election notice on a date determined by you, this must be after the publication of the first notice and before the publication of the final election notice the final interim election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the day of the poll 2 The deadline for anyone to make an application in time to appear on the final interim election notice of alteration is midnight, 12 working days before the poll. 3 The only exceptions to this are anonymous registration applications, which can be received up to six working days before the poll, as they are not subject to the five-day objection period. You will need to have arrangements in place so that you know whether or not an application has arrived by the deadline. The following table sets out the timetable for applications and determinations to be made in time for inclusion on the final election notice of alteration: 4

Timetable for applications and determinations	Determination deadline; deletions deadline; deadline for receipt and determination of anonymous registration applications
The working day before publication	Deadline for receipt of applications (new applications and amendments to existing entries)
Six working days before the determination deadline	Publication date of final notice of alteration
Fifth working day before the poll	You must provide updates to those who are entitled by law to receive them.

5 This includes candidates and agents who will require them as quickly as possible, so you should ensure these are provided promptly. For more information on access to and supply see our guidance on supplying copies of the full register . 1. Section 13AB(5) and (6) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 13B(3) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 13B(1) – (3) Representation of the People Act 1983 and Regulation 29(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 13AB(1) – (3) Representation of the People Act 1983, Regulation 29(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 7(5)(b) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 11 August 2021

Book traversal links for Election notices of alteration

Monthly notices of alteration

Clerical errors on the electoral register

Clerical errors on the electoral register

A clerical error is a mistake found on the electoral register that has occurred as a result of an error made by you or your staff, for example, an error when transcribing information from an application or where you have failed to add a successful applicant to the register due to a clerical processing error. 1 You may determine that the electoral register contains a clerical error at any time and 2 any clerical errors should be rectified as soon as they have come to your attention and reflected in the next register update. If a clerical error has been identified after the publication of the last notice of alteration before an election, you can make the determination to correct the error up until 9pm on polling day for it to take effect in time for an election. 3 The details must be transmitted to the Presiding Officer for the appropriate polling station and you should agree a process for doing so in advance with the Returning Officer. 4 For more information on clerical errors see our guidance for Returning Officers . 1. Section 13A(1)(d) and (2) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 13A(1)(d) and (2) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 13B(3C), (3D), (3E) RPA 1983, Regulation 36(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales)

Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 36A(1) 2001 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 7 May 2021 Book traversal links for Clerical errors on the electoral register Election notices of alteration Maintaining the property database throughout the year Maintaining the property database throughout the year Maintaining the property database throughout the year You should maintain a comprehensive property database in order to effectively undertake your registration duties, and take steps to maintain it throughout the year. You should inspect other local authority records to help identify: new residential properties properties that have undergone a change of use empty properties properties which no longer exist properties that are yet to be built You may also use canvass staff and poll card delivery staff, where poll cards are hand delivered, to seek out properties not on the current database, and correct any errors identified. Where you use staff for this purpose, ensure they receive clear instructions about recording and reporting issues they identify. Last updated: 26 August 2020 Book traversal links for Maintaining the property database throughout the year Clerical errors on the electoral register What records can be inspected to assist with maintaining the property database? What records can be inspected to assist with maintaining the property database? What records can be inspected to assist with maintaining the property database? You should inspect other local authority records to assist with identifying new residential properties and those that have undergone a change of use, as well as those that are empty, non-existent or are yet to be built. It is essential that all properties are placed in the correct polling district in order to avoid electors being included in the wrong electoral area. Particular care will need to be taken in this regard in respect of new properties and where there have been any boundary changes. Inspection of other local authority records, such as information held by other departments or mapping systems, can be used to help to ensure the correct placement of all properties within the property database. You should be satisfied that the local authority record is the one not containing any errors before you amend the property database. Liaising with the following departments may also be of assistance: Council tax - the Valuation Office will supply the council tax office with details of changes to rateable values for properties, for example when properties are newly converted, built or demolished. You should request a copy of this information. Register of households in multiple occupation (HMOs) - HMOs may cause particular issues when ensuring the residents are correctly registered. For example, post addressed to The Occupier may not be completed by any of the residents simply because the form is addressed to The Occupier of the building and not to any room or flat in particular. It is important that you have HMOs correctly coded in your property database, as you may choose to approach these differently during canvass. The Housing Act 2004 provides for compulsory licensing of certain HMOs. As part of the licensing scheme, landlords of certain HMOs are required to provide the licensing council with information including: the name and address of the landlord and the managing agent (if there is one) the number of separate letting units the number of households in the HMO the number of people occupying the HMO In addition, a local housing authority will maintain a public register of the licences it has granted, which must contain, amongst other things, the number of rooms in the HMO providing sleeping and living accommodation (and, in the case of an HMO comprising flats, the number of flats). You should arrange to inspect these records when reviewing your property database in order to ensure that all residents within HMOs receive separate registration activity. Planning and building control - The development control section should be

able to supply regular lists of planning consents. You should hold outline planning consents on record for information, until such time as full consent is granted. A developer might not start a development for many years and details of a consent may be changed prior to the development taking place. Information such as non-residential or listed building consents, may be irrelevant, and care should be taken not to add this information to the property database. Inspection of building control records and liaising with builders can also give an indication of the state of progress of new developments and whether they are ready for residential occupation. Instead of liaising with planning and building control directly, you may be able to gain the necessary information from the Valuation Office. Local land and property gazetteers (LLPGs) - you should work closely with the gazetteer custodian to ensure quick, accurate updates to your property database and to ensure that UPRNs are attached to each property in your area, as this may facilitate matching with other official records. While a comprehensive and up-to-date gazetteer should be able to provide information on all units of accommodation, including rooms and flats within buildings, you may still discover changes to properties, which you may feed back to the LLPG. Geographical information systems (GIS) - this tool can be very useful in locating properties and maintaining boundaries of canvass areas, polling districts and other electoral boundaries. Maps should be provided to staff undertaking house-to-house enquires to help them locate properties and to track progress of any new developments. GIS used alongside properly referenced property data can be particularly useful in analysing variations in returns, so can inform your planning for how to fulfil your duties to maintain the register. Street naming - street naming and numbering orders will give information about properties, new developments and any changes to road names and numbering schemes within a street. If such information is not already supplied you should ask for it. Social services - social services will be able to provide current lists of residential and care homes. Land Registry - can be used to find information on property ownership and sales of property, which can provide a useful source of information on changes, particularly as the name of the buyer is given allowing you to send personalised correspondence. If making changes to your property database based on information given in other local authority records you should be satisfied that the record you have inspected is correct. External sources of information may also prove valuable: Royal Mail - can provide information on postcodes. Postcode updates are published on an annual basis. You may also obtain postcodes for particular addresses, or vice versa at www.royalmail.com . Commercial and industrial premises - many have residential dwellings attached to them that might not be obvious. For example, flats situated above retail premises referred to as composite properties on the valuation list. Their use as residential may vary from year to year so making contact with shop owners and employees may help to identify residential dwellings. Last updated: 26 August 2020

Book traversal links for What records can be inspected to assist with maintaining the property database? Maintaining the property database throughout the year What if an address isn't listed on the IER Digital service? What if an address isn't listed on the IER Digital service? What if an address isn't listed on the IER Digital service? The UK government Register to Vote website uses the Ordnance Survey addressing service. Users input their postcode and select their address from the list provided. However, occasionally a user's postcode or address does not appear in the Ordnance Survey database, for example, if an address is a new build. Where the postcode is recognised but the required address does not appear, users will be able to manually add their address. If the postcode is not recognised, the user will also

be able to select the local authority responsible for the area they live in from a drop down list. Last updated: 26 August 2020 Book traversal links for What if an address isn't listed on the IER Digital service? What records can be inspected to assist with maintaining the property database? Household notification letters Household notification letters Household notification letters It is important that you take steps to maximise the number of people included on the electoral registers. The period leading up to the next scheduled polls provides an opportunity to: encourage those people missing from the register to apply check that there are no inaccurate entries in your register Sending a letter to all households showing who is registered to vote at that particular address has a number of clear benefits, all of which can contribute to helping you to ensure that your registers are as accurate and complete as possible ahead of the next scheduled polls: it will be a useful tool for prompting those who have not registered yet to do so it will help to pick up those who have recently moved within or into the registration area it will give residents an opportunity to check their details on the register are accurate Your household notification letter should ask those who live at the address to register to vote if their name is not included on the letter, emphasising the ability to register online, and to notify you if any information on the letter is incorrect. You may be able to maximise the impact of your household notification letter by: linking it to any national public awareness campaign that the Commission may undertake in advance of scheduled polls undertaking local awareness work to make people aware of the letter liaising with university accommodation officers and managers/landlords of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) on how best to carry out the activity in student halls and HMOs working with any other partners identified in your public engagement strategy to help promote the letters To limit the risk of potential confusion and electors becoming overwhelmed with communications, you will need to think how the activity will fit in with other communications to be sent to electors (e.g. the absent vote signature refresh), as well as how it will interact with any known by-elections. You will also need to liaise with your printers to establish the timescales for signing off proofs, sending data and getting the letters and envelopes printed and collated. Last updated: 26 August 2020 Book traversal links for Household notification letters What if an address isn't listed on the IER Digital service? What should be included in a household notification letter? What should be included in a household notification letter? What should be included in a household notification letter? Neither the design nor the content of the household notification letter is prescribed, but you should ensure that the letter is easy to understand, with a clear explanation of what action, if any, householders need to take. The household notification letter falls outside the statutory framework; no response is required to be provided, there is no penalty for not responding and you are not legally required to carry out any follow-up processes. We have produced a template letter that you can use. Household notification letter template and FAQs - E The template has been kept simple to ensure that the key messages are communicated clearly. If you decide to produce your own letter, it should include: information on why the letter is being sent the names of all electors registered at the address what the recipient should do if any information on the letter is incorrect or if someone who lives at the address is not registered Your vote matters – don't lose it branding frequently asked questions data protection messaging Where sending household notification letters, you should also consider how to prompt registration applications to be made, reducing the need to give formal invitations to register. You should emphasise the option to apply to register online, by telephone or in-person (if you offer these services), as well

as giving information on how paper application forms are obtained. In some instances it may be appropriate to include paper application forms with your household notification letter – for example, ahead of a registration deadline. The simpler the letter, the clearer the call to action, and the more likely it is that you will get a response. In general terms, there is a risk that additional information may confuse electors and dealing with their questions may draw resources away from registering new electors ahead of the scheduled polls. In deciding whether to add additional information to the letter, you should consider the risks and how you would mitigate these. You will also need to check that your software is capable of enabling you to include any additional data on the letter. Additional information also means potentially having to tailor the letter to particular audiences, which creates its own series of risks and challenges. Additional information – and some of the risks which would need to be managed – could include:

- Franchise - this makes clear to the elector which elections they are entitled to vote at. For example, a UK Parliamentary election and/or any local (or other) elections happening on that day. However, this may be a difficult message to convey in a simple way, especially in households where the individuals have different franchises. Information on registration deadlines for upcoming elections - our experience from user testing messages suggests that this type of information is most effective when the call to action is closely linked to the message, for example, where the deadline is close to the request to register. Where the deadline is a few weeks or months away there is a risk that those who receive the letter will not take action. Reference to registration deadlines could also confuse those who are already registered resulting in duplicate applications.
- Open register preference - open register information is not directly relevant to an upcoming election. The questions this could generate may divert resources away from registering electors.

Envelopes Our experience of user testing registration materials has shown that people are more likely to open an envelope if it looks official and is brown in colour. You can increase your chances of the envelope being opened by including text that emphasises the importance of the communication: e.g. 'IMPORTANT INFORMATION ENCLOSED'. Commission public awareness campaigns will use the 'Your vote matters – don't lose it' branding. Reflecting this on the envelope will increase recognition and tie in any national registration message with your local one.

Last updated: 26 August 2020

Book traversal links for What should be included in a household notification letter?

Household notification letters

What resources are needed to manage household notification letter activity?

What resources are needed to manage household notification letter activity?

What resources are needed to manage household notification letter activity?

You will need the resource to: process any new registrations resulting from the write-out conduct registration reviews or seek a second piece of evidence where required to delete electors who are no longer resident at a particular address deal with any enquiries from electors as a consequence of the letter

You will also need to decide on the practical arrangements for carrying out the activity and what the cost and additional resource implications will be. For example, will you print the letters in-house or use an external supplier? Will you use canvassers to deliver the letters, or use a postal service?

Last updated: 26 August 2020

Book traversal links for What resources are needed to manage household notification letter activity?

What should be included in a household notification letter?

Data protection considerations when using contractors to produce your household notification letters

Data protection considerations when using contractors to produce your household notification letters

Data protection considerations when using contractors to produce your household notification letters

If you are sending

data from the electoral register to a contractor or supplier to produce your household notification letters, or to provide an automated response service, you are using a processor to process personal data on your behalf. Data protection legislation requires that you only appoint a processor that can provide sufficient guarantees that the requirements of data protection legislation will be met. This means that data protection needs to be integral in any tender exercise, and you should document your decision-making process to ensure you have an audit trail. Whenever you use a processor, data protection legislation imposes a legal obligation to formalise the working relationship in a written agreement or contract which includes: the subject matter, nature and purpose of the processing the obligations and rights of the data controller the duration of the processing the types of personal data and categories of data subjects In addition, data protection legislation requires that the contract must set out specific obligations on the processor, including that they: comply with your instructions are subject to a duty of confidentiality keep personal data secure and notify you of any breach maintain written records of the processing activities they carry out for you only use a sub-processor with your consent submit to audits and inspections and provide you with whatever information you need to ensure compliance with data protection requirements delete or return all personal data to you as requested at the end of the contract As the data controller, you remain ultimately responsible for ensuring that personal data is processed in accordance with data protection legislation. However, if a processor fails to meet any of its obligations, or acts against your instructions, then it may also be liable to pay damages or be subject to fines or other penalties or corrective measures. The ICO has provided guidance on Contracts and liabilities between controllers and processors which you should consider in relation to your contracts with data processors. You should ensure that when using a contractor you have robust proof-checking processes in place, including ensuring that you only provide the data required for each specific process. This could help detect any errors and avoid data breaches before they occur. We have produced a proof checking factsheet which you can use to help quality assure your processes. Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) We also have produced a contract development and management checklist to support you in your work with suppliers/contractors. Contract development and management checklist (PDF) Last updated: 26 August 2020 Book traversal links for Data protection considerations when using contractors to produce your household notification letters What resources are needed to manage household notification letter activity? Communicating with households outside the canvass Communicating with households outside the canvass Communicating with individuals and households outside of the canvass As part of your year-round activity to maintain an accurate and complete register throughout the year, you may wish to make enquiries with particular households outside of the canvass period■ to confirm if there have been changes in occupancy, and to ascertain the names of any new potential electors. You will also find out about potential changes in occupancy at addresses through your year-round activity to identify new potential electors and electors who should be removed. You may discover potential changes in occupancy by: inspecting other local records , such as Council Tax, Housing, and Registrars being notified of a change of occupancy by electors, for example where they have moved and registered elsewhere being notified of a change of occupancy by a third party being notified of new properties and inspecting records of other local authority departments being aware of properties which tend to have lots of changes throughout the year, such as HMOs – see our guidance on maintaining contact with responsible persons Where you have been

provided with the name and address of potential electors, you must invite them to register . You may also encourage them to register before sending a formal invitation to register. Where you do not have sufficient information to invite individuals to register (such as the names of new residents) but are aware that changes in occupancy may have taken place you could use a discretionary communication to ascertain the names of new potential electors before inviting or encouraging them to register. A response to a discretionary communication could also serve as a second source of information for deleting electors. Last updated: 27 May 2021 [Book traversal links for Communicating with households outside the canvass](#) Data protection considerations when using contractors to produce your household notification letters Discretionary communications Discretionary communications Discretionary communications The canvass communications designed by the Commission are specifically for use during the canvass and there is no legislative provision for their use outside the canvass period. However, you can still make contact with households throughout the year to help maintain your electoral register, especially when you have evidence that there may have been changes that need to be captured. We have produced template forms for contacting households outside of the canvass, which you may wish to use. These are available on our [Registration forms and letters](#) webpage. You may also design your own form for use throughout the year, but if you do so it should not be referred to as a Canvass Form, and should not contain information that is only applicable to the canvass. Any discretionary communication for use outside of the canvass does not need to be pre-printed with existing elector details, but can be if you wish. You may decide that a household notification letter is more appropriate for contacting certain households outside of the canvass as part of your work to maintain the register. The household notification letter has been designed to prompt unregistered individuals to register. Last updated: 1 July 2021 [Book traversal links for Discretionary communications](#) [Communicating with households outside the canvass](#) [Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Maintaining the register throughout the year](#) [Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Maintaining the register throughout the year](#) [Contract development and management checklist \(PDF\)](#) [Household notification letter template and FAQs - E Proof checking fact sheet \(DOC\)](#) [Rolling registration dates 2023 \(PDF\)](#) Last updated: 19 July 2023 [Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Maintaining the register throughout the year](#) Discretionary communications Petition notices of alteration Petition notices of alteration Where a Speaker's notice in respect of a recall petition has been given for a UK Parliamentary constituency, the Petition Officer (PO) is required to publish a petition register on the third working day before the signing period begins. Any elector for the relevant constituency who applies on or before the day the Speaker's notice is given, and whose application will be determined before the publication of the petition register (the cut-off day), will be entitled to sign the petition. 1 You are required to publish a petition notice of alteration on the cut-off day, detailing in-time additions, amendments and deletions, as well as any alterations due to court orders or clerical errors. Determinations relating to other constituencies, or the local government register only, will only take effect on the next monthly notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is sooner. You will need to have arrangements in place so that you know whether or not an application has arrived by the deadline. Where you are not the PO, you will need to agree with them how you will supply the relevant notices for the constituency or the part of the constituency that you are responsible for. This includes any notices issued as a result of court orders or clerical errors up to the end of the signing period. The

following table sets out the timetable for applications and determinations to be made in time for inclusion on the petition notice of alteration: Petition Register Process

Deadline	Deadline for receipt of applications (new applications and amendments to existing entries)	The date the Speaker's notice is given	Determination deadline;	deletions deadline;	deadline for receipt and determination of anonymous registration applications
On the day of publication of the petition notice of alteration	Publication of the petition notice of alteration and supply to the PO	3 working days before the signing period begins	Deadline to make further alterations as a consequence of court orders or clerical errors	Before the prescribed time on the last day of the signing period (i.e. 1 hour before the end of the signing period on the last day of signing).	Further guidance on supply of the register to the PO is available in our resource for EROs in England, Scotland and Wales.

1. Section 10, Recall of MPs Act 2015, and Section 13BC(2) and (3) RPA 1983 (inserted by Schedule 2, Recall of MPs Act 2015) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 13 September 2023

Book traversal links for Petition notices of alteration

Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Maintaining the register throughout the year

Access and supply of the electoral register

Access and supply of the electoral register

Access and supply of the electoral register

Access to and supply of the full electoral register, any notices of alteration and the list of overseas electors is prescribed in legislation. You have a duty to supply free copies of the register of electors to various organisations and individuals, and legislation imposes restrictions on how this is done. In some cases, registers have to be supplied on publication and in others the register is only supplied on request. There are different provisions that apply in respect of the edited register and the marked register. The timing of receipt of the register is particularly important to some recipients. For example, political parties need the electoral register to fulfil their statutory obligations in relation to the checking of donations, in addition to using it for campaigning purposes. It is important that the register is supplied promptly and you should, therefore, supply the register to anyone who is entitled to receive it on publication as soon as possible and in any case, within 5 working days. You should ensure that every person/organisation that receives the register, whether on publication, by sale, or on request, is aware that: they must only use the register for the permitted purpose(s) specified in the Regulations once the purpose for which the register has been supplied has expired, they must securely destroy the register they understand the penalty for misuse of the register You should not provide any advice in response to questions about whether a recipient's proposed usage of register data is in accordance with the law. It is for the recipient of the register to be satisfied that their use of the register is in accordance with what the law sets out. If they are not certain they should speak to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or seek their own legal advice. There are different provisions that apply in respect of the edited register and the marked register. To demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner, you should maintain records of every person and organisation you supply with the register. Last updated: 12 October 2020

Book traversal links for Access and supply of the electoral register

Petition notices of alteration

Public inspection of the full register

Public inspection of the full register

Public inspection of the full register

You must make the full register available for public inspection.

1 You must ensure that:

2 any inspection takes place under supervision, either by you or someone else

there is provision for inspection at your office and, additionally, at your discretion, you may enable inspection of the

register at one or more places elsewhere in your area if there are reasonable facilities for this. The legislation does not prescribe the level and nature of supervision of those who inspect the register. You should, however, be satisfied that the supervision is sufficient to prevent, as far as possible, unauthorised copying or theft of all or any part of the register. You should provide training or guidance notes to those staff who will be supervising the inspection of the register. Handwritten notes may be made by those inspecting the full register. Any other copying or recording is not permitted, and is a criminal offence. 3 Registers may be made available for inspection in paper and/or electronic form. If you make the register available for inspection electronically you must take steps to ensure the security of the register; in particular, you will need to ensure that any person inspecting the register is prevented from downloading, transmitting electronically or printing this information or copying it by any other means. Any search facility must be by address only and not by name, as this is specifically prohibited. 4 Whether paper or electronic records are provided, any photographing or similar recording of the register, including by mobile phone, is also prohibited. A person inspecting the register is not permitted to use the information for direct marketing. 5 You could ask those inspecting the register to give their name and address and to sign a disclaimer stating that they understand that breaching the legal restrictions would be an offence. If a person subsequently breaches those restrictions, you will have an audit trail demonstrating that the inspection was undertaken in accordance with electoral law. You may allow library or other council staff to provide inspection facilities, provided that you are confident that they can offer an appropriate level of supervision. You may want to support other staff in providing the appropriate level of supervision by, for example, sending a copy of the legislation and any relevant guidance to the responsible person and obtaining a signed letter or email stating that the requirements will be followed. You may consider updating the signed undertaking annually. You should make regular checks to ensure that the supervision continues to be sufficient. If you have any concerns that steps are not being taken to avoid a breach of the regulations, you may wish to take legal advice. You should remove the copies of the register from any place where you are not satisfied that the supervision arrangements are sufficient. We have produced a cover sheet for the inspection of the register which sets out how it may be used and the penalty for misuse. Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection (DOC) 1. Regulation 43 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 43(1)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 7(3) and (4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 43(1A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 96 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 12 October 2020 Book traversal links for Public inspection of the full register Access and supply of the electoral register Supplying copies of the full register and associated documents to specified individuals and organisations Supplying copies of the full register and associated documents to specified individuals and organisations Supplying copies of the full register and associated documents to specified individuals and organisations The supply of copies of the full register, any notices of alteration and the list of overseas electors is limited to those individuals and organisations prescribed in the legislation. 1 Some of those are entitled: to free copies without application to free copies upon application to copies on payment of a prescribed fee In all cases, before supplying the register you need to be satisfied that the individual or organisation making the request is entitled to receive it. We have published a list, for reference, of those

entitled to receive the register and associated documents. This includes who is entitled to receive these documents, on what basis and in what format. It also includes contact details where relevant. List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) Outside of those specifically listed in legislation, only a body or organisation which is allowed by an enactment to access the electoral register may be supplied with a copy upon request. You should consider the enactment quoted by the applicant and, if you are satisfied that the enactment gives them access to the full register, you should supply it. An example of an enactment could be the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992, Regulation 4 of which allows a billing authority to obtain name and address (including past address) information from an ERO. 1. Regulation 94(3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 12 October 2020

Book traversal links for Supplying copies of the full register and associated documents to specified individuals and organisations Public inspection of the full register Free supply of the full register Free supply of the full register Free supply of the full register Free supply without application You must automatically send a copy of the revised published full register, and any associated documents, to certain individuals and organisations entitled to be supplied with the register on publication. 1 This also applies when you publish a revised register at any time during the year . Free supply upon application Legislation provides for certain persons or organisations, which include a councillor, party or candidate, to request by application that the ERO supply to them a free copy of the relevant parts of the full register, any notice setting out an alteration to the register and a list of overseas electors. 2 Any application must be made in writing and must specify: 3 the document that is requested whether the request is made for current documents only or whether it includes a request for the supply of any subsequent documents, such as notices of alteration (although the option of receiving subsequent documents does not apply to candidates requesting the documents for electoral purposes, so they will not need to include this); 4 and whether a printed copy of any of the documents is requested instead of the version in data form The relevant part of the full register, including the list of overseas electors if requested, must be supplied on receipt of a valid request. 5 There is no limit on the numbers of requests that can be made. This means that the right to request the register could potentially be exercised more than once, with each request being a valid request that the ERO must comply with. For example, a councillor, party or candidate who has already been supplied with the register, may make a further request for the ERO to supply a further copy of the revised register and any subsequent notices of alteration. Access to the full register by third parties There is no distinction in law between political parties and third parties when it comes to accessing the full register and the purpose for which the information can be used. A third party, registered by the Commission, is entitled to request a copy of the following; the full register any notice setting out an alteration to the register a list of overseas electors the current absent voters list the final absent voters list for a particular election This information can only be used for prescribed purposes. 6 If a valid request is made for any of this information it must be supplied unless the ERO has reason to believe that the person requesting the information is not asking for it on behalf of the registered third party. You can find the full list of third parties registered with us on our PEF Online website . A request for a copy of the full register by a third party must be made in writing to the ERO. It must state whether the request is for the current version of the full register or whether it includes requests for the supply of any

subsequent notices of alteration. Where a printed copy is required, the requester must specify this too. 7 Where it is not clear from the written request whether the request is for the current version of the register or if it includes any updates, the ERO should contact the requester and ask for clarification. Similarly, if there are any questions about whether the request has actually come from the registered third party (for example, if the third party name used in the request does not exactly match the name that appears on PEF Online), you should not supply the register until you have asked the requester for clarification and are satisfied that they are requesting the register on behalf of the third party. There are strict legal restrictions on the use of the register and it can only be used by registered third parties for electoral purposes and the control of donations. 8 As with anyone requesting a copy of the register, you should point out to them the restrictions on the use of the information contained in it, as well as the potential penalties for misuse. Any person found breaching the restrictions on the use of the electoral register could face an unlimited fine. 9 We have produced a cover sheet for the supply of the electoral register on request which sets out how the register may be used, the penalty for misuse, and that the data should be securely destroyed once the purpose for which it has been supplied has finished. Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) 1. Regulations 97 – 101 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 103-109 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 102(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 102(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 102(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 106 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 102(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Regulation 106(4)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Regulation 115 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 9 Last updated: 28 September 2022 Book traversal links for Free supply of the full register Supplying copies of the full register and associated documents to specified individuals and organisations Supply of the full register by sale Supply of the full register by sale Supply of the full register by sale Specified organisations are entitled to a copy of the full register, any notice of alteration, and the list of overseas of electors, on payment of the relevant prescribed fee (unless that organisation is entitled to a copy free of charge). 1 Fees The relevant prescribed fees are: 2 For sale of the full register and the notices of alteration: in data format, £20 plus £1.50 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries) in it in printed format, £10 plus £5 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries) in it For sale of the list of overseas electors: in data format, £20 plus £1.50 for each 100 entries (or remaining part of 100 entries) in it in printed format, £10 plus £5 for each 100 entries (or remaining part of 100 entries) in it The £20 charge for a data copy or the £10 charge for a paper copy applies to the whole of each register that the ERO maintains and the legislation does not permit EROs to calculate the fees separately in relation to polling districts covered by the register. So, for example, if you maintain the registers for two parliamentary constituencies, the £20 charge applies separately to the register for each constituency. The legislation does not permit the charging of any other administration or additional fees. The register must be supplied on receipt of a valid request, providing that the ERO is satisfied that the applicant is entitled to receive the register. Failure to supply the electoral register when required may have an impact on individual electors as the information is used by credit reference agencies for vetting applications for credit. Charges for monthly notices of

alteration The same principle applies to each notice of alteration. If a request is received to buy a full register and any notices of alteration which have been published before the request is received, the register and notices are treated as the same document for the purposes of the fee calculation. This means that the £20 fee covers the full register and all the requested notices of alteration that have already been published. Where a request is received which includes any notices of alteration that are due to be published after the request is received, the £20 fee will be applied each time a subsequent notice of alteration is produced, as per the request.

Recording sales of the register You should keep a record of the transactions of sales of the register so that the revenue gained, alongside the number of registers sold, can be made available for public scrutiny if so required. You should redact any personal information when the record is made available for public scrutiny.

Use of 'Z' markers All copies of the full register that have been sold must have the letter 'Z' placed against the name of any person whose name is not included in the edited version of the register that is published at that time.

3 We have produced a cover sheet for the sale of the electoral register which sets out how the register may be used, the penalty for misuse, and that the data should be securely destroyed once the purpose for which it has been supplied has finished.

Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) 1. Regulation 111(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 111(5) and (6) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 111(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 12 October 2020

Book traversal links for Supply of the full register by sale

Free supply of the full register

Restrictions on the use of the full register

Restrictions on the use of the full register

There are restrictions on the use of the information contained in the full register. This table demonstrates how the register may be used by different individuals or organisations.

Individual / organisation	Permitted use of the register
Councillor, or employee of the council (excluding a parish council) who has a copy of the full register	may supply a copy of it, or disclose or make use of information contained in it for:
	1 the discharge of a statutory function of the council or any other local authority relating to security, law enforcement and crime prevention statistical purposes (without disclosing the name and address of any elector, whether that elector appears in the edited register or not)
	the purposes of a local poll under s116 of the Local Government Act 2003
Parish councillor, or a person employed or otherwise assisting a parish who has a copy of the full register	may supply a copy of it, or disclose or make use of information contained in it for:
	2 the purpose of establishing whether a person is entitled to attend or participate in a meeting of the parish council
	the purpose of establishing whether a person is entitled to take action on behalf of the parish
	the purposes of a local poll under s116 of the Local Government Act 2003
Elected representatives	are also entitled to be supplied with the electoral register:
	3 for electoral purposes, for the area that they represent
Government departments	are restricted in the way that they may use the register. They may not supply or sell a copy unless the recipient could obtain a free copy under the regulations.
Government departments	may only use the register for:
	4 the prevention and detection of crime and the enforcement of the criminal law (whether in England or elsewhere)
	the vetting of employees and applicants for employment where such vetting is required pursuant to any enactment
	the vetting of any person where such vetting is for the purpose of safeguarding national security, or supply and disclosure as defined by the regulations
Credit reference agencies	must only use the register for:
	5 vetting

applications for credit or applications that can result in the giving of credit or the giving of any guarantee, indemnity or assurance in relation to the giving of credit meeting any obligations contained in the Money Laundering Regulations 2007 or any rules made pursuant to Section 137A of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, and statistical analysis of credit risk assessment in a case where no person whose details are included in the full register is referred to by name or necessary implication

1. Regulation 107(4) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 107(8) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 103 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 113(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. Regulation 114(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 12 October 2020

Book traversal links for Restrictions on the use of the full register

Supply of the full register by sale

Access to and supply of the edited register

Access to and supply of the edited register

Access to and supply of the edited register

Public inspection of the edited register

The edited register must be made available for public inspection. Unlike inspection of the full register, no supervision is required. The copy must be made available at your office, and in addition by any other means as you see fit.

1 Supply of the edited register by sale

The edited register can be sold to anyone requesting it on payment of the prescribed fee. The fees for sale of the edited register are:

2 in data format, £20 plus £1.50 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries) in it

in printed format, £10 plus £5 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries) in it

1. Regulation 93(6) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 110 (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 12 October 2020

Book traversal links for Access to and supply of the edited register

Restrictions on the use of the full register

Inspection of marked registers, marked absent voter lists and other election documentation

Inspection of marked registers, marked absent voter lists and other election documentation

Inspection of marked registers, marked absent voter lists and other election documentation

Any person may inspect the marked register and any notices amending it, plus the marked copies of the list of postal voters, the list of proxies, and the list of proxy postal voters and such other documents relating to an election as you are required to retain, except ballot papers, completed corresponding number lists, certificates as to employment on the day of the election, and the list of ballot papers rejected under the verification procedure.

1 Any person wanting to inspect the marked register or absent voters list must apply in writing and must state:

2 which register or document they wish to inspect

whether they wish to inspect a printed or data copy (where appropriate)

the purposes for which any information will be used

where the request concerns the marked register or lists, why inspection of the full register or unmarked lists would not be sufficient to achieve the purpose

who will be inspecting the documents, and the date on which they wish to make the inspection

You may refuse to allow inspection of these documents if you are satisfied that the purposes of the requestor can be met by inspection of the full register, in which case you must inform the requestor of this decision and provide information concerning the availability of the full register for inspection.

3 Otherwise, the documents must be made available within 10 days of receipt of the application.

You must arrange for them to be inspected under supervision.

4 Inspection can take place anywhere you choose. Those inspecting the documents can make copies of the registers and lists using handwritten notes only.

5 The same safeguards apply regarding the supervision and protection of the information as apply with the inspection of the

full register . The Security Service, Government Communications Headquarters, and Secret Intelligence Service are entitled to a free copy of any of the above documents on request. The police (including the National Crime Agency) are entitled to free copies of any of these documents on request if they have inspected them. 6 Use of voter ID data on and after polling day We have produced a guidance note for ROs and EROs which outlines the legal requirements for the collation and sharing of data collected in polling stations relating to the operation of the new voter ID requirements. Some of this data may only be shared with the UK Government and Electoral Commission because of specific legislative restrictions, but some may be shared more widely. This note aims to support ROs and EROs to make decisions on how and when to share data locally. Publication of data from polling stations Further guidance on the ballot paper refusal lists and voter identification evaluation forms can also be found below. Ballot paper refusal lists (BPRLs) The ERO has responsibility for retaining the BPRLs once received from the Returning Officer. You may only disclose information from the BPRL to the elector, whose ballot paper was refused, or in the case of a proxy being refused a ballot paper, the person acting as proxy or the elector on whose behalf they were acting as a proxy. 7 Voter identification evaluation forms (VIDEF) After taking receipt of the polling station VIDEFs, you must, as soon as practicable, anonymise the data contained on them (for example, by destroying any related VIDEF notes sheets, or by removing any elector details recorded on the VIDEF for the purpose of capturing any of the required data). You must also collate the data from the VIDEFs into two separate groups: 8 one group providing total figures for all polling stations where voters were given an explanation of the photographic ID requirement before they applied for a ballot paper (e.g. where staff were appointed to greet voters and explain the requirements as they entered the polling station) one group providing total figures for all polling stations where voters were not given an explanation of the photographic ID requirement You must submit the data to the Secretary of State and the Electoral Commission (if requested to do so). 9 The anonymised, collated data from the polling station VIDEFs is not open for inspection, and you must not disclose this information to anyone apart from the statutory duty to share information with the Secretary of State and the Electoral Commission (if requested to do so). 10 The polling station VIDEFs must be retained for 10 years, in an anonymised format. 11 To achieve this, you must ensure that any related VIDEF notes sheets are destroyed, or that you have removed any elector details recorded on the VIDEF for the purpose of capturing any of the required data. Data will be collected using the VIDEF and VIDEF notes sheets for the first two parliamentary general elections. Additionally, it will be collected for the first ordinary election of councillors for local government in England after the provisions come into force. If the first ordinary election of councillors is combined with a parliamentary general election, the data will be required to be collected for the subsequent ordinary election of councillors. 12 Following a scheduled election we will update you on the process for providing the required anonymised and collated information to the Electoral Commission through our Bulletin . 1. Regulation 118(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 118(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 118(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 118(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 118(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 118(8) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 32 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Reg 35(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Rule 40B(5)

and (6) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ [Back to content at footnote 9 10. Rule 40B\(7\) Sch 1 RPA 1983](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 10 11. Rule 40B\(8\) Sch 1 RPA 1983](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 11 12. S.59A RPA 1983](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 12](#) Last updated: 19 April 2023 Book traversal links for Inspection of marked registers, marked absent voter lists and other election documentation Access to and supply of the edited register Supply of the marked register and marked absent voting lists Supply of the marked register and marked absent voting lists Supply of the marked register and marked absent voting lists If requested, relevant parts of the marked copy of the register of electors and any notices amending it, plus the marked copies of the list of postal voters, the list of proxies, and the list of proxy postal voters, must be supplied to specified persons on payment of a prescribed fee. 1 The request must be made in writing and must specify: 2 which of the marked register or lists (or relevant parts of them) are requested; whether printed or data copies are requested; and the purpose for which the data will be used and why the supply of the full data would not be sufficient to achieve that purpose The cost of a marked document is prescribed. The charge for data copies is £10 plus £1 per 1,000 entries or part thereof, and for printed copies it is £10 plus £2 per 1,000 entries or part thereof. 3 You must supply the requested copies provided the relevant fee is paid and you are satisfied that the requestor needs to see the marks on the marked register or lists in order to achieve the purpose for which it is requested. 4 When you supply the marked register, you should remind the recipient that the data should be securely destroyed once the purpose for which it has been supplied has finished. 1. Regulation 117(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 117\(3\) RPR 2001](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 120\(2\) RPR 2001](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 117\(4\) RPR 2001](#) ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) Last updated: 12 October 2020 Book traversal links for Supply of the marked register and marked absent voting lists Inspection of marked registers, marked absent voter lists and other election documentation Inspection of registration applications, objections and absent vote applications Inspection of registration applications, objections and absent vote applications Inspection of registration applications, objections and absent vote applications Applications for registration (other than anonymous registration applications) and any objections to applications are available for public inspection from the point at which they are made until they are determined. 1 After that point, such documents may not be inspected. Applications for absent votes may not be inspected at any time. 1. Regulation 28 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 12 October 2020 Book traversal links for Inspection of registration applications, objections and absent vote applications Supply of the marked register and marked absent voting lists Requests to supply other data Requests to supply other data Requests to supply other data You may receive other requests for data you hold, which is not covered by any particular duty to disclose or to withhold. For example, it could be information sought by police or other investigating or prosecuting authorities in connection with any criminal investigations, or the appointing local authority may request copies of canvass forms and registration application forms in connection with fraud investigations. Although there is no right or duty of disclosure, you may supply such data if you feel that it is appropriate and are satisfied that to do so is in compliance with data protection legislation. Where you are not satisfied, any such body would need to obtain a court order for its supply. Last updated: 12 October 2020 Book traversal links for Requests to supply other data

Inspection of registration applications, objections and absent vote applications
Subject access requests Subject access requests Subject access requests Data protection legislation provides that a person may make a subject access request to see personal information that is held about them. No charge can be made for fulfilling a subject access request unless the request can be deemed excessive or repetitive. Subsequent copies may be charged for, but the charge must be reasonable and based on administrative costs. There is no requirement for the request to be made in writing. You must, however, be satisfied of the requester's identity before complying with the request. Information requested by data subjects must be provided without delay and in any event within one month (although it can be extended to two months in certain conditions). Where an elector requests a letter confirming their residency, known as a certificate of registration, this should be treated as a subject access request. In the majority of instances, providing confirmation of a data subject's entry on the register via a certificate of registration would not be considered excessive or repetitive, and therefore no charge should be made. Our guidance on data protection for EROs and ROs provides additional information on subject access requests. Last updated: 23 June 2023 [Book traversal links for Subject access requests](#) Requests to supply other data Access requests for crime prevention Access requests for crime prevention Access requests for crime prevention Schedule 2 of the DPA 2018 provides an exemption to data processing rules for the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. Therefore, where you receive a request for information that you hold you will need to consider: the person or organisation making the request, the purpose of the request, and the enactment quoted requesting access If satisfied that the request meets the purpose detailed in Schedule 2 of the DPA 2018 then you should supply the data. It should be noted that Regulation 107 of the RPR 2001 provides for the ERO to supply the full register to the council that appointed them. An employee or councillor of that council may disclose or make use of information contained in it where necessary for the discharge of a statutory function of the council, or in any other local authority relating to security, law enforcement and crime prevention. If the request relates to the council's copy of the register, you should direct this to your council's Monitoring Officer. Last updated: 12 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Access requests for crime prevention](#) Subject access requests Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act EROs are not a public authority under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 and, as such, are exempt from the disclosure requirements imposed by it. However, where possible, EROs should disclose the requested information, provided this information is already in the public domain, or if the information requested does not include personal data. An example of non-personal data would be statistical data providing the total number of electors registered in your area. Last updated: 12 October 2020 [Book traversal links for Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act](#) Access requests for crime prevention Inspection of old copies of the full register Inspection of old copies of the full register Inspection of old copies of the full register You should keep old copies of the full register and the overseas list for 15 years in case checks are needed, particularly in the context of checking overseas voter applications. You should not, however, allow access to a register or other documents other than the current versions. Local authority libraries and archives services, the British Library and the Statistics Board holding copies of the full register (and the other associated information) may allow inspection and supply

of older versions. 1 You could therefore refer inquiries for older versions to any of these bodies. 1. Regulations 97(5), 97A(7), 99(6) and 109A(9) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 12 October 2020 Book traversal links for Inspection of old copies of the full register Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act Security of data in transit Security of data in transit Security of data in transit Given that the register contains personal data, you should take measures to ensure that proper caution is exercised when sending this data to any of the entitled recipients. While you should seek your own advice regarding the most appropriate and secure method of supplying the register to recipients, general security precautions should include as a minimum: saving electronic copies of the register, either sent by email or saved to disk, in a password-protected or encrypted format with the relevant password or encryption key being sent in a separate communication using secure delivery options provided by Royal Mail and other mail delivery service providers maintaining records of what has been sent, the recipient's details, and how it was sent The Information Commissioner's Office provides advice on encryption, available at <https://ico.org.uk> Where you have used data encryption, you will need to ensure that any recipient can access the data. Further information on data protection considerations for the ERO is covered in our guidance what are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? Last updated: 12 October 2020 Book traversal links for Security of data in transit Inspection of old copies of the full register Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Access and supply of the electoral register Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Access and supply of the electoral register Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection (DOC) Guidance notes for staff supervising the inspection of the full register List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) Publication of data from polling stations Last updated: 19 July 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Access and supply of the electoral register Security of data in transit Absent voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Absent voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Absent voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) This section contains guidance on absent voting. It covers the range of absent vote options for electors, eligibility and application requirements for absent voting and guidance on how an elector can cancel or amend their absent voting arrangements. It also includes guidance on processing absent vote applications, storage of forms, and ongoing requirements to maintain the lists of absent voters. Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Absent voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Access and supply of the electoral register Postal voting (Pre-commencement) Postal voting Postal voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Eligibility to vote by post You should ensure that electors are made aware that they have the option to vote by post, proxy or in person. This will allow them to make an informed choice about the option that is most appropriate to their circumstances. Electors who are or will be registered are entitled to apply for a postal vote for one of the following: an indefinite period a definite period a particular election For someone to meet the 'will be registered' criteria, the five day objection period must have passed and you must have positively determined their registration application, which means they will be added to the register on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. 1 There is no requirement

for an elector to provide a reason why they want to vote by post. 1. Sections 9(2), 10ZC(1), 13 and 13A Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983, Schedule 4 Paragraph 3(1) and 4(1) RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023

Book traversal links for Postal voting (Pre-commencement) Absent voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) How to apply to vote by post (Pre-commencement) How to apply to vote by post How to apply to vote by post (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) There is no prescribed postal vote application form and so an application can be made on any form, although there are requirements for the signature and date of birth to be presented in a specific format . A postal vote application must be made in writing and be dated, 1 but can be in any format: a letter, a fax, an email with a scanned signature or an application form are acceptable, as long as the personal identifier information is clear and provided in the prescribed format . Applications sent by fax must be legible and the personal identifiers need to be set out in the prescribed manner . Applications submitted as a scanned attachment to an email should also be accepted, although there must be a legible scanned image of the signature on the application attached. Unlike applications to register, postal vote applications cannot be made online or by telephone. Where a registration application is made online and the applicant indicates that they wish to vote by post and provides their email address, the IER Digital Service will automatically email them a postal vote application form to print off and complete and return to their ERO. Where the applicant does not provide their email address but indicates that they wish to vote by post, you will be notified by the IER Digital Service and need to send them a paper copy of the application form. There are a number of pieces of information that must be included on a postal vote application including: 2 the full name of the elector the address where the elector is (or has applied to be) registered to vote the elector's signature (or a request for a signature waiver) the elector's date of birth whether the application is for a particular election (and if so, identify which one), a particular period (and if so, specify that period) or an indefinite period whether it is for parliamentary elections, local government elections or both the address where the postal ballot pack should be sent and, if this is not the registered address, a reason for the redirection 1. Regulation 51(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 4 Paragraphs 3(1)(b) and 4(1)(b) Representation of the People Act 2000, and Regulation 51(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 5 September 2023

Book traversal links for How to apply to vote by post (Pre-commencement) Postal voting (Pre-commencement) What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement) What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Although there is no prescribed form for applying for a postal vote, the regulations require that the personal identifiers (i.e. the signature and date of birth) are set out in a manner that is sufficiently clear as to allow electronic scanning into your records, by setting out the information as follows: 1 the signature shall appear against a background of white unlined paper of at least 5 cm long and 2 cm high, and the applicant's date of birth shall be configured numerically in the sequence of day, month and year, i.e. DD MM YYYY You cannot impose any other conditions on the way the information is presented even if to do so would make it easier to scan the identifiers: for example, you cannot require a certain thickness or colour of paper for an application. As long as the identifier fields feature the required contrast and the application meets all other legislative requirements, the

form must be accepted. The location of the signature and date of birth on an application is not prescribed. If the signature and date of birth fields are set out so as to meet the size, format and contrast requirements outlined above, they must be accepted. Your software system must be able to accept any applications where the provisions are fulfilled, applications should not be rejected on the grounds that they are not made on a particular form. If you are producing postal vote application forms you should ensure that these meet accepted good practice in terms of accessibility and usability, and that you lay out the form clearly to help ensure that it is completed accurately. For example, you could position the date of birth box before the signature box, followed by the space for date of completion, to reduce the risk that applicants will give the date of completion first by mistake. 1.

Regulation 51(3A) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■
Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement) How to apply to vote by post (Pre-commencement) Signature waivers for postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Signature waivers for postal vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) If an applicant is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write, they can request that the requirement for a signature on the postal vote application (and postal voting statement) is waived. 1 The applicant must provide with their application the reason for the request and the name and address of any person who has assisted them with completing the application. 2 The proof or evidence needed in order to be satisfied that the applicant is unable to provide a signature, or a consistent signature, due to a disability or an inability to read or write is for you to decide, although you have no power to investigate or to make judgements on the nature or extent of an elector's disability. You should, however, be satisfied that the request is genuine and not being used as an attempt to avoid the postal vote security measures. You should take a consistent approach to considering requests for signature waivers that balances both the accessibility and integrity of the postal voting process. If making further enquiries you should bear in mind that the person requesting the waiver may not be able to respond themselves. However, you can ask the person who has assisted the applicant for clarification or further information. You could, for example, ask this person to complete a signed declaration that to the best of their knowledge and belief the elector in question is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write. You should make clear to anyone from whom you request information or a declaration that it is an offence to provide false information in connection with an application for an absent vote, and that this carries (on summary conviction) a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. If, having made any appropriate enquiries, you are not satisfied as to the authenticity of the request, you should refuse it. If refused, you must reject the absent vote application and notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for your decision. You should remain vigilant as to any trends which may be revealed through the receipt of waiver requests and the following should raise suspicion: large numbers of applications assisted or signed by one person with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible for nursing or care home staff to assist a number of electors to complete their waiver requests, it is less plausible that ordinary members of the public who do not have a connection with such establishments, would need to assist a large number of applicants) large numbers of applications from one street or area with no plausible explanation (for example,

while it may be plausible that a larger than usual number of waivers are requested by residents in a nursing or care home, it is less plausible that a high number of residents in an ordinary HMO would need a waiver) If you are satisfied as to the waiver request and the accompanying absent vote application, you should give confirmation in writing to the elector that you have accepted the application and the waiver. 1. Schedule 4 Paragraphs 3(8 and 4(5) Representation of the People Act 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 51(2)(f) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Signature waivers for postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement) Availability of postal vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Availability of postal vote application forms Availability of postal vote application forms (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You should ensure that electors are made aware that they have the option to vote by proxy, post, or in person. This will allow them to make an informed choice about the option that is most appropriate to their circumstances. You must supply, free of charge, a reasonable quantity of absent vote application forms to people who wish to use them in connection with an election, which includes political parties. 1 Postal vote application forms can also be sent to individuals by email via the IER Digital Service. Application forms should also be made available at all public offices of the local authority and at other premises frequented by electors, such as: post offices libraries doctors' surgeries Citizens Advice Bureaux A number of organisations, including the Electoral Commission and political parties, also provide postal vote application forms. You should also make the forms available to download from your local authority's website. or include a link to the forms that are available from our website . You should consider publicising the closing date for the return of applications, including the deadlines for making changes to existing arrangements, wherever forms are available. Liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) to ensure that the information you provide about the dispatch of postal votes is accurate. You should liaise with local political parties and any local organisations or groups who produce postal application forms to make them aware of the requirements for postal applications and to provide advice on the content and format of their forms. This should help avoid unnecessary delays in processing applications and help to avoid electors having to re-submit an application that has not been made correctly. This is particularly important at election time when any delay could result in the elector missing the deadline. You should ensure that local political parties, candidates and agents at elections are aware of their responsibilities in relation to handling postal applications. If they are given a completed application form, they should forward it directly and without delay to the elections office. The Commission has developed a Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums. You should liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) at any elections that are taking place to ensure that all candidates and agents are provided with copies of the Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums, and know how to obtain additional copies if required. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 The code provides a guide as to what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community during the lead-up to polling day, including in relation to absent vote applications. Any concerns that the code has been breached should be raised first with the candidate, agent, political party or campaigner in question. If you have any further concerns or wish to report a breach

of the code you should first contact your local Commission team . This code has been agreed by the political parties represented on the House of Commons Parliamentary Parties Panel and the panels for the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd, and is endorsed by the members of the Electoral Commission's UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board of senior Returning and Electoral Registration Officers and by the Electoral Integrity Roundtable.

1. Regulation 4(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Availability of postal vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Signature waivers for postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Applying name changes to postal votes (Pre-commencement) Applying name changes to postal votes (Pre-commencement) Applying name changes to postal votes (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) An elector can apply to change their name on the register by submitting a completed change of name form with supporting evidence.

1 The change of name will need to be reflected in the absent voting record. When an elector with a postal vote changes their name, you should send them a new postal vote application in order to collect their new signature.

1. Regulation 26A Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Applying name changes to postal votes (Pre-commencement) Availability of postal vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Pre-commencement) Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) As part of an application for a postal vote, a person may ask for their postal ballot papers to be sent to a different address from their qualifying address. Existing postal voters may also request a redirection . Any request to have postal ballot papers redirected must (unless they are an anonymously registered elector) set out why they require their ballot paper to be sent to that address. There are many circumstances that may lead a person to request a postal vote redirection: they may be on holiday, be in hospital, have work commitments elsewhere, etc. If a person has indicated that they wish their postal vote to be redirected but has failed to include any reasons, you should write to the elector and ask them to provide an explanation. They cannot simply say because I prefer it that way. This does not set out their circumstances and, therefore, is not a valid reason. In this case, you should put the application on hold and request further information from the elector. If they do not respond setting out their circumstances, you can reject the application on the grounds that it does not meet the prescribed requirements. Where an explanation of the circumstances has been provided, you cannot reject a postal vote application or redirection request on the grounds that you are not satisfied with the explanation given. If the reason causes suspicion, or you have concerns because of other circumstances linking the redirection request to others in the area, or to a particular address, this should be reported to your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC), even though you may have no grounds on which to reject the application or redirection request. Levels of postal vote redirections should be monitored. It is important to be vigilant for emerging patterns of redirections. In particular, you should agree with your police SPOC a threshold number of applications being directed to any one address, and consider notifying them if this threshold is reached. Where you grant a redirection request, you must confirm this to the elector, which you can do at the same time as confirming whether their postal vote application has been successful. Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Pre-commencement) Applying name

changes to postal votes (Pre-commencement) Postal vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement) Postal vote application deadlines Postal vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Applications can be made at any time, and you should process all applications as soon as possible. There are, however, deadlines in legislation by which postal vote applications must have been received in order to apply at a particular election. Deadline for new postal and postal proxy applications 5pm – 11 working days before the date of the poll 1 Deadline for changes (including cancellations) to existing absent voting arrangements 5pm – 11 working days before the date of the poll 2 Except in the case where a postal ballot paper has been issued before then and has been returned (but not under the lost / spoilt / not received provisions) - in that case, no changes may be made after the ballot paper has been returned. 3 Deadlines for absent vote applications at elections are statutory. There can be no extension to the deadlines for any reason. Applications received after the deadline for a particular election cannot be accepted. Where applications for a particular election miss the application deadline, applicants should be notified that their application was not received by the statutory deadline and so cannot be allowed in respect of that election. If the deadline to vote by proxy has not also passed you should highlight the option and include the relevant form. You should also include another postal vote application form and mention the option electors have to apply for a definite or indefinite period, in case they wish to have a postal vote for future elections. Applications for a definite or indefinite period received after the deadline for an election, must still be processed and determined but will apply for subsequent elections only. You should notify the applicants that they missed the deadline to be issued a postal vote for that particular election, but that the postal vote will be in place for future elections. If the deadline to vote by proxy has not also passed you should highlight this option for the particular election as an option and include the relevant form. However, you should also note that should the elector choose a proxy for that particular election the postal vote application processed for future elections will be cancelled and a new postal vote application will need to be made. Recall Petitions A person is entitled to sign a petition by post if they have been granted an application for a definite or indefinite period at parliamentary elections before 5pm on the cut-off day (3 working days before the first day of the signing period). Where a person has been granted an application to vote by post for a definite period and that period expires during the signing period of a particular petition, that definite period is deemed to continue until the end of the signing period. Unless they apply to cancel their postal vote before 5pm on the eleventh day before the last day of the signing period. ■ 4 Calculating deadlines Deadlines are calculated in working days by excluding Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. 5 Bank holidays that apply when calculating absent voting deadlines are ones that apply anywhere across the area in which the election as a whole takes place. So, at a UK Parliamentary general election, a bank holiday in Scotland will also apply in England and Wales. The only exception to this is where the proceedings at a UK Parliamentary general election in a particular constituency are commenced afresh because a candidate has died. In this case, only the bank holidays that apply in the affected area will be included in the calculation of the absent voting deadlines. However, at UK Parliamentary by-elections and local government elections, only the bank holidays that apply in the area that has the election must be taken into account. 6 1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 56(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 56(5A) RPR

2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 50 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 56(6) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 56(7)(b) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 13 September 2023 Book traversal links for Postal vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement) Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Pre-commencement) Processing postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Processing postal vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) All applications should be date-stamped upon receipt. This is particularly important in the lead-up to an election. On deadline day for applications, it is advisable to record the time of receipt, so that you have an audit trail of which applications were received before and after the deadline. Electors may deliver application forms to other local authority buildings. You should decide where you will accept absent vote applications and whether to appoint staff at these locations for the purposes of receiving application forms. If you do, you should ensure that they are aware of the absent voting deadlines and emphasise the importance of transmitting absent vote applications they receive to you in a timely fashion. You should also ensure that all in-trays, post boxes and desks of registration staff are checked regularly to ensure that no forms are missed. Occasionally, electors will send their applications to the wrong ERO. You should have in place arrangements for the rapid, onward transmission of such forms. It may be necessary to fax or scan and email the application to the correct ERO if the application is received close to the deadline for an election. At certain times - for example, in an election period - you may deal with a large volume of applications. You should plan the arrangements you will put in place to allow you to process a large number of applications. If using temporary staff, you should ensure that training and instructions are provided. Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Processing postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Postal vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement) Determining postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Determining postal vote applications Determining postal vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Step 1 Is the applicant registered, or will they be? Only electors who are, or will be registered, can apply for a postal vote. You will therefore need to check that the applicant is or will be registered before granting a postal vote application. For someone to meet the will be registered criteria, the five day objection period must have passed and you must have positively determined their registration application, which means they will be added to the register on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. 1 Step 2 Check the application meets the prescribed requirements Once the application has passed the registration check, it must be scrutinised to ensure that it satisfies the prescribed requirements . Where it does, you must confirm to the elector the outcome of the application. If applications are incomplete you should, where possible, make enquiries to obtain the missing information. If the missing information is not submitted, the application must not be allowed. Where it appears that the elector has made a mistake when completing their postal vote application (for example, where they have transposed their date of birth figures), you should contact the elector and ask them to resubmit an application form. Where you have any integrity concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice and handle the application form in accordance with any instructions provided by them on evidence handling. It is for you to determine how much checking you undertake to satisfy yourself as to the authenticity of a date of birth or signature, taking into account available resources and access

to this information. 1. Sections 9(2), 10ZC(1), 13 and 13A Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Determining postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Processing postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Pre-commencement) Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You must write to applicants to let them know whether their application has been accepted or rejected. 1 If an application is rejected, you must give the reason(s) why. 2 There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed. Confirmations are an opportunity to safeguard against potential fraud, or misunderstanding, on the part of the elector. You may, additionally, decide to acknowledge receipt of applications. If an elector receives an acknowledgement for a postal vote that they have not requested, receipt of the acknowledgement would give the elector an opportunity to get in touch with you. All responses, along with any confirmation notices or acknowledgements returned as undelivered/not known at this address, should be monitored and, if you have concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice. For further information, see our guidance on identifying suspicious absent vote applications. 1. Regulation 57 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 57(4) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Pre-commencement) Determining postal vote applications (Pre-commencement) Changing or cancelling a postal vote at an election (Pre-commencement) Changing or cancelling a postal vote at an election Changing or cancelling a postal vote at an election (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) What happens if the postal vote has already been returned? As postal ballot papers may be issued to electors from the deadline for withdrawals, but the deadline for changes to absent voting arrangements is not until 5pm, 11 working days before the poll, there are provisions to allow the Returning Officer to cancel an already issued ballot paper. To allow the Returning Officer to cancel the relevant ballot paper, you must notify them whenever you have granted: 1 cancellation of postal vote arrangements change from postal to proxy application for a postal ballot paper to be sent to a different address If a person returns a postal ballot paper that has been or is to be cancelled, the ballot paper, together with any other ballot papers returned, the postal voting statement or covering envelopes must be forwarded to the Returning Officer. 2 However, you must disregard any application to change the electors method of voting for the election for which the postal ballot paper has been issued if, before you have determined the new application, the elector returns their postal ballot paper (unless they have spoilt it or claim it has been lost or not received). If you are not the Returning Officer at the election you will need to closely liaise with them to check the list of returned postal ballot papers before processing any requests for changes after postal ballot packs have been issued. 3 Postal voters for a definite or indefinite period may cancel their postal vote at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election. 4 The exception to this is where the completed postal ballot paper has already been returned by the elector for the election. This is also the case for an elector voting by proxy, where their proxy has a postal vote and has already voted on behalf of the elector by returning their completed postal proxy vote. 5 It is the return of the ballot paper that is relevant in determining whether or not an elector can make changes to their postal voting arrangements to take effect at that election.

Returning Officers will therefore need to have in place a system that will allow them to identify promptly whether or not a postal ballot paper has been returned. There are no provisions for those electors with a postal vote at a particular election to cancel their postal vote. However, they may change their voting method by submitting a fresh proxy application by 5pm, 11 working days before the election, which would supersede the earlier application for a postal vote.

1. Regulation 78A(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulation 78A(2)(a) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Regulation 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Regulation 56(5) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

5. Regulation 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#)

Last updated: 5 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Changing or cancelling a postal vote at an election \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Cancelling a postal vote \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Cancelling a postal vote \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

Postal voters who have a postal vote for a definite or indefinite period may cancel their postal vote at any time and up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election.

1 However, since postal ballot papers may be issued to electors as soon as practicable, an elector who has received their postal ballot and has returned their completed postal ballot paper for the election will not be allowed to cancel or make any changes to their absent voting arrangements so that they take effect at the election (except if the ballot paper has been returned as spoilt or lost).

2 This is also the case for an elector voting by proxy, where their proxy has a postal vote and has already voted on behalf of the elector by returning their completed postal proxy vote.

3

1. Regulation 56(5) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulation 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Regulation 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

Last updated: 5 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Cancelling a postal vote \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Changing or cancelling a postal vote at an election \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Changes from postal to proxy \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Changes from postal to proxy \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

Postal voters who have a postal vote for a definite or indefinite period may change their voting method from postal to proxy at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election.

1 The exception to this is where the completed postal ballot paper has already been returned by the elector for the election.

. Applications to change the voting method must be made in writing and may be hand-delivered, faxed or emailed to you and must contain:

2 the elector's full name and registered address the proxy's name and address the reason why the elector cannot vote in person on polling day the date of application the family relationship to the proxy (if any) a statement that they have consulted the proxy and that the person is capable of being and willing to be appointed as their proxy

1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Regulations 51(1), (2) and 52 RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 5 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Changes from postal to proxy \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Cancelling a postal vote \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Redirection requests for existing postal voters \(Pre-commencement\)](#)

[Redirection requests for existing postal voters \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

Existing postal voters with a postal vote for a definite or indefinite period may ask for their postal vote to be redirected at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election.

1 The exception to this is where the

completed postal ballot paper has already been returned by the elector for the election . The request must be made in writing and may be hand-delivered, faxed or emailed to you and must contain: 2 the elector's full name and registered address the redirection address the circumstances that require, or will require, the redirection the date of the request Where a request for redirection has been granted, you must confirm this to the elector. 3 Those electors with a postal vote for a particular election may not alter their postal vote delivery details, but may submit a fresh application with a new address for the postal vote to be sent to. 1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 51 and 51B RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 57(4A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Redirection requests for existing postal voters (Pre-commencement) Changes from postal to proxy (Pre-commencement) Proxy voting (Pre-commencement) Proxy voting Proxy voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Eligibility to vote by proxy You should ensure that electors are made aware that they have the option to vote by post, proxy or in person. This will allow them to make an informed choice about the option that is most appropriate to their circumstances. Electors who are or will be registered are entitled to apply for a proxy vote for one of the following: 1 an indefinite period a definite period a particular election For someone to meet the will be registered criteria, the five day objection period must have passed and you must have positively determined their registration application, which means they will be added to the register on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. 2 Voting by proxy for a definite or indefinite period While everyone is entitled to a proxy vote at a particular election, applications for a definite or indefinite period require a specific reason. These reasons are: 3 blindness other disability (the disability must be specified) occupation/employment/service/attendance on a course (details must be provided) registered as a service voter or overseas voter registered as an anonymous elector journey necessary by sea or air to get from the registered address to their polling station In some cases, an attestation in support of the application is also required. More information can be found in our guidance on attestations . Voting by proxy at a particular election Applications for a proxy vote for a particular election only require the applicant to give a reason for voting by proxy. 4 The decision as to whether a reason given is satisfactory is made at your discretion, taking each case on its own merits. There are many reasons why a person may decide to vote by proxy at a particular election. If no explanation of the relevant reason is given on the application it will be incomplete and you should write to the elector to ask them to provide an explanation. If no explanation is provided, you can decide to reject the application on the grounds that it does not meet the prescribed requirements. You cannot, however, reject a proxy vote application solely on the grounds that you are not satisfied with the explanation. You should accept applications at face value. If the reason does cause suspicion, or if you have concerns because of other circumstances linking the application to others in the area, or to a particular address, this should be reported to your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) even though you may have no grounds on which to reject the application. 1. Schedule 4 Paragraphs 3(2) and 4(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sections 9(2), 10ZC(1), 13 and 13A RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4 Paragraph 3(3) RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 55(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated:

5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Proxy voting (Pre-commencement) Redirection requests for existing postal voters (Pre-commencement) The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Pre-commencement) The qualifications for acting as a proxy The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Any person can be appointed as proxy for another as long as you are satisfied that the person appointed as proxy is an elector who is, or will be, registered and are entitled to vote in the type of poll they are appointed for. 1 Where the proxy is resident in your local authority area, you will be able to check your own register. However, where the proxy is registered in another local authority area you will need to confirm these details with the ERO for that local authority area. You can require another ERO to provide information as soon as reasonably practicable 2 and should let the ERO know if you require an urgent response due to an imminent election. You should draw their attention to the urgency of any required response, for example, by using a clear subject heading in your email, such as ERO registration status check for proxy application. You need to have in place a mechanism for monitoring and following up on any non-responses. Equally, you should ensure you provide this information as quickly as possible to any other ERO. If the nominated person is not and will not be registered, you should contact the applicant to explain the qualification criteria and ask them to nominate someone else who is or will be registered as their proxy, or suggest they ask their proxy to register (and explain how to do so) then notify you if the registration application is successful. If the proxy application is made close to a registration deadline you should attempt to contact the applicant quickly, such as by phone or email if you have their contact details. A person is not entitled to vote as proxy in any electoral area on behalf of more than two electors, except where they are the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the electors. 3 There is no limit to the number of close relatives that a proxy may vote on behalf of. It is not an offence to be appointed as proxy by more than two people, but it is an offence to vote for more than two people who are not close relatives. 1. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(1), (3) and (3A) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 2(1), Representation of the People (Provision of information regarding proxies) Regulations 2013 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(6) RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Pre-commencement) Proxy voting (Pre-commencement) How to apply to vote by proxy (Pre-commencement) How to apply to vote by proxy How to apply to vote by proxy (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) There is no prescribed proxy vote application form and so an application can be made on any form, although there are requirements for the signature and date of birth to be presented in a specific format . A proxy vote application must be made in writing and be dated, 1 but can be in any format: 2 a letter, a fax, an email with a scanned signature or an application form are acceptable, as long as the personal identifier information is clear and is provided in the prescribed format . Applications sent by fax must be legible and the personal identifiers need to be set out in the prescribed manner . Applications submitted as a scanned attachment to an email should also be accepted, although there must be a legible scanned image of the signature on the application attached. Unlike applications to register, proxy vote applications cannot be made online or by telephone. When electors apply to register online, the online form makes this clear. The applicant will be asked whether they want to apply to vote by post or by proxy. Where the elector wishes to vote by proxy you will need to send them a proxy vote

application form. There are a number of pieces of information that must be included on a proxy application including: 3 the full name of the elector the address where the elector is (or has applied to be) registered to vote the elector's signature (or a request for a signature waiver) the elector's date of birth the grounds on which the elector claims to be entitled to vote by proxy the full name and address of the proxy the family relationship between the elector and proxy (if any) whether the application is for a particular election, a particular period or an indefinite period, and if it is for a particular period it should specify that period whether it is for parliamentary elections, local elections or both the date of the application The requirement for applicants to specify why they cannot reasonably be expected to vote in person does not apply to: overseas electors service voters crown servants anonymous electors The applicant must also either: 4 where only they have signed the form, include a statement stating that they have consulted the proxy and that that person is able and willing to be appointed as a proxy, or where the proxy has also signed the form, include a statement by the proxy stating that they are able and willing to be appointed as the applicant's proxy 1. Regulation 51(3) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 51(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4 Paragraphs 3(2)(c) and 4(2)(c) Representation of the People Act 2000, Regulation 51(1), (2), (4) and (5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 52 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for How to apply to vote by proxy (Pre-commencement) The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Pre-commencement) What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement) What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Although there is no prescribed form for applying for a proxy vote, the regulations require that the personal identifiers (i.e. the signature and date of birth) are set out in a manner that is sufficiently clear as to allow electronic scanning into your records, by setting out the information as follows: 1 the signature shall appear against a background of white unlined paper of at least 5 cm long and 2 cm high, and the applicant's date of birth shall be configured numerically in the sequence of day, month and year, i.e. DD MM YYYY You cannot impose any other conditions on the way the information is presented, even if to do so would make it easier to scan the identifiers: for example, you cannot require a certain thickness or colour of paper for an application. As long as the identifier fields feature the required contrast and the application meets all other legislative requirements, the form must be accepted. The location of the signature and date of birth on an application is not prescribed. If the signature and date of birth fields are set out so as to meet the size, format and contrast requirements outlined above, they must be accepted. You must accept any application that arrives in the prescribed format – i.e. with the date of birth and signature fields as prescribed. Your software system must be able to accept any applications where the provisions are fulfilled, applications should not be rejected on the grounds that they are not made on a particular form. 1. Regulation 51(3A) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement) How to apply to vote by proxy (Pre-commencement) Signature waivers for proxy applications (Pre-commencement) Signature waivers for proxy applications Signature waivers for proxy applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) If an applicant is

unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write, they can request that the requirement for a signature on the application is waived. The applicant must provide the reason for the request and the name and address of any person who has assisted them with completing the application. 1 The proof or evidence needed in order to be satisfied that the applicant is unable to provide a signature, or a consistent signature, due to a disability or an inability to read or write is for you to decide, although you have no power to investigate or to make judgements on the nature or extent of an elector's disability. You should, however, be satisfied that the request is genuine and not being used as an attempt to avoid security measures. You should take a consistent approach to considering requests for signature waivers that balances both the accessibility and integrity of the proxy voting process. If making further enquiries you should bear in mind that the person requesting the waiver may not be able to respond themselves. However, you can ask the person who has assisted the applicant for clarification or further information. You could, for example, ask this person to complete a signed declaration that to the best of their knowledge and belief the elector in question is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write. You should make clear to anyone you request information or a declaration from that it is an offence to provide false information in connection with an application for an absent vote, and that this carries (on summary conviction) a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. If, having made enquiries, you are not satisfied as to the authenticity of the request, you should refuse it. If refused, you must reject the absent vote application and notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for your decision. You should remain vigilant as to any trends which may be revealed through the receipt of waiver requests and the following should raise suspicion: large numbers of applications assisted or signed by one person with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible for nursing or care home staff to assist a number of electors to complete their waiver requests, it is less plausible that ordinary members of the public who do not have a connection with such establishments, would need to assist a large number of applicants) large numbers of applications from one street or area with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible that a larger than usual number of waivers are requested by residents in a nursing or care home, it is less plausible that a high number of residents in an ordinary HMO would need a waiver) If you are satisfied as to the waiver request and the accompanying absent vote application, you should give confirmation in writing to the elector that you have accepted the application and the waiver. 1. Regulation 51(2)(f) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Signature waivers for proxy applications (Pre-commencement) What are the prescribed requirements for personal identifiers? (Pre-commencement) Availability of proxy vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Availability of proxy vote application forms Availability of proxy vote application forms (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You should ensure that electors are made aware that they have the option to vote by proxy, post, or in person. This will allow them to make an informed choice about the option that is most appropriate to their circumstances. You must supply, free of charge, a reasonable quantity of absent vote application forms to people who wish to use them in connection with an election, which includes political parties. 1 It is not currently possible for proxy vote application forms to be sent via the IER Digital Service. Application forms should also be made available

at all public offices of the local authority and at other premises frequented by electors, such as: post offices libraries doctors' surgeries Citizens Advice Bureaux A number of organisations, including the Electoral Commission and political parties, also provide proxy vote application forms. You should also make the forms available to download from your local authority's website. or include a link to the forms that are available from our website . You should consider publicising the closing date for the return of applications, including the deadlines for making changes to existing arrangements, wherever forms are available. Liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) to ensure that the information you provide about the dispatch of postal proxy votes is accurate. You should liaise with local political parties and any local organisations or groups who produce proxy application forms to make them aware of the requirements for proxy applications and to provide advice on the content and format of their forms. This should help avoid unnecessary delays in processing applications and help to avoid electors having to re-submit an application that has not been made correctly. This is particularly important at election time when any delay could result in the elector missing the deadline. You should ensure that local political parties, candidates and agents at elections are aware of their responsibilities in relation to handling proxy applications. If they are given a completed application form, they should forward it directly and without delay to the elections office. The Commission has developed a Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums. You should liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) at any elections that are taking place to ensure that all candidates and agents are provided with copies of the Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums, and know how to obtain additional copies if required. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 The code provides a guide as to what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community during the lead-up to polling day, including in relation to absent vote applications. Any concerns that the code has been breached should be raised first with the candidate, agent, political party or campaigner in question. If you have any further concerns or wish to report a breach of the code you should first contact your local Commission team . This code has been agreed by the political parties represented on the House of Commons Parliamentary Parties Panel and the panels for the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd, and is endorsed by the members of the Electoral Commission's UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board of senior Returning and Electoral Registration Officers and by the Electoral Integrity Roundtable. 1. Regulation 4(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Availability of proxy vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Signature waivers for proxy applications (Pre-commencement) Proxy applications requiring an attestation (Pre-commencement) Proxy applications requiring an attestation Proxy applications requiring an attestation (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Proxy applications for a definite or indefinite period require specific reasons and, in some cases, an attestation in support of the application is also required. 1 These include: applications for reasons of blindness or other disability (excluding those who are registered blind or severely sight impaired by the local authority or who are in receipt of the higher rate of the mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment) applications due to occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations provide that an attestation from a medical professional in support of an application

to vote by proxy due to disability must be provided free of charge. 2 Those having to make a journey by sea or air to get to their polling station do not require their application to be attested. You will be able to verify whether a journey by sea or air is required to get from the qualifying address to the relevant polling station from your own local knowledge. This provision only covers journeys from the qualifying address to the polling station, and not any such journeys required due to being temporarily absent from the qualifying address, such as being on holiday. 1. Regulations 53 and 54 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 22 and Schedule 2, The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Proxy applications requiring an attestation (Pre-commencement) Availability of proxy vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? (Pre-commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Application forms for the appointment of a proxy on the grounds of disability of blindness must be attested by: 1 a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse treating the applicant for their disability or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability a person registered as a member of a profession to which the Health Professions Order 2001 applies (i.e. arts therapists, chiropodists, clinical scientists, dieticians, medical laboratory technicians, occupational therapists, orthoptists, paramedics, physiotherapists, prosthetists and orthotists, radiographers, and speech and language therapists) treating the applicant for their condition or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability a registered dentist, dispensing optician, optometrist, pharmaceutical chemist, osteopath or chiropractor treating the applicant for their disability or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability the manager of a care home service registered under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000 the warden of residential premises provided for persons of pensionable age or disabled persons, where the applicant states that they reside in such an establishment the manager (or their authorised representative) of a hospital registered in accordance with Section 145 of the Mental Health Act 1983 a registered social worker who has arranged care or assistance for the applicant a registered chartered psychologist who is treating the applicant for their condition or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability In most circumstances, the person attesting the form must provide their name and address. 2 The only exception is where an application is made by an elector detained in a hospital under Section 145 of the Mental Health Act 1983. 3 In this case, there is no need for the attestor to provide their address. In all cases, the attestor must state: 4 the post or office that qualifies them to attest the application that to the best of their knowledge and belief the applicant cannot reasonably be expected to go to the polling station or to vote there unaided by reason of their disability that the medical condition or disability is likely to continue either indefinitely or for a period specified by the attestor Where an application is made by an elector detained in a hospital under Section 145 of the Mental Health Act 1983, the person attesting the application must also state the statutory provision under which the applicant is liable to be detained. 5 1. Regulation 53(2) and (3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 53(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 53(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 53(4) and (5A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 54(5A)(iv) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) Last updated: 5 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Proxy applications requiring an attestation \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Application forms for the appointment of a proxy on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course must be attested: 1 by the applicant's employer or an employee delegated to do so on the employer's behalf if the applicant is self-employed, by a person aged 18 years or over who knows the person but is not related to them, or if the applicant is attending a course, by the tutor of a course or the principal of the educational institution where a course is taking place, or an employee delegated to do so on the principal's behalf 1. Regulation 54(2) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 5 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Voting by post as proxy \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Voting by post as proxy \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Those appointed as a proxy can choose to apply to vote by post . You should consider sending application forms for this purpose when notifying the proxy of their appointment. The application made by the proxy to vote by post must meet the same prescribed requirements as for any application to vote by post, including the requirement to provide personal identifiers. Last updated: 5 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Voting by post as proxy \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Emergency proxies \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Emergency proxies \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) An elector may appoint an emergency proxy at an election up to 5pm on polling day in the following circumstances: 1 in the case of a medical condition, illness or disability arising after the deadline for ordinary proxy applications if they are a mental health patient detained under civil powers if their occupation, service or employment means they cannot go to the polling station in person and they became aware of this after the deadline for ordinary proxy applications if they meet any of the conditions relating to emergency proxies on the grounds of voter identification after the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document (at local government elections, Police and Crime Commissioner elections and UK parliamentary by-elections) [Emergency proxies on the grounds of voter identification](#)2 The grounds on which an elector can appoint an emergency proxy relating to voter identification are covered in our guidance on [emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification](#). Any application under this provision must state that it is made on the grounds of voter identification and include which of the acceptable conditions apply to the applicant. An application made on the grounds of voter identification does not require an attestation. 1. Regulation 56(3A) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regs. 55B and 56A RPR (E&W) 2001 (as amended) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2 a b](#) 3. 56A(2)(b) RPR (E&W) 2001 (as amended) ■ [Back to](#)

content at footnote 3 4. Representation of the People Act 2000, Schedule 4 para 6(11)(b) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 6 September 2023 Book traversal links for Emergency proxies (Pre-commencement) Voting by post as proxy (Pre-commencement) Attestations for emergency proxies (Pre-commencement) Attestations for emergency proxies (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Emergency proxy application forms must be attested except: where the elector is registered anonymously 1 where the application is made on grounds relating to voter identification 2 Where the application is due to a medical condition, illness or disability, the attestor must be one of the individuals included in the list of people who may attest proxy applications made on the grounds of disability or illness. The attestation must include the day on which, to the best of the knowledge and belief of the person attesting, the applicant became ill or disabled, which must be after 5pm on the sixth working day before polling day if the application is to be accepted. 3 Where a person applies for an emergency proxy because they have been called away as a result of their occupation, service or employment, the application must include the date on which they became aware of the circumstances which will not allow them to vote in person. 4 Applications on the grounds of occupation, service or employment must be attested by either: 5 the applicant's employer or an employee delegated to do so on the employer's behalf if the applicant is self-employed, by a person aged 18 years or over who knows the person but is not related to them A person is related to another in this context if they are their spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild. 6 1. Regulation 55(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 55B RPR (E&W) 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulations 53, 55(2), (3), (4) and (5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 55A(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 55A(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 55A(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Attestations for emergency proxies (Pre-commencement) Emergency proxies (Pre-commencement) Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station staff (Pre-commencement) Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station staff (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) If the application is made after the list of proxies has been dispatched to the polling station, the Presiding Officer at the polling station where the proxy will be voting will need to be made aware, as they will not be on the list of proxies originally supplied. Every effort should be made to contact the Presiding Officer directly to notify them that an emergency proxy has been appointed, particularly as there is no requirement in law that a proxy must provide any documentation in order to be permitted to vote on behalf of an elector. Where possible, it is recommended that a supplementary list of proxies be issued to the polling station, which should then be added to the list originally supplied. Local arrangements between you and the Returning Officer will be required in order to determine how any emergency proxy appointments will be notified to the Presiding Officer. For example, you could give the proxy of any voter whose application has been accepted a letter authorising them to act as a proxy, which would also include details of the person for whom they are voting. The proxy could then be instructed to take that authorisation with them when they go to vote and hand it to the Presiding Officer. The letter should then be retained with the list of proxies as a record that the proxy has been issued with a ballot paper. Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station

staff (Pre-commencement) Attestations for emergency proxies (Pre-commencement) Proxy vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement) Proxy vote application deadlines Proxy vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Applications can be made at any time, and you should process all applications as soon as possible. There are, however, deadlines in legislation by which proxy vote applications must have been received in order to apply at a particular election. Deadline for changes to existing proxy and postal proxy arrangements (including cancellations) 5pm – 11 working days before the date of the poll 1 Deadline for new proxy applications (excluding emergency proxies) and new proxy appointments 5pm – 6 working days before the date of the poll 2 Deadline for emergency proxy applications 5pm – polling day 3 Recall Petitions A person is entitled to sign a petition by proxy if they have been granted an application to vote by proxy for a definite or indefinite period at parliamentary elections before 5pm on the cut-off day (3 working days before the first day of the signing period). Where a person has been granted an application to vote by proxy for a definite period and that period expires during the signing period of a particular petition, that entitlement to vote by proxy is deemed to end at the expiry of that definite period. 4 Calculating deadlines Bank holidays that apply when calculating absent voting deadlines are ones that apply anywhere across the area in which the election as a whole takes place. So, at a UK Parliamentary general election, a bank holiday in Scotland will also apply in England and Wales. However, at UK Parliamentary by-elections and local government elections, only the bank holidays that apply in the area that has the election must be taken into account. 5 Deadlines for absent vote applications at elections are statutory. There can be no extension to the deadlines for any reason. Applications received after the deadline for a particular election must be disallowed for that election, and the elector notified of the fact. 6 If, however, it is an application for a definite or indefinite period going beyond the election, and the application meets all the prescribed requirements, the elector should be advised they missed the deadline to be given a proxy vote for that election but that their proxy vote will be in place for future elections. If the application is refused, you must notify the applicant of the decision and the reason for it. 7 Deadlines are calculated in working days by excluding Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. 1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 56(2) and (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 56(3A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 50 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 56(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulations 56(1) – (4) and 57(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 57(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 13 September 2023 Book traversal links for Proxy vote application deadlines (Pre-commencement) Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station staff (Pre-commencement) Processing proxy vote applications (Pre-commencement) Processing proxy vote applications Processing proxy vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) All applications should be date-stamped upon receipt. This is particularly important in the lead-up to an election. On deadline day for applications ahead of a particular election, it is advisable to record the time of receipt, so that you have an audit trail of which applications were received before and after the deadline. Electors may deliver application forms to other local authority buildings. You should decide where you will accept absent vote applications and whether to appoint staff at these locations for the purposes of receiving application forms. If you do, you should ensure that

they are aware of the absent voting deadlines and emphasise the importance of transmitting absent vote applications they receive to you in a timely fashion. You should also ensure that all in-trays, post boxes and desks of registration staff are checked regularly to ensure that no forms are missed. Occasionally, electors will send their applications to the wrong ERO. You should have in place arrangements for the rapid, onward transmission of such forms. It may be necessary to fax or scan and email the application to the correct ERO if the application is received close to the deadline for an election. At certain times - for example, an election period, you may deal with a large volume of applications. You should plan the arrangements you will put in place to allow you to process a large number of applications. If using temporary staff, you should ensure that training and instructions are provided. Last updated: 5 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Processing proxy vote applications \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Proxy vote application deadlines \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Determining proxy vote applications \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Determining proxy vote applications \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

Step 1 Is the applicant registered, or will they be? Only electors who are, or will be registered, can apply for a proxy vote. 1 You will therefore first need to check that the applicant is or will be registered before granting a proxy vote application. For someone to meet the will be registered criteria, the five day objection period must have passed and you must have positively determined their registration application, which means they will be added to the register on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. 2

Step 2 Check the application meets the prescribed requirements Once the application has passed the registration check, it must be scrutinised to ensure that it satisfies the prescribed requirements . Where it does, you must confirm to the elector and their proxy the outcome of the application. If applications are incomplete you should, where possible, make enquiries to obtain the missing information. If the missing information is not submitted, the application must not be allowed. Where it appears that the elector has made a mistake when completing their application (for example, where they have transposed their date of birth figures), you should contact the elector and ask them to resubmit an application form. Where you have any integrity concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice and handle the application form in accordance with any instructions provided by them on evidence handling. It is for you to determine how much checking you undertake to satisfy yourself as to the authenticity of a date of birth or signature, taking into account available resources and access to this information. 1. Schedule 4 Paragraph 3(2) and 4(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Sections 9(2), 10ZC(1), 13 and 13A RPA 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

Last updated: 5 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Determining proxy vote applications \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Processing proxy vote applications \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

You must write to applicants to let them know whether their application has been accepted or rejected. If an application is rejected, you must give the reason(s) why. 1 There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed. When you grant an application, you must confirm that the proxy has been appointed, the name and address of the proxy and the duration of their appointment. 2 The proxy must also be notified of their appointment. 3 The form of the proxy paper for confirming the proxy of their appointment is prescribed. 4 Confirmations are an opportunity to safeguard against

potential fraud, or misunderstanding, on the part of the elector or the proxy. You may, additionally, decide to acknowledge receipt of applications. If an elector receives an acknowledgement for a proxy vote that they have not requested, receipt of the acknowledgement would give the elector an opportunity to get in touch with you. All responses, along with any confirmation notices or acknowledgements returned to you as undelivered/not known at this address, should be monitored and, if you have concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice. For further information, see our guidance on identifying suspicious absent vote applications . 1. Regulation 57(1) and (4) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 57(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(9) Representation of the People Act 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 57(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application (Pre-commencement) Determining proxy vote applications (Pre-commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Changing an appointed proxy Proxy voters who have a proxy vote for a definite or indefinite period may change their appointed proxy at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election. 1 Alternatively, they may submit a fresh application to vote by proxy for a definite or indefinite period, by 5pm six working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier one. There are no provisions for those electors with a proxy vote at a particular election to change their proxy appointment. However, they may submit a fresh application to vote by proxy, by 5pm six working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier one. Emergency change of proxy on grounds relating to voter identification2 A proxy voter can make an application to change an appointed proxy made on grounds relating to voter identification. The application must include a statement that to the best of the proxy voter's knowledge and belief their appointed proxy meets one of the conditions provided for . An application made under these provisions must reach the ERO by 5pm on the day of poll. Changing from a proxy vote to a postal vote Proxy voters who have a proxy vote for a definite or indefinite period may change their voting option from proxy to postal at any time and up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election.4

Applications to change the method of voting from proxy to postal must be made by submitting an application to vote by post. If the postal vote application meets the prescribed requirements , you must amend the record accordingly. Cancelling a proxy vote Proxy voters who have a proxy vote for a definite or indefinite period may cancel their proxy vote at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before an election to be effective at that election.5 There are no provisions for electors with a proxy vote at a particular election to cancel their proxy vote. However, they may change their voting method by submitting a postal application by 5pm, 11 working days before the election, which would supersede the earlier application for a proxy vote. An elector who has appointed a proxy may still vote in person, provided they do so before their appointed proxy and that the appointed proxy has not elected to vote by post. Changing or cancelling a proxy vote where a postal proxy exists If a postal proxy returns their postal ballot paper (unless they have spoilt it or claim it has been lost or not received) before you have determined an application from the elector to change or cancel their proxy, or from the proxy to change their method of voting from postal to voting in person, you must disregard the application for the election for which the postal ballot paper has been issued.6

Please see our guidance on the cancellation of postal votes , which also applies in the case of a postal proxy. Name changes An elector can apply to change their name on the register by submitting a completed change of name form with supporting evidence.⁷

The change of name will need to be reflected in the absent voting record.

Requirement to notify the Returning Officer at an election of changes to proxy voting arrangements You must notify the Returning Officer whenever you have granted:

8
cancellation of proxy vote or postal proxy vote arrangements change from proxy to postal appointment of proxy application for a proxy postal ballot paper to be sent to a different address 1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 52 RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 a b 3. Regulation 52(1A) and (1B) RPR (E&W) 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 a b c 4. Regulation 56(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 a b 5. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(10) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 and Regulation 56(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 a b 6. Regulation 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 a b 7. Section 10ZD(1) RPA 1983 and Regulation 26A RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 a b 8. Regulation 78A(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 Last updated: 7 September 2023 Book traversal links for Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application (Pre-commencement) Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You must make enquiries of all proxy vote applications granted on the specific grounds of occupation, service, employment or attendance on an educational course within three years of granting the application, or of the last such enquiry. 1 The purpose is to establish whether there has been a material change in circumstances that would mean that the person is no longer entitled to their proxy vote. You may make additional enquiries at any time. You will need to put arrangements in place to schedule and track the progress of any such enquiries. You could, for example, include this in your monthly procedures for publishing a notice of alteration. The format and content of these enquiries is not prescribed. You may contact the elector via email, phone or letter. Where you make an enquiry by phone, you should keep a written note for your records. Your communications should clearly state any deadline period of one month for replying and the consequences of not responding. If an elector fails to respond within one month, you are entitled to cancel the absent vote. 2 Cancellation in these circumstances is discretionary and you may wish to send the elector further reminders before cancelling. If the cancellation would fall immediately before an election, you should consider not exercising the discretion until after the election to avoid the elector potentially being disenfranchised. Whatever approach you take, you should ensure that it is applied consistently. 1. Regulation 60(3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 60(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Pre-commencement) Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed (in the case of proxy applications, this applies to applications to appoint a proxy for a definite or indefinite period only). Any appeal must be made to you within 14 days of

Book traversal links for Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application (Pre-commencement) Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You must make enquiries of all proxy vote applications granted on the specific grounds of occupation, service, employment or attendance on an educational course within three years of granting the application, or of the last such enquiry. 1 The purpose is to establish whether there has been a material change in circumstances that would mean that the person is no longer entitled to their proxy vote. You may make additional enquiries at any time. You will need to put arrangements in place to schedule and track the progress of any such enquiries. You could, for example, include this in your monthly procedures for publishing a notice of alteration. The format and content of these enquiries is not prescribed. You may contact the elector via email, phone or letter. Where you make an enquiry by phone, you should keep a written note for your records. Your communications should clearly state any deadline period of one month for replying and the consequences of not responding. If an elector fails to respond within one month, you are entitled to cancel the absent vote. 2 Cancellation in these circumstances is discretionary and you may wish to send the elector further reminders before cancelling. If the cancellation would fall immediately before an election, you should consider not exercising the discretion until after the election to avoid the elector potentially being disenfranchised. Whatever approach you take, you should ensure that it is applied consistently. 1. Regulation 60(3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 60(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Pre-commencement) Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed (in the case of proxy applications, this applies to applications to appoint a proxy for a definite or indefinite period only). Any appeal must be made to you within 14 days of

the date of the decision on the application and must specify the grounds of appeal. You must immediately forward the notice to the county court together with a statement containing: 1 the material facts which have, in your opinion, been established in the case your decision upon the whole case any point which may be specified as grounds of appeal If there are several appeals, all made on the same or similar grounds you must inform the court of this to enable the appeals to be consolidated, if appropriate, or a test case to be selected. 2 Legislation does not specify the procedure that should be followed should the court allow the appeal, but you should be prepared to add the electors to the record and, if appropriate, to the list for an election. 1.

Regulation 58(2) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 58(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Pre-commencement) Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Pre-commencement) Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Pre-commencement) Identifying suspicious absent vote applications Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You are uniquely placed to identify incidents and patterns of activity that might indicate electoral fraud in your area. There are no definitive signs of absent vote application fraud, and each specific case will be different. The following could, depending on the context of the local area and the specific circumstances surrounding any application or applications, be indicators of possible fraud: a number of application forms completed in the same hand unusually large numbers of absent vote applications in any particular area unusually large numbers of postal and postal proxy redirections to one particular property or properties unusually large numbers of proxy attestations unusually large numbers of signature waiver requests. For example: large numbers of applications assisted or signed by one person with no plausible explanation large numbers of applications from one street or area with no plausible explanation signature and date of birth provided on the application form is inconsistent with data that you already hold acknowledgements or confirmation notices returned as undelivered You should put in place mechanisms that will help to identify suspicious absent vote applications including: training for office staff on what to look out for regular data reviews to identify patterns considering how to share data about patterns of applications with local political parties and elected representatives to improve transparency and confidence, so that they can help identify any applications which might be suspicious Our guidance on identifying suspicious registration applications has more information on liaising with your local police Single Point Of Contact (SPOC). Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Pre-commencement) Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Pre-commencement) Storage of absent vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Storage of absent vote application forms Storage of absent vote application forms (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Forms containing personal identifiers of postal or proxy voters must be stored securely. Forms may be scanned and stored electronically, or you may keep the originals in paper form. Data protection legislation does not set out any specific maximum periods for retention of personal data, but it says that personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose. You will therefore need to consider whether it would be appropriate for you to hold on to the information after your determination of an absent vote application. Documents could be retained for a specific period (for example, one elections cycle) to take account of the possibility

of a legal challenge and any analysis the police may need to carry out if there were integrity concerns. It is important you have a document retention policy which should set out the following for all documents you receive and hold: your retention period your rationale for the retention period (which might relate to a requirement in electoral law) whether the document contains personal data the lawful basis on which any personal data was collected Unless there is a legal challenge or investigation, you should not retain any documents for more than 12 months after a postal vote has been cancelled, as 12 months is the usual time limit for any prosecutions. You should ensure that you do not retain documents for longer than the period specified in your document retention policy and you need to ensure that you have processes in place to retrieve data and securely destroy it at the appropriate time, in accordance with your policy. There are no specific requirements in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) concerning the storage of data that amend previous data protection protocols. The principle remains to protect against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss. Article 32 requires that appropriate technical and organisational measures are in place to ensure a level of security, appropriate to the risk. Your council will have corporate standards and processes for data handling and security. You should review your processes with advice from your data protection officer and information management/IT departments. They will help you to identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper or stored electronically. The Information Commissioner's Office provides general advice on the retention of personal data . Our guidance on data protection for EROs and ROs contains more detailed advice on storing personal data securely and maintaining your document retention policy, including what it should contain. Absent voters' signatures are refreshed every five years, see our guidance on refreshing absent vote signatures . Where the signature has been refreshed, you should consider whether it would be appropriate to keep the original or an electronic copy of the refresh notice. Last updated: 5 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Storage of absent vote application forms \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Identifying suspicious absent vote applications \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Absent voting records, lists and registers \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Absent voting records, lists and registers \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

As Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) you are responsible for maintaining records of absent vote applications including applicants' personal identifiers, and producing lists of absent voters. These records should be kept up to date and accurate. What absent voting records and lists am I required to keep? You are required to keep records of absent vote applications that have been granted. Three separate records are required, as follows:

- 1 Postal voters The record must indicate the elector's full name (unless the elector is registered anonymously) and the address to which the ballot paper is to be sent. It should also include the elector number.
- Proxy voters The record must indicate the elector's full name (unless the elector is registered anonymously) and the full name and address of the proxy. It should also include the elector number.
- Postal proxy voters The record must indicate the elector's full name (unless the elector is registered anonymously) and the full name of the proxy and the address to which the ballot paper is to be sent. It should also include the elector number.

Absent vote lists For any particular election, you must produce a postal voters list, a list of proxies and a postal proxy list based on the information contained in these records and supply these to the Returning Officer for the election, 2 provided you are not also the Returning Officer, and those entitled to receive the list. 3 If an elector is registered anonymously only the elector number and period of anonymous registration is included on the lists. 4 You

should ensure that the records and lists are accurate, and should take steps to ensure that electors who are deleted from the register are also removed from the absent voting records and lists. Personal identifiers You are required to maintain a personal identifiers record. 5 This record must include the names, signatures and dates of birth of all absent voters (where a waiver has been granted the record will not include a signature). You must keep the personal identifiers of an elector who has been granted an absent vote (whether for a definite or indefinite period) until the expiry of twelve months from the date on which the elector is removed from the records of applications. In the case of the identifiers belonging to an elector who has been granted an absent vote for a particular election, you must keep the record until the expiry of twelve months from the date of the poll for the purposes of which the absent vote was applicable. You must require absent voters to provide a fresh signature when the signature on their record is more than five years old and update the signatures on the personal identifiers record accordingly. 6 For more information on this exercise, see our guidance on the absent vote identifier refresh . 1.

Schedule 4 Paragraph 5 and 7(8) RPA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2.

Regulation 61(6)(b) and (6A) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Regulation 61 and 61A 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4.

Schedule 4 paragraph 5(4) and 7(8A) RPA 2000 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5.

Regulation 61B 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Regulation

60A 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) Last updated: 8 September

2023 Book traversal links for Absent voting records, lists and registers (Pre-commencement) Storage of absent vote application forms (Pre-commencement) Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Pre-commencement) Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Absent voting lists and information contained on the absent voting record which would be used to generate the lists in case of an election are available for public inspection. Copies of the relevant part may be supplied, free of charge, to: 1 elected representatives local constituency parties political parties candidates The relevant part is the same part that is specified in the regulations for the supply of the electoral register.

Details can be found in our resource: List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) A record should be kept of every person or organisation who has been supplied with absent voting lists. This will help to show that you are complying with data protection legislation and the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.

Before an election Ahead of an election, you should explain to candidates and parties that the absent voting lists are available and set out how a request can be made. If you receive a request for the absent voting lists, you should action it promptly.

Sharing absent voting lists with candidates and parties in a timely manner will help promote confidence in the administration of the election and help candidates and parties to campaign. A request must be made in writing and specify: 2 the information being requested whether the request is for the current lists only, or whether it includes a request for the final list whether the information is required in printed or data form Updates you need to make to the lists to include the details of those who have made successful emergency proxy applications must also be shared with those who have requested a copy of the final lists. 3 Ahead of an election, you must make the absent voting lists available for public inspection as soon as practicable after 5pm on the sixth working day before the poll. 4 For more information about making lists available for inspection see our guidance on access and supply . Personal Identifiers Personal identifier records are not open to public inspection and are not

available for supply. You must provide a copy or allow access to these records to the Returning Officer for the purposes of carrying out the personal identifier checks on returned postal voting statements. 5 Candidates and agents are not entitled to inspect the application form of an absent voter, unless it is their own. However, the RO is permitted to show the relevant entry in the personal identifiers record (i.e. the name, signature (unless a waiver has been granted) and date of birth of the relevant absent voter) to agents when personal identifiers are being verified. 6 Additionally a data subject is entitled to see personal information held about them. Information requested by data subjects must be provided without delay and in any event within one month (although it can be extended to two months in certain conditions). Under data protection legislation, information must be provided free of charge. Subsequent copies may be charged for, but the charge must be reasonable and based on administrative costs. There is no requirement for the request to be made in writing, you must, however, be satisfied of the requesters' identity before fulfilling the request. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further information on subject access requests. A postal voter who has received a postal vote identifier rejection notice for example may request to see their postal voting statement. Such a request should be treated as a subject access request and, as a data subject is entitled to see personal information that is held about them, they should be permitted to see their postal voting statement. Further information about postal vote identifier rejection notices can be found in our resource: FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC) 1. Regulation 61 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61(2) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 61(7) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 61(6) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 4 Paragraph 7C RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 85(a) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 8 September 2023

Book traversal links for Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Pre-commencement) Absent voting records, lists and registers (Pre-commencement) Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (pre-commencement) Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists at a recall petition (pre-commencement) You must, on request, supply free of charge a copy of the absent signers and proxy postal signers list to: 1 a registered political party the MP to whom a petition relates the Electoral Commission the Security Service, Government Communications Headquarters and the Secret Intelligence Service any police force in Great Britain, the National Crime Agency and any body of constables established under an Act of Parliament an accredited campaigner As soon as practicable after 5pm on the cut-off day (3 working days before the first day of the signing period) you must: publish the absent signers, proxies 2 and postal proxies 3 lists send to the petition Petition officer Officer a copy of those lists Inspection of the lists Where inspection takes place by providing a copy of the information on a computer screen or in another data form, you must ensure that no person is permitted to: search it by electronic means by reference to the name of any person copy or transmit any part of that copy by electronic or any other means A person who inspects a copy of the information whether in printed or data form may not: make copies of any part of it or record any particulars in it otherwise by means of hand-written notes 1. Regulation 80 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 55 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 58 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 13 September 2023 Book

traversal links for Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (pre-commencement) Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Pre-commencement) Absent voting register markers (Pre-commencement) Absent voting register markers (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) After all absent vote applications have been processed ahead of an election, and the sixth day before the poll has passed, you will need to prepare the electoral registers which are to be used in the polling stations. Electors allowed to vote by post and electors whose proxies have been allowed to vote by post must have the letter 'A' marked alongside their names in the polling station register. 1 Your EMS system should have the facility to print registers for use in the polling station at an election. There is no prescribed way of marking proxy voters on polling station registers, although in many cases, they will be prefixed with the letter 'P'. 1. Regulation 62 2001

Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Absent voting register markers (Pre-commencement) Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (pre-commencement) Refreshing absent vote signatures (Pre-commencement) Refreshing absent vote signatures (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) By 31 January each year, you must send a notice in writing 1 to every absent voter (postal, proxy and postal proxy voters) whose signature on the personal identifiers record is more than five years old. This is known as the absent vote refresh exercise and it takes place in January each year for those absent voters whose signatures on the personal identifiers record became more than five years old in the 12 months since the last refresh. For example, the refresh exercise in January 2020 covered those absent voters whose signatures on the personal identifiers record became more than five years old between 31 January 2019 and 30 January 2020. Absent voters who have been granted a waiver are not affected by the refresh provisions, as they do not have a signature on the personal identifiers record. You can only require an absent voter to refresh their signatures during the formal refresh exercise. The only exception is where you have sent a rejection notice to a postal voter after an election because the signature provided on the returned PVS did not match the personal identifier record. You can find out more about that in our guidance on sending a postal vote identifier rejection notice . There may be occasions where an elector may ask you to update their signature, e.g. as a result of a name change. Where this is the case, you should send them a new postal vote application in order to collect their new signature. 1. Regulation 60A(1) 2001

Regulations, RPR ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Refreshing absent vote signatures (Pre-commencement) Absent voting register markers (Pre-commencement) Identifying the size of the absent vote refresh (Pre-commencement) Identifying the size of the absent vote refresh (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You should review the personal identifiers record to check the numbers of signatures that will be subject to the refresh process and consider what resources will be required to carry out the exercise, including whether any additional staff will be required. You should check you have the necessary technology in place to support the process and confirm with your EMS supplier that your system is able to identify the relevant absent voters. You should determine the age of each signature based on: the date of the signature the voter originally provided if the signature is undated, the date that the ERO received the original signature if the signature is undated and the ERO does not have a record of the date on which the signature was received, the date the signature was scanned into the electoral management system in order to be added to the personal identifier record If an absent voter has submitted a new signature to replace an existing

signature at any point, the age of the signature is calculated based on the latest signature provided. You should also ensure that you have the appropriate notices in place to send to electors to obtain refreshed signatures, and to notify any electors whose absent vote you have cancelled because they did not provide a fresh signature .

Last updated: 8 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Identifying the size of the absent vote refresh \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Refreshing absent vote signatures \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Calculating deadlines for the absent vote refresh \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Calculating deadlines for the absent vote refresh \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Absent voters will lose their entitlement to vote by post or proxy if no response is received within six weeks of the original notice being sent. 1 This means that absent voters have just under six weeks to return the notice – the entitlement would be lost on the last day of the six-week period. The six-week period is calculated from the date the notice is sent to absent voters. You should therefore date the notice on the day you expect to send it. Where the end of the six-week period falls on a non-working day, the deadline is extended to the next working day. After three weeks of the date of the original notice, if no reply is received, a reminder notice needs to be sent to the absent voter. 2 In this instance, the three weeks are inclusive, i.e. absent voters have a full three weeks to complete the notice and for it to arrive back at the ERO's office before a reminder should be sent. 1. Regulation 60A(1)(b) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 60A(3) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 8 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Calculating deadlines for the absent vote refresh \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Identifying the size of the absent vote refresh \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Contents of the absent vote refresh notice \(Pre-commencement\)](#) [Contents of the absent vote refresh notice \(Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) The notice should be dated on the day that it is being sent. You should keep a record of the name of each person you have sent a notice to, the address to which you sent it, and the date of the notice, so that you can calculate the point at which the absent voter will lose their entitlement if they have not provided a fresh signature. The initial notice must: require the absent voter to supply a specimen of their signature explain that if this is not received within six weeks of the date of the notice, their absent voting facility will be cancelled 1 inform them of the date on which they would no longer be entitled to vote by post or by proxy You should also include information to explain the following: how the required personal identifiers are used and how the personal identifiers assist in deterring misuse of the entitlement to vote by post/proxy the details of the absent vote currently in place for that person and the types of elections at which the person would no longer be able to vote by post/proxy if they do not provide the required signature that cancellation of the absent vote for failure or refusal to supply a new sample signature does not prevent the elector from re-applying for an absent vote the circumstances in which the signature requirement may be waived the deadline for the ERO to receive the signature (i.e. before six weeks from the date of the notice) What is not included on absent voter refresh notices? There is no provision in law for the elector's date of birth to be pre-printed on the refresh notice. Existing absent voters do not need to provide their date of birth again in order for their absent vote to continue. As you will be required to send postal vote identifier rejection notices after an election to absent voters whose date of birth was not included on the postal voting statement or did not match the one on your records, you should not use the signature refresh exercise for confirming an elector's date of birth. Where should the absent vote refresh notice be sent? You

must send the notice to the current or last known address of the absent voter. 2 You must enclose a pre-addressed pre-paid postage reply envelope with every notice sent to a UK-based absent voter. 3 Notices sent to absent voters with non-UK addresses must also enclose a pre-addressed reply envelope but this is not required to have pre-paid postage. 4 Reminder notices You will need to scan in or otherwise record which notices are returned to allow you to produce an accurate list of those who need a reminder notice. If, within three weeks of the original notice date, an absent voter has not responded and the absent vote has not in the meantime been cancelled by the absent voter, you must send a reminder notice as soon as is practicable. 5 The reminder notice is a copy of the contents of the original notice. Templates We have produced a template postal voter identifier request letter and a template proxy vote identifier request letter which you may find helpful. Postal vote identifier request letter (DOC) Proxy vote identifier request letter (DOC) 1. Regulation 60A(1) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 60A(2) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulation 60A(5) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulation 60A(5) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 60A(3) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Contents of the absent vote refresh notice (Pre-commencement) Calculating deadlines for the absent vote refresh (Pre-commencement) Notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Pre-commencement) Notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) A returned signature must meet the prescribed requirements of an absent vote application, i.e. it must appear against a background of white unlined paper of at least five centimetres long and two centimetres high. 1 If you receive a notice that does not include a signature or where the signature does not meet the prescribed requirements, you should send another notice to request a new signature. You should include an explanation as to why the notice originally returned could not be accepted, provided there is time left for the absent voter to complete and return it before the deadline. If there is not enough time left for the absent voter to complete and return it before the deadline, you should treat the absent voter as having failed to return the notice. 1. Regulation 51(3A)(a) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Pre-commencement) Contents of the absent vote refresh notice (Pre-commencement) Return of the notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Pre-commencement) Return of the notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You cannot accept a notice or reminder containing a fresh signature after the deadline. You should send the person a letter explaining that the notice cannot be accepted and that if they wish to continue to have an absent vote they must re-apply and provide their identifiers on the new application. You should include a new application form with the letter. There is no provision for you to pre-print the date of birth you already hold on the new application form. Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Return of the notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Pre-commencement) Notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Pre-commencement) Removing an absent voter from the absent voting records and lists (Pre-commencement) Removing an absent voter from the absent voting records and lists (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) If you have not received a fresh signature before six weeks of the date of the

original notice you must immediately remove the absent vote entry from the absent voting records and relevant list (postal voters list, list of proxies or proxy postal voters list). 1 You must also remove that person's entry from the relevant record of granted absent vote applications. The records and lists should be updated on the day after the deadline. You must, however, keep the elector's signature and date of birth previously provided on the record of personal identifiers for a period of twelve months from the date on which the elector is removed from the record of granted applications. 2 You must notify the elector in writing that their absent vote has been removed. The notice must: 3 explain that the person's absent vote has been removed because of a failure to provide a fresh signature, and if they wish to vote they can now only do so at a polling station inform them of their polling station remind them that they may make a fresh absent vote application, which must include their identifiers You should include a new absent vote application form with the removal notice. There is no provision to pre-print the date of birth that you already hold for the elector on the new application form. Where a postal proxy is removed from the record and list of postal proxies, you must also write to the elector who appointed the proxy and explain that while the proxy appointment remains in place (provided the elector has not also lost their entitlement to vote by proxy), their proxy must now attend the elector's polling station to vote on their behalf, or re-apply for a postal vote. 4 You should also write to any proxy or postal proxy where the elector has failed to respond to the request notices to inform them that their proxy or postal proxy appointment has been cancelled. We have produced a template cancellation letter due to a failure to supply a fresh signature which you may find helpful. Cancellation letter (due to failure to provide a fresh signature (DOC) 1.

Regulation 60A(7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61B(1)(b) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 60A(8) and (9) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 60A(8)(c) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 11 September 2023 Book traversal links for Removing an absent voter from the absent voting records and lists (Pre-commencement) Return of the notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Pre-commencement) Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Pre-commencement) Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) After a poll, where an absent voter appears on the list of rejected postal ballot papers you must tell the elector or postal proxy that the ballot paper was rejected because the Returning Officer was not satisfied that the postal voting statement was duly completed. 1 When must I send a postal vote identifier rejection notice? Where a postal vote statement was rejected, you must within three months of the date of the poll send the elector a rejection notice informing them of the rejection. You do not need to send a rejection notice if: 2 the person is no longer shown in your records as an absent voter at the time you send out the rejection notice, or the Returning Officer suspects that an offence may have been committed in relation to the postal ballot paper, postal voting statement or the absent voter's registration as an elector If you are not also the Returning Officer for the election you should: arrange for the Returning Officer to send you the list of rejected postal voting statements liaise with them after the election, so you do not send a rejection notice to a postal voter where fraud is suspected What information must a rejection notice include? The rejection notice must include the reason the postal vote was rejected, 3 i.e. whether: the signature provided on the postal voting statement did not match the example held by you; and, or the date of

birth provided alongside the postal voting statement did not match the one held by you; and, or no signature was provided on the postal voting statement; and, or no date of birth was provided on the postal voting statement The notice may also include any other information that you consider appropriate, but must not include the date of birth or signature. 4 1. Regulation 61C(1) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61C(2) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 61C(1)(c) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 61C(3) 2001 Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Pre-commencement) Removing an absent voter from the absent voting records and lists (Pre-commencement) Requirement to provide a fresh signature (Pre-commencement) Requirement to provide a fresh signature (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) If you have sent a rejection on the grounds that the signature provided on the returned postal voting statement does not match the example held on the personal identifiers record (and the person continues to be shown on your records as an absent voter) you may require the absent voter to provide a fresh signature for the personal identifiers record. This could be done at the same time as you send them the rejection notice. 1 Where you do require the absent voter to provide you with a fresh signature, you must inform them of the date (six weeks from the date of the notice) on which they would cease to be entitled to vote by post in the event of a failure or refusal to provide a fresh signature. 2 If the absent voter has not responded to the notice within three weeks from the date on which the notice was sent, you must send a reminder notice that is a copy of the contents of the original notice. 3 The notice and any reminder notice must be sent to the current or last known address of the absent voter and must be accompanied by a pre-addressed reply envelope with (for any address in the United Kingdom) prepaid return postage. 4 It is important for you to establish a clear audit trail for this process as the date specified on the notice sent to the absent voter determines whether the absent voter has failed or refused to provide a fresh signature within the specified time frame. If they have not responded by the deadline you must: 5 remove that person's entry from the postal voters list or postal proxy voters list, as appropriate, and where a person has been removed from the postal proxy list, you must also notify the elector 1. Regulation 60B(1) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 60B(2) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 60B(3) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 60B(4) and (5) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 60B(8)(and (9)(c) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Requirement to provide a fresh signature (Pre-commencement) Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Pre-commencement) Notification of removal of an absent vote (Pre-commencement) Notification of removal of an absent vote (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) You must notify the person in writing that their absent vote has been removed. The notice must: 1 explain that their absent vote has been removed because of a failure to provide a fresh signature explain that if they wish to vote they can only do so at a polling station and inform them of the location of their polling station explain that they can make a fresh absent vote application, which must include their identifiers The notice must also set out that they have a right to appeal your decision and set out how an appeal may be made. A postal voter who has received a postal vote identifier rejection notice may request to see their postal voting statement. Such a request should be treated as a subject access request and, as a data subject is entitled to see personal information that is

held about them, the postal voter should be permitted to see the information held on their postal voting statement. Our data protection guidance for EROs and EROs contains further information on subject access requests. For more information see our resource: FAQs for postal vote rejection notices. FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC) We have also produced template postal vote rejection notices which you may find helpful. Template postal vote rejection notices (DOC) 1. Regulation 60B(9)(a) and (b) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Notification of removal of an absent vote (Pre-commencement) Requirement to provide a fresh signature (Pre-commencement) Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Pre-commencement) Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Any person wishing to appeal must give notice to you within 14 days of the date of your decision to remove their postal vote and must specify the grounds of appeal. 1 The date on the rejection notice is deemed to be your decision date. You must immediately forward the appeal notice to the county court together with a statement: 2 of the material facts which have, in your opinion, been established in the case of your decision upon the whole case, and upon any point which may be specified as grounds of appeal If there are several appeals, all made on the same or similar grounds you must inform the court of this, to enable the appeals to be consolidated, if appropriate, or alternatively a test case to be selected. If the appeal is successful you must add the person's details to the relevant records and lists. 3 1. Regulation 58(1) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 58(2) 2001 Regulations (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 56(4) and 57 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Pre-commencement) Notification of removal of an absent vote (Pre-commencement) Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting (Pre-commencement) Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting (Pre-commencement of Elections Act measures) Cancellation letter (due to failure to provide a fresh signature (DOC) Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC) List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) Postal vote identifier request letter (DOC) Proxy vote identifier request letter (DOC) Template postal vote rejection notices (DOC) Last updated: 8 September 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting (Pre-commencement) Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Pre-commencement) Absent voting (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Absent voting Absent voting (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) This section contains guidance on absent voting. It covers the range of absent vote options for electors, eligibility and application requirements for absent voting and guidance on how an elector can cancel or amend their absent voting arrangements. The guidance covers the differences in absent voting arrangements for domestic and overseas electors. A domestic elector is an elector who is neither a service elector nor an overseas elector. It also includes guidance on processing absent vote applications, storage of forms, and ongoing requirements to maintain the lists of absent voters. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Absent voting (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting (Pre-commencement) Postal voting (Post commencement) Postal voting (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) This

section contains guidance on postal voting. It covers the range of postal vote options for electors, eligibility and application requirements for postal voting and guidance on how an elector can cancel or amend their postal voting arrangements. It also includes guidance on processing postal vote applications, storage of forms, and ongoing requirements to maintain the lists of postal voters. Last updated: 4 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Postal voting \(Post commencement\)](#) [Absent voting \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) [Transitional arrangements \(Post commencement\)](#) [Transitional arrangements \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) [The commencement of The Representation of the People \(Postal and Proxy Voting etc.\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023](#)

will take place from 31 October 2023. New applications received on or after the 31 October 2023 commencement

All postal and postal proxy vote applications received on or after the commencement must satisfy the new requirements including information for the verification of personal identifiers. 1

Where an application does not contain the required information, you should, where possible, make enquiries to obtain the missing information. If the missing information is not submitted, the application cannot be accepted. You should write to the elector, explain why the application has not been accepted and how to make a fresh application. New applications received but not determined by the 31 October 2023 commencement

Any postal or postal proxy applications that have been received but not determined by the 31 October 2023 commencement date can be accepted. However, if the application is made for an indefinite arrangement, you can only grant it for the maximum period. You should write to the elector to explain why the application has only been granted for the maximum period and not the indefinite period specified in the application. Notifying existing postal and postal proxy voters of the requirement to reapply

Existing long term domestic postal and postal proxy voters will continue to be able to vote by post without reapplying until the 31 January 2026. You will need to notify these existing long term domestic postal and postal proxy voters of the need to re-apply before the expiry of their existing arrangement. The notification must include the date on which their existing postal vote entitlement is to end and inform them about how to make a fresh application before that date if they want to continue to vote by post. 2

Transitional arrangements for overseas electors with postal votes

The postal vote arrangements of overseas electors that are in place at commencement of the new overseas electors' provisions will expire at the same time as their existing overseas elector declaration, which will be within 12 months of commencement. You will need to contact the elector before their overseas elector declaration expires to advise them that they will need to reapply for their postal vote. This can be combined with any renewal request relating to the need to reapply to remain registered as an overseas elector. Once the new overseas electors' provisions come into force, the maximum period for a postal vote arrangement will be the period up until the end of the declaration renewal period. This will be calculated from the original date of the overseas elector's addition and will cease on the third 1 November calculated from the date of their addition to or renewal on the register. Our guidance on overseas electors is being updated to reflect changes as a result of the Elections Act 2022. A link will be provided here once this guidance has been published. Applications for a postal vote from attainers made and determined before commencement on 31 October 2023

If an applicant who is registered as an attainer makes an application for a postal vote and it is determined before 31 October 2023, the arrangement will come into effect once they turn 18. 1. Regulation 51(2) (aa) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) (as amended), Para 11(1) (aa) Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner

Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO 2012) (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 60ZA(2) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Transitional arrangements (Post commencement) Postal voting (Post commencement) Eligibility to vote by post (Post commencement) Eligibility to vote by post (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should ensure that electors are made aware that they have the option to vote by post, proxy or in person. This will allow them to make an informed choice about the option that is most appropriate to their circumstances. Electors who are or will be registered are entitled to apply for a postal vote. For someone to meet the will be registered criteria, the five day objection period must have passed and you must have positively determined their registration application, which means they will be added to the register on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. 1 There is no requirement for an elector to provide a reason why they want to vote by post. A postal vote arrangement can be in place for one of the following: a particular poll a definite period a maximum period of up to 3 years A particular poll means a poll held on a specific date. A definite period cannot exceed 3 years and has a start and end date - for example: From: DD/MM/YY until DD/MM/YY For domestic electors the maximum period cannot exceed 3 years and will cease on the third 31 January calculated from the date the application is granted. As such, you must contact affected electors and invite them to reapply before this date. 2 For more information on this see our guidance on the re-application process . If a domestic elector applies for a postal vote for a definite period which exceeds the maximum period, you should grant the application for the maximum period possible. Their confirmation letter should confirm the date that the postal vote arrangement will expire. EROs may also decide to get in contact with the applicant to clarify the period that they are intending to apply for if there is uncertainty on this. Postal voting arrangements for overseas electors If an overseas elector applies or renews after the 16 January 2024 any postal voting arrangement made is then directly linked to their electoral registration and will cease on the third 1 November calculated from the date of their addition to or renewal on the register. For example: Date O/E added or renewed on the electoral register Date of expiry of postal vote arrangement Addition/renewal made after 16 January 2024 1 November 2026 Addition/renewal made after 1 November 2024 1 November 2027 Addition/renewal made after 1 November 2025 1 November 2028 Any postal vote arrangement for an overseas elector will expire when their electoral registration expires, regardless of the date the postal vote application was made. For more information see our guidance on managing the renewal of overseas elector registration . If, during the renewal period, a new postal vote application is received separately from a renewal declaration from an overseas elector, you should check to see if the elector has made a new overseas elector application. If they have not, you should contact the overseas elector to confirm if they want to renew their declaration. If they do, wait to receive it, and process it in advance of the postal vote application. If you cannot get confirmation from the elector, you should process the postal vote application without the renewal and clarify to the elector that it will only be applicable until the end of the declaration period (i.e. up to the relevant 1 November). If a declaration is subsequently received the overseas elector would be required to reapply for their postal vote if they wish their arrangement to continue to be in place after that date. 1. Sections 9(2), 10ZC (1), 13 and 13A Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983, Schedule 4 Paragraph 3(1) and 4(1) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 60ZA (2)

Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Eligibility to vote by post \(Post commencement\)](#) [Transitional arrangements \(Post commencement\)](#) [Applications for postal votes \(Post commencement\)](#) [Applications for postal votes \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Electors can apply for a postal vote in a number of ways: online on GOV.UK in writing (e.g., on a paper application form) in person at your office (if you decide to offer the service)

Online applications Electors can apply for a postal vote online using the postal vote application service, which is hosted on GOV.UK. However, it is not possible for a nominated proxy wishing to vote by post to apply for a postal vote online. Paper applications Postal vote applications forms are not prescribed; however, an application must contain all the required information and the applicant's signature and date of birth must be presented in a specific format . 1 When you receive a request for a paper application form, before providing one you should check that the applicant is registered to vote or has made an application to be registered to vote. If they have not, you should explain that the applicant needs to be registered to vote and should offer them the opportunity to apply to register online or send a voter registration form with the postal vote application. We produce printable postal vote application forms which you can use. These printable postal vote application forms are published on our website and GOV.UK. A paper postal vote application can be in any format: a letter, an email with a scanned attachment or a paper application form are acceptable, as long as the signature and date of birth are clear and provided in the prescribed format . If you receive a written application that is not on an application form, you should check that it contains all the required information. If incomplete, you should follow the process outlined in our guidance on incomplete applications .

In-person applications People may have difficulties completing a postal vote application. For the benefit and convenience of your electors and to help you to meet your duties under the Equalities Act 2010, you should offer in-person application services so that individuals have the opportunity to apply without the need to provide application information in writing. If you are unable to provide in-person applications for postal votes for everybody, you should still provide this at your discretion in certain circumstances. When dealing with in-person applications before proceeding you should check that an applicant is registered to vote or has made an application to be registered to vote. If they have not, you should explain that an applicant needs to be registered to vote before they can be issued with a postal vote and should offer them the opportunity to apply to register. You should check whether the applicant has all the required information for you to complete an application in full on their behalf. This includes their National Insurance number (NINo) or a reason why this cannot be provided, date of birth and their ability to provide a written ink signature on a paper form or a photograph of their ink signature for uploading to the online postal vote application service. You can assist the applicant with taking a photo of their signature and uploading it if necessary. Where a person is unable to provide a written signature, they can request a waiver . Applications made using the online postal vote application service cannot be partially completed and returned to at a later time, so if an applicant cannot provide all of the information, you will need to ensure that their application is captured on a paper form to allow you to add any missing information later. Once you have taken the required information you should read it back to the applicant, giving them the opportunity to review the information provided and to satisfy themselves that it is true and accurate. If you accept applications in person, it is important

that you keep accurate records of the information provided by applicants. 2 Before collecting any information, you should make the applicant aware of your privacy notice, give general information about how their data will be used and alert them to the offence of making a false statement. 1. Reg 51 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), Paragraph 11 Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Paragraph 3, Schedule 4, Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Applications for postal votes (Post commencement) Eligibility to vote by post (Post commencement) Availability of paper postal vote application forms (Post commencement) Availability of paper postal vote application forms Availability of paper postal vote application forms (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should ensure that you have an adequate supply of paper postal vote application forms available in case an elector is unable to print forms off themselves and is not able to use the postal vote application service. You must supply, free of charge, a reasonable quantity of absent vote application forms to people who wish to use them in connection with a poll, which includes political parties. Paper postal vote application forms should also be made available at all public offices of the local authority and at other premises frequented by electors. A number of organisations, including the Electoral Commission and political parties, also provide postal vote application forms. You should liaise with local political parties and any local organisations or groups who produce postal application forms to make them aware of the requirements for postal applications and to provide advice on the content and format of their forms. This should help avoid unnecessary delays in processing applications and help to avoid electors having to re-submit an application that has not been made correctly. This is particularly important at election time when any delay could result in the elector missing the deadline. You should ensure that local political parties, candidates and agents at elections are aware of their responsibilities in relation to handling postal applications. If they are given completed paper postal application forms, they should forward them directly and without delay to the elections office. The Commission has developed a Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums. You should liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) at any elections that are taking place to ensure that all candidates and agents are provided with copies of the code and know how to obtain additional copies if required. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 The code provides a guide as to what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community during the lead-up to polling day, including in relation to postal vote applications. Any concerns that the code has been breached should be raised first with the candidate, agent, political party or campaigner in question. If you have any further concerns or wish to report a breach of the code, you should first contact your local Commission team. This code has been agreed by the political parties represented on the House of Commons Parliamentary Parties Panel and the panels for the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd and is endorsed by the members of the Electoral Commission's UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board of senior Returning and Electoral Registration Officers and by the Electoral Integrity Roundtable. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Availability of paper postal vote application forms (Post commencement) Applications for postal votes (Post commencement) What information must a postal vote application contain? (Post commencement) What information must be included in a postal vote application? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

An application for a postal vote must include the following information: 1 the full name of the elector the address where the elector is (or has applied to be) registered to vote the elector's date of birth the elector's National Insurance number (NINo) or, if they are not able to provide that information, the reason why they are not able to do so the elector's signature (or a request for a signature waiver) whether the application is for a poll on a particular date (and if so, confirmation of which one), a particular period (and if so, the date range of the period) or for the maximum period allowed an indication of which polls the application applies to the address where the postal ballot pack should be sent and, if this is not the registered address, a reason for the redirection. The applicant's full name, National Insurance number (NINo), and date of birth (DOB) are also known as their personal identifiers and these pieces of information are used to perform the data match with DWP to verify an applicant's identity. Our guidance for Electoral Registration Officers on National Insurance numbers and Dates of birth covers more information on personal identifiers. If an applicant is unable to provide a NINo they may provide with their application a copy of the documents listed in acceptable documents for the exceptions process . 2 If provided, these documents can be used to verify an applicant's identity. This may be particularly useful close to the deadline for a poll to ensure that an application can be processed without delay. An application may also contain the applicant's previous name, email address and telephone number, but they are not a requirement. 1. Reg 51 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) (as amended), Paragraph 11 Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 51(9) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for What information must a postal vote application contain? (Post commencement) Availability of paper postal vote application forms (Post commencement) Incomplete postal vote applications (Post commencement) Incomplete postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Online applications An applicant will not be able to submit an incomplete postal vote application online. The only exceptions are: where an applicant is unable to provide their NINo and they provide a statement of the reasons why as part of the application where an applicant is unable to provide their signature and they indicate that they will require a waiver Where an applicant is unable to provide their NINo and they provide a statement of the reasons why, you should try to verify the applicant's identity using the exceptions process. 1 Paper applications You may receive paper postal vote applications which do not contain all the required information. You are not able to determine a postal vote application if any of the required information is missing or incomplete. If the applicant has not been able to provide their NINo, they must provide a statement of the reasons why as part of the application. Where an applicant is unable to provide their NINo and they provide a statement of the reasons why, the application is not rejected as incomplete and you should verify the identity of the applicant using the exceptions process. 2 If no explanations are provided as to why the required information is missing from a paper application you should, where possible, make enquiries to obtain the missing information. If the missing information is not submitted, you must reject the application. You should contact the applicant, explain why the application has been rejected and how to make a fresh application. If the application is made in the run up to a poll, you should also explain that a new application must be received by 5pm, 11 working days before the poll for it to be able to be processed in time for that poll. Where an applicant is unable to provide their signature, they should indicate that they will require a

waiver and you should send out a signature waiver application for completion. 1. Regulation 56C Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Incomplete postal vote applications (Post commencement) What information must a postal vote application contain? (Post commencement) Required format for signature and date of birth included on a postal vote application (Post commencement) Required format for signature and date of birth on a postal vote application (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Although there is no prescribed form for applying for a postal vote, the regulations require that the applicant's signature and date of birth are set out as follows: 1 the signature shall appear against a background of white unlined paper of at least 5 cm long and 2 cm high, and the applicant's date of birth shall be configured numerically in the sequence of day, month and year, i.e. DD MM YYYY The location of the signature and date of birth on a paper postal vote application is not prescribed. You cannot impose any other conditions on the way the information is presented. As long as the signature and date of birth meet the legislative requirements, the application must be accepted. If you are producing paper postal vote application forms you should ensure that these meet accepted good practice in terms of accessibility and usability, and that you lay out the form clearly to help ensure that it is completed accurately. For example, you could position the date of birth box before the signature box, followed by the space for date of completion, to reduce the risk that applicants will give the date of completion first by mistake. If the application is made online, the photograph of the applicant's signature must meet the requirements set out above and be sufficiently clear and unambiguous. 2 1. Reg 51 (3A) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 51(3A) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Required format for signature and date of birth included on a postal vote application (Post commencement) Incomplete postal vote applications (Post commencement) Signature waivers for postal voters (Post commencement) Signature waiver requests for postal voters (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) If an applicant is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write, the requirement for a signature on the postal vote application and postal voting statement can be waived. An elector can request a signature waiver application form from you at any time. The request may be made by any means including as part of an online postal vote application. The applicant must provide with their waiver application the reason for the request and the name and address of any person who has assisted them with completing the application. You should be satisfied that the request is genuine and not being used as an attempt to avoid the postal vote security measures. It is for you to decide the proof or evidence needed in order to be satisfied that the applicant is unable to provide a signature, or a consistent signature, due to a disability or an inability to read or write. You have no power to investigate or to make judgements on the nature or extent of an elector's disability. You should take a consistent approach to considering requests for signature waivers that balances both the accessibility and integrity of the postal voting process. If making further enquiries, you should bear in mind that the person requesting the waiver may not be able to respond themselves. However, you can ask any person who has, or is assisting the applicant for clarification or further information. You could, for example, ask this person to complete a signed declaration that to the best of their knowledge and belief the

elector in question is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write. You should make clear to anyone from whom you request information or a declaration that it is an offence to provide false information in connection with an application for a postal vote and make clear the maximum relevant penalty. If, having made any appropriate enquiries, you are not satisfied as to the authenticity of the request, you should refuse it. If refused, you must reject the postal vote application and notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for your decision. 1 You should remain vigilant as to any trends which may be revealed through the receipt of waiver requests and the following should raise suspicion: large numbers of applications assisted or signed by one person with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible for nursing or care home staff to assist a number of electors to complete their waiver requests, it is less plausible that ordinary members of the public who do not have a connection with such establishments, would need to assist a large number of applicants) large numbers of applications from one street or area with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible that a larger than usual number of waivers are requested by residents in a nursing or care home, it is less plausible that a high number of residents in an ordinary HMO would need a waiver) If you are satisfied as to the waiver request and the accompanying postal vote application, you should give confirmation in writing to the elector that you have accepted the application and the waiver. 1. Reg 57(4) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Signature waivers for postal voters \(Post commencement\)](#) Required format for signature and date of birth included on a postal vote application (Post commencement) Name or signature changes by postal voters (Post commencement) Name or signature changes by postal voters (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) An elector can apply to change their name on the register by submitting a completed change of name form with supporting evidence. 1 When an elector with a postal vote changes their name, you should contact them to tell them that although their existing postal vote arrangement will remain in place they will need to make a new application if they are now using a new signature. 1. Reg 26A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Name or signature changes by postal voters \(Post commencement\)](#) Signature waivers for postal voters (Post commencement) Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Post commencement) Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) As part of an application for a postal vote, a person may ask for their postal ballot papers to be sent to a different address from their qualifying address. Existing postal voters may also request a redirection . Any request to have postal ballot papers redirected must (unless they are an anonymously registered elector) set out why they require their ballot paper to be sent to that address. 1 There are many circumstances that may lead a person to request a postal vote redirection: they may be on holiday, be in hospital, have work commitments elsewhere, etc. If a person has indicated that they wish their postal vote to be redirected but has failed to include any reasons, you should write to the elector and ask them to provide an explanation. They cannot simply say because I prefer it that way. This does not set out their circumstances and, therefore, is not a valid reason. In this case, you should put the application on hold and request further information from the elector. If they do not respond setting out their circumstances, you can reject the application on the grounds that it does not meet the prescribed requirements. Where an explanation of

the circumstances has been provided, you cannot reject a postal vote application or redirection request on the grounds that you are not satisfied with the explanation given. If the reason causes suspicion, or you have concerns because of other circumstances linking the redirection request to others in the area, or to a particular address, this should be reported to your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Levels of postal vote redirections should be monitored. It is important to be vigilant for emerging patterns of redirections. In particular, you should agree with your police SPOC a threshold number of applications being directed to any one address and consider notifying them if this threshold is reached. Where you grant a postal vote application for an elector and it includes a redirection request, you must confirm the re-direction to the elector in writing at their registered address and confirm the date that the postal vote arrangement will expire or if it is for a particular election only. 2 You can include this in the notification you send confirming whether their postal vote application has been successful. Where you grant a redirection request for an existing postal voter the notification you send confirming the redirection must be sent in writing to the address where the elector is registered to vote. 3 1. Reg 51AA Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 57(1A) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 57(10)(b) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address (Post commencement) Name or signature changes by postal voters (Post commencement) Postal vote application deadlines (Post commencement) Postal vote application deadlines (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Applications can be made at any time, and you should process all applications as soon as possible. There are, however, deadlines in legislation by which postal vote applications must have been received in order to apply at a particular poll. Deadline for new postal and postal proxy applications 5pm - 11 working days before the date of the poll 1 Deadline for changes (including cancellations) to existing absent voting arrangements 5pm – 11 working days before the date of the poll 2 Except in the case where a postal ballot paper has been issued before then and has been returned (but not under the lost / spoilt / not received provisions) - in that case, no changes may be made after the ballot paper has been returned. 3 Deadlines for the receipt of postal vote applications at polls are statutory. There can be no extension to the deadlines for any reason. Postal vote applications received after the deadline for a particular poll cannot be accepted. Where postal vote applications for a particular poll miss the application deadline, applicants should be notified that their application was not received by the statutory deadline and so cannot be allowed in respect of that poll. If the deadline to vote by proxy has not also passed you should highlight the option and include the relevant information about how an application for a proxy vote can be made. You should also provide them with information about how to make another postal vote application for future polls. Applications for a longer term postal vote arrangement received after the deadline for a poll, must still be processed and determined but will apply for subsequent polls only. 4 You should notify the applicants that they missed the deadline to be issued a postal vote for that particular poll, but that the postal vote will be in place for future polls. If the deadline to vote by proxy has not also passed you should highlight this option for the particular poll and include the relevant form. However, you should also note that should the elector choose a proxy for that particular poll the postal vote application processed for future polls will be cancelled and a new postal vote application will need to be made. Recall

Petitions A person is entitled to sign a petition by post if they have been granted an application for a definite or indefinite period at parliamentary elections before 5pm on the cut-off day (3 working days before the first day of the signing period). Where a person has been granted an application to vote by post for a definite period and that period expires during the signing period of a particular petition, that definite period is deemed to continue until the end of the signing period. Unless they apply to cancel their postal vote before 5pm on the eleventh day before the last day of the signing period.

5 Calculating deadlines Deadlines are calculated in working days by excluding Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays.

6 Bank holidays that apply when calculating postal voting deadlines are ones that apply anywhere across the area in which the poll as a whole takes place. So, at a UK Parliamentary general election, a bank holiday in Scotland will also apply in England and Wales. The only exception to this is where the proceedings at a UK Parliamentary general election in a particular constituency are commenced afresh because a candidate has died. In this case, only the bank holidays that apply in the affected area will be included in the calculation of the postal voting deadlines. However, at UK Parliamentary by-elections and local government elections, only the bank holidays that apply in the area that has the election must be taken into account.

7 1. Reg 56(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 57 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 50 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Reg 56(6) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Reg 56(7)(b) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7

Last updated: 13 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Postal vote application deadlines \(Post commencement\)](#)

[Applying for a postal vote to be sent to a different address \(Post commencement\)](#)

[Processing postal vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#)

[Processing postal vote applications \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

[Postal vote applications made online will be electronically dated and time-stamped when received into the ERO Portal \(EROP\). You should date stamp paper applications upon receipt. On deadline day for applications in advance of a particular poll, it is advisable to also record the time applications are received so that you have an audit trail of which applications were received before and after the deadline. This will enable you to tell which postal vote applications were made by the relevant legal deadline and are eligible to be processed for an upcoming poll. Last updated: 4 September 2023](#)

[Book traversal links for Processing postal vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#)

[Postal vote application deadlines \(Post commencement\)](#)

[Verification of an applicant's identity \(Post commencement\)](#)

[Verification of an applicant's identity \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

Any person making a new application for a postal vote must provide personal identifiers which are used to verify the applicant's identity against DWP records.

1 The results of these checks, which will appear in the ERO, must be taken into account in determining the application .

2 If an applicant's identity cannot be verified using DWP records, you should follow the exceptions process, or failing that the attestation process.

3 Unlike applications for electoral registration and Voter Authority Certificates, you cannot use local data to verify postal vote applications.

1. Reg 56B Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) (RPR), Paragraph 16B Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) (PCCEO) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56B(9) RPR 2001 (as amended), Para 16B(9) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56C RPR 2001 (as amended), Para 16C Sch 2 PCCEO

2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for Verification of an applicant's identity (Post commencement) Processing postal vote applications (Post commencement) How to interpret DWP match results for postal vote applications (Post commencement) How to interpret DWP match results for postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Customer Information System (CIS) is an amalgamated data source, containing data received from internal DWP systems, as well as other government sources, such as His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). A match level is sent to the Electoral Registration Online Portal (EROP) which shows either a match or a no match result against each application. You will need to assess whether the applicant's identity has been established. Match If DWP returns a match result for an applicant's identity, you can be confident that the applicant is the person they claim to be on their application. No match If a no match result is returned by DWP, this indicates that it has not been possible to establish that person's identity and you should not be satisfied that the applicant is the person that they claim to be on their application at this stage. You may contact the applicant to query the information given on the application using any communication channel that you have contact details for. You should ask the applicant to supply their full application information - name, address, DOB and NINo. These details should be checked against the original application. You should not supply any details of any information given in an application to the applicant. If the information provided by the applicant confirms they have made an error on their application, you can correct the application and should resubmit their personal identifiers for a further check. If you make a change to an applicant's application based on additional information supplied by them, you should tell them that in their confirmation letter. You should not include any personal identifier information (NINo and DOB) in the letter. If no error has been made on the application, you should write to the elector to inform them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and request they supply documentary proof of their identity; this is known as the exceptions process . Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for How to interpret DWP match results for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Verification of an applicant's identity (Post commencement) Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Processing errors may occur when inputting personal identifier information for ID verification. This may result in an applicant who has properly submitted an application not having their identity verified in time for you to issue a postal vote in time to vote at a poll. For example, a paper application form that contains personal identifier information may be received but misplaced and not properly dealt with, or an online application may be incorrectly processed, resulting in the application not being sent to DWP. You can correct the error, determine an application for a postal vote and issue the postal vote at any time before the close of poll. However, if the postal vote is needed for a forthcoming poll you should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for the determination of postal vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining applications close to the deadline provides more information on this. On discovering this type of processing error, before you determine the application, you must still: be satisfied that the application was submitted before the deadline (for example, it was time and date-stamped upon receipt) send the applicant's personal identifiers to be verified When

processing errors are identified close to the close of poll, and you are concerned that the results of the DWP matching process may not be returned in time, you may in these circumstances, proceed straight to the documentary exceptions process before you receive the result of the DWP matching process to mitigate the impact of the processing error. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for postal vote applications (Post commencement) How to interpret DWP match results for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Determining postal vote applications (Post commencement) Determining postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Only electors who are, or will be, registered can apply for a postal vote. A check of the relevant electoral register held in your electoral management system will be conducted. The result of this check will appear in the EROP to confirm whether a person who has applied for a postal vote is a registered elector or not. Where an applicant is found to be a registered elector, the EROP will indicate that the information matches a register entry, and you will be able to consider the rest of the application details. Where an applicant is found to have an entry waiting to be added to the register, you can determine the application for a postal vote once the five day objection period has passed. You will need to ensure that you return to the EROP to process the applications of those waiting to be added following the objection period. If the results show an applicant is not included on a relevant electoral register or has not applied to be included on a relevant electoral register, you should decide whether to reject the application at this point, wait and check again at a later date, or make such other manual check as may be helpful. This could be to see if the applicant has made an application to register at the same time as they made an application for a postal vote and the data check from the registration process has not yet been returned or may be to establish if the reason a match cannot be found is due to a minor difference. For example, an elector's name may have been misspelt or may have legally changed since they applied to register. You should contact the elector to make any enquires necessary so that you can be satisfied that the entry on the register is the same person who has made the application for a postal vote. Once the application has passed the registration check, it must be scrutinised to ensure that it satisfies the prescribed requirements. Where it does, you must confirm to the elector the outcome of the application. Where it appears that the elector has made a mistake when completing their postal vote application (for example, where they have transposed their date of birth figures), you should contact the elector and ask them to resupply the information. You should take extra steps to contact the elector where possible by email or by phone, if it is close to the postal voting deadline before a poll. Where you have any integrity concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice and handle the application form in accordance with any instructions provided by them on evidence handling. Guidance on how to access and use the EROP will be provided by DLUHC. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Determining postal vote applications (Post commencement) Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions and attestation processes for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions and attestation processes for postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should require applicants to provide additional evidence where you consider it is necessary to verify the applicant's identity. 1 This may be because either: they are unable to provide their NINO the personal identifiers cannot be matched against DWP records This additional evidence may be in the form of supporting documents verifying that

they are who they say they are, known as the exceptions process , or failing that, by providing a statement from another individual confirming the applicant's identity, known as the attestation process . The types and quantities of documents and the content of attestations that are acceptable to establish an applicant's identity vary depending on the category of elector the applicant is registered as. 1. Reg 56C Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), Paragraph 16C Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for The exceptions and attestation processes for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Determining postal vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) To support the verification of personal identifiers (NINo and DOB) for domestic electors you may require additional documentary evidence in respect of their application. You must inform them of the following: the deadline for submitting the additional documentary evidence that their application may be rejected if they fail or refuse to provide the additional evidence If the postal vote is needed for a forthcoming poll you should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for the determination of postal vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining applications close to the deadline provides more information on this. If an applicant for a postal vote is a special category elector and you require additional evidence to verify their identity, our guidance on documentary evidence that can be required in connection with postal vote applications made by special category electors provides more information on this. Last updated: 5 September 2023 Book traversal links for The exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions and attestation processes for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Document types for the exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Document types for the exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Postal vote applications which fail to match with DWP should be referred to the exception process. The documents required to successfully establish an applicant's identity should refer to the applicant by name and the types and quantities that must be supplied for domestic electors are as follows: any one document from list 1 one document from list 2 and two additional documents from either list 2 or list 3 List 1 the applicant's passport the applicant's identity card issued in the European Economic Area the applicant's biometric immigration document issued in the United Kingdom in accordance with regulations made under section 5 of the Borders Act 2007 the applicant's electoral identity card issued in Northern Ireland the applicant's photocard driving licence granted in the United Kingdom or driving licence granted by a Crown Dependency, which bears a photograph of the applicant List 2 (the following documents must have been issued in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, except for the final document in this list) 1 the applicant's birth certificate the applicant's marriage or civil partnership certificate the applicant's adoption certificate the applicant's firearms certificate granted under the Firearms Act 1968 the record of a decision on bail made in respect of the applicant in accordance with section 5(1) of the Bail Act 1976 the applicant's driving licence, which is not in the form of a photocard the applicant's driving licence, granted other than in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, which bears a photograph of the applicant, and which must be valid for at least 12 months from the date the applicant entered the United Kingdom List 3 (any of the

following kinds of evidence must bear the applicant's full name as stated on their application) 2 a financial statement, including but not limited to— a mortgage statement a bank or building society statement or a letter from a bank or building society confirming that the applicant has opened an account with that bank or building society a credit card statement a pension statement a council tax demand letter or statement a utility bill a Form P45 or Form P60 issued to the applicant by their employer or former employer a statement of benefits or entitlement to benefits, such as a statement of child benefit, within the meaning of section 141 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, or a letter confirming that the applicant is entitled to housing benefit, within the meaning of section 130 of that Act If a domestic elector applying for a postal vote cannot provide the quantity and types of documentary evidence set out in this guidance, they should be asked to provide an attestation in support of their application. Exceptions process for postal vote applications from overseas electors The types of documents that can be provided to successfully establish an applicant's identity for a postal vote where they are registered as an overseas elector are the same as detailed in our guidance above but with the exception that: electors can alternatively provide a photocard driving licence issued other than in the UK or a Crown Dependency and there is no requirement relating to the timing of that document's validity the documents in list 3 must have been issued in the United Kingdom or a Crown Dependency If an overseas elector who has applied for a postal vote cannot provide the quantity and types of documentary evidence set out in this guidance, they should be asked to provide an attestation in support of their application. Exceptions process for applicants registered via a service declaration on the grounds that they are the spouse or civil partner of a member of the forces, a Crown Servant or the spouse or civil partner of a Crown Servant If an applicant for a postal vote is registered via a service declaration on the grounds that they are the spouse or civil partner of a member of the forces, a Crown Servant or the spouse or civil partner of a Crown Servant and you require additional evidence to verify their identity, you should write to them and ask them to provide one of the following documents 3 : the applicant's passport the applicant's identity card issued in the European Economic Area. The document must be certified by a Crown servant or British Council employee or an officer of the forces who is not the applicant's spouse or civil partner 4 . There is no exceptions process for applicants who are registered by a service declaration as member of the armed forces. For more information on the attestation process for these electors see the attestation process for postal vote applications . 1. Reg 56C(3)(a) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR), Paragraph 16C(3)(a) Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C(4) RPR 2001, Para 16C(4) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 26B(8) RPR 2001 & Reg 26B(8) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 26B(8) RPR 2001, para 16(C)9 PCCEO 2012 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Document types for the exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement) Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Where postal vote applications require verification of personal identifiers, and an applicant has been asked to provide documentary evidence, you should request that the applicant provide copies of the evidence. Documentary evidence may be provided as part of an online application or delivered to your office by hand or by post or as an attachment to an email. If an

applicant provides an original document, you must make a copy of that document and return the original document to the applicant. 1 Any copies of documents provided by applicants or taken by you of original documents should be stored securely in the same way as application forms. Please see guidance on the retention of information submitted with applications for more information on this. You should be satisfied that the documents or copies provided to you appear to be genuine. Where you have a doubt as to whether a copy is genuine or where the copy is of such poor quality that you cannot assess the document, you may ask the applicant to present the original document(s) in person at your office or to send original documents to you to be copied and returned. You should be aware that you would become responsible for the secure transit of the document in the latter case. Where you have doubt as to whether an original document is genuine, you may ask the applicant to provide alternative documentary evidence in the first instance. Where alternative documentary evidence is not available, you should direct the applicant to the attestation process or reject the application. Where documentary evidence does not appear to be genuine, you should advise the applicant of the penalties for supplying false information and inform your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) where you suspect that false information may have been supplied. For more information, see our ERO guidance on document authenticity checks . 1. Reg 56D(1 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), Paragraph 16D(1) Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement) Document types for the exceptions process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The attestation process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) The attestation process for postal vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Where postal vote applications require the verification of personal identifiers, and an applicant has been unable to provide documentary evidence to the type and quantity required by the exceptions process to prove their identity, you should write to them and ask them to provide an attestation in support of their application. For applications made by domestic electors, you should inform the applicant of the following: the deadline for submitting the attestation that their application may be rejected if they fail or refuse to provide it The attestation must: 1 confirm that the applicant is the person named in the application be in writing and signed by the qualified attester state the qualifying attester's full name, date of birth, occupation, residential address and (if different) the address at which they are registered as an elector state the qualifying attester's electoral number (where not registered as an overseas elector) or their digital registration number if the qualifying attester is registered at an address in Northern Ireland if the qualifying attester is registered as an overseas elector, the attester's British passport number together with its date and place of issue include an explanation that the qualifying attester is able to confirm the applicant is the person named in the application, their connection to the applicant, including (but not limited to) the length of time that the connection has existed include an indication that the qualifying attester is aware that it is an offence to provide false information to the registration officer include a declaration by the qualifying attester that all information provided in the attestation is true state the date on which it is made You could either design a form containing the necessary legal statements and requirements for an attestation or set the required detail out in your communication with the applicant. You should also provide examples of a person of good standing to help the applicant to identify a suitable attester. You

should advise the applicant that an attester is not permitted to charge for providing an attestation. Our guidance for EROs provides information on how to decide if an attestation is valid . If the postal vote is needed for a forthcoming poll, you should encourage the applicant to supply the attestation to you as soon as possible. You should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of postal vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining application close to the deadline provides more information on this. An attestation may be delivered to your office by hand, by post or by electronic means, such as email. If the attestation is sent electronically, the signature of an attester must be a photograph of a handwritten wet signature attached to an email. The attester is required to supply their electoral number as part of their attestation. 2 You should be aware that you may receive requests from potential attestors to supply this information and be prepared for how you will manage such requests in practice. Applicant is registered via a service declaration as a member of the armed forces There is no exceptions process for applicants who are registered by a service declaration as a member of the armed forces. If an applicant for a postal vote is registered via a service declaration as a member of the armed forces and you require additional evidence to verify their identity you should write to them and ask them to provide an attestation in support of their application. The attestation must 3 : Confirm that the applicant is the person named in the application, Be in writing and signed by an officer of the forces (within the meaning of section 59(1) of the 1983 Act) who is not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant, state the full name, address and rank of the person signing the attestation and the service (whether naval, military or air forces) in which they serve; and state the date on which it is made. 1. Reg 56C(6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended)(RPR), Paragraph 16C(5) Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C (6)(d) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 16C (10) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for The attestation process for postal vote applications (Post commencement) Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement) Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement) Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) When you receive an attestation, you should ask the following questions to assess whether the attestation is complete: Question – Has the attester: Notes Answer confirmed the applicant is the person named in the application? this would be confirmed by written statement and attester signing the attestation Yes/No confirmed they are aware of the penalty for providing false information? this would be confirmed by written statement and attester signing the attestation Yes/No confirmed their connection to the applicant including (but not limited to) the length of time that connection has existed? this would be confirmed by written statement and attester signing the attestation Yes/No given their full name? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their date of birth? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their registered address (and residential address if different) this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their electoral number or if they are an overseas elector, their British passport number? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their occupation? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No dated the attestation? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No signed the attestation? this should be written on the attestation Yes/No If

the answer to all of these questions is yes, then the applicant has provided a complete attestation. If one or more of the questions are answered with a no, then the attestation is not complete, and the applicant must be directed to ask the attestor to supply the missing information. If an attestor cannot supply the missing information, the applicant should be told that they must seek an attestation from another source, otherwise their application will be rejected. Last updated: 4 September 2023

[Book traversal links for Is the attestation complete? \(Post commencement\)](#) [The attestation process for postal vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Is the attestation valid? \(Post commencement\)](#) [Is the attestation valid? \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#)

When a complete attestation is received, you must assess whether the attestation has been made by a qualifying attestor and is valid. Some of the criteria differs depending on whether an attestor is registered as a domestic or overseas elector.

1 All qualifying attestors must:

- confirm they are not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant
- not have already signed identity attestations for two other applicants since either the last publication of the annual register or when the attestor was first added to the register, whichever is the most recent

Where an attestor is a domestic elector they must be:

- registered as an elector to vote in a local authority area in England or Wales
- a person of good standing in the community

Where an attestor is registered as an overseas elector they must be:

- registered to vote
- aged 18 or over
- Good standing

There is no precise definition of good standing; however, for the purposes of an attestation, you should consider it to mean someone who has credentials that can be checked and would suffer professional or reputational damage if they were to provide a false attestation. The list in the table below is not definitive but is intended to illustrate which professions could be described as of good standing:

Examples of professions which could be described as of good standing

accountant	airline pilot	articled clerk of a limited company	assurance agent of recognised company	bank/building society official	barrister	chairman/director of limited company	chiropodist	commissioner of oaths	civil servant (permanent)	dentist	director/manager of a VAT-registered charity	director/manager/personnel officer of a VAT-registered company	engineer (with professional qualifications)	financial services intermediary (e.g. a stockbroker or insurance broker)	fire service official	funeral director	insurance agent (full time) of a recognised company	journalist	Justice of the Peace	legal secretary (fellow or associate member of the Institute of Legal Secretaries and PAs)	licensee of public house	local government officer	manager/personnel officer (of a limited company)	medical professional	member, associate or fellow of a professional body	Merchant Navy officer	minister of a recognised religion (including Christian Science)	nurse (RGN and RMN)	officer of the armed services	optician	paralegal (certified paralegal, qualified paralegal or associate member of the Institute of Paralegals)	person with honours (an OBE or MBE, for example)	pharmacist	photographer (professional)	police officer	Post Office official	publicly elected representative (MP, Councillor etc)	president/secretary of a recognised organisation	Salvation Army officer	social worker	solicitor	surveyor	teacher, lecturer	trade union officer	travel agent (qualified)	valuer or auctioneer (fellows and associate members of the incorporated society)	Warrant Officers and Chief Petty Officers
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It is important to note that an unemployed/retired person who is of good standing in the community is not precluded from attesting an application. You must judge each attestation on its individual merits rather than apply a blanket policy. You must assess whether the attestation satisfies the relevant requirements, by answering two further questions: Is the qualifying attestor registered as either a

domestic elector to vote in a local authority area in England or Wales or as an overseas elector? The qualifying attester must be registered to vote either an overseas elector or in a local authority area in England or Wales. 2 If the qualifying attester's address is in the same local authority area as the applicant, you should check your electoral register and your electoral management software to check that the qualifying attester satisfies this condition. If the qualifying attester's address is not in the same local authority area as the applicant, you should contact the attester's ERO to check if the qualifying attester fulfils these conditions. Has the qualifying attester signed no more than two identity attestations since either the last publication of the register or since the attester was added to it, whichever is the most recent? Qualifying attestors are limited to signing identity attestations for no more than two applicants in any one electoral year (normally from 1 December to 30 November), or since their entry was added to the register in that local authority area, whichever is the shortest period. This allows the attester's ERO to confidently supply the required information without being required to account for attestations made whilst the attester was registered elsewhere. Electoral management software should record each time an elector has signed an attestation. Where the limit has been reached, you should reject the attestation for this reason. This does not prevent the applicant from seeking another attestation from a different elector. You should process attestations in the order they are received. If the attester fulfils all the conditions, the attestation will be accepted, and the attester's ERO will be able to record this against the elector's record. This will then count towards this elector's total allowable attestations. 1.

Reg 56C (6) and (7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C(7) RPR 2001 (as amended), Para 16C(6) Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Is the attestation valid? (Post commencement) Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement) Determining applications for postal votes following the exceptions or attestation process (Post commencement) Determining applications for postal votes following the exceptions or attestation process (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Where postal vote applications require verification of personal identifiers and the postal vote is needed for a forthcoming poll, you should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of postal vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining application close to the deadline provides more information on this. Determining an application where additional documentary evidence has been provided Where you are satisfied that an applicant's identity has been verified as a result of providing additional documentary evidence, you should determine the application as approved. Where you are not satisfied with the documentary evidence provided you may request further additional evidence, an attestation or refuse the application. Determining an application where an attestation has been provided If you have been able to determine an attestation as valid and therefore successfully established the identity of the applicant, you should determine the application for a postal vote as approved. If you are not satisfied that the attestation is valid you may request another attestation, ask for additional evidence or refuse the application. If an applicant refuses or does not respond to your request on or before the deadline to provide additional documentary evidence or an attestation If an applicant refuses or does not respond to your request on or before the deadline to provide additional evidence or an attestation, you may refuse the application for a

postal vote. Whatever determination decision you make, you must write to the elector to notify them. 1 Our guidance on confirming the outcome of postal vote applications contains more information . 1. Reg 57 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) Para 17 Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Determining applications for postal votes following the exceptions or attestation process (Post commencement) Is the attestation valid? (Post commencement) Determining postal vote applications close to a poll (Post commencement) Determining postal vote applications close to a poll (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) If an elector applying for a postal vote close to the deadline for a poll fails the DWP check, their application can be determined using the exceptions or attestation process up to and including polling day. Whilst the processing of applications is the responsibility of the ERO, the RO is responsible for the issuing of postal ballot packs. You should liaise with the RO (where you are not also the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for the issue of overseas and domestic postal votes including applications determined close to the deadline. Our guidance on planning for tranche 2 of the Elections Act changes has more information on this: Key considerations for the implementation of Tranche 2 of the Elections Act 2022 (PDF) Whatever determination decision you make, you must write to the elector to notify them. 1 Our guidance on confirming the outcome of postal vote applications contains more information . 1. Reg 57 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended), Para 17 Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Determining postal vote applications close to a poll (Post commencement) Determining applications for postal votes following the exceptions or attestation process (Post commencement) Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Post commencement) Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You must write to applicants to let them know whether their application has been accepted 1 or rejected. 2 If an application is rejected, you must give the reason(s) why. 3 There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed. Where you are confirming a postal voting arrangement for a particular poll, definite period or the maximum period, the notification must specify when the arrangement will expire. 4 Where an application will not be determined in a timeframe that will allow the elector to receive and return their postal vote for a particular poll, you should notify the applicant that the determination will not be made in time to be issued a postal vote for that particular poll, but that the postal vote will be in place for future polls. You should try to contact such electors by email or by phone to explain the alternative arrangements that could be put in place for polling day. If the deadline to vote by proxy has not also passed you should highlight this option for the particular poll and include the relevant form. However, you should also note that should the elector choose to vote by proxy for that particular poll, the postal vote application processed for future polls will be cancelled and a new postal vote application will need to be made. Confirmations are an opportunity to safeguard against potential fraud or misunderstanding on the part of the elector. You may, additionally, decide to acknowledge receipt of applications. If an elector receives an acknowledgement for a postal vote that they have not requested, receipt of the acknowledgement would give them an opportunity to get in touch with you. All responses, along with any confirmation notices or acknowledgements returned as undelivered/not known at this address, should be monitored and, if you have concerns,

you should contact your SPOC for advice. For further information, see our guidance on identifying suspicious absent vote applications . 1. Reg 57(1A) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulation 2001 (as amended) (RPR), Para 17(1) Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) (PCCEO) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 57 (4) RPR 2001, Para 17(3) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 57(4) RPR 2001, Para 17(3) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 57(1A) RPR 2001; Reg (17) (1) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Post commencement) Determining postal vote applications close to a poll (Post commencement) Changing or cancelling a postal vote at a poll (Post commencement) Changing or cancelling a postal vote at a poll (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) What happens if the postal vote has already been returned? As postal ballot papers may be issued to electors from the deadline for withdrawals, but the deadline for changes to absent voting arrangements is not until 5pm, 11 working days before the poll, there are provisions to allow the Returning Officer to cancel an already issued ballot paper. To allow the Returning Officer to cancel the relevant ballot paper, you must notify them whenever you have granted: 1 cancellation of postal vote arrangements change from postal to proxy application for a postal ballot paper to be sent to a different address If a person returns a postal ballot paper that has been or is to be cancelled, the ballot paper, together with any other ballot papers returned, the postal voting statement or covering envelopes must be forwarded to the Returning Officer. 2 However, you must disregard any application to change the elector's method of voting for the poll for which the postal ballot paper has been issued if, before you have determined the new application, the elector returns their postal ballot paper (unless they have spoilt it or claim it has been lost or not received). If you are not the Returning Officer at the poll you will need to closely liaise with them to check the list of returned postal ballot papers before processing any requests for changes after postal ballot packs have been issued. 3 There are no provisions for those electors with a postal vote at a particular poll to cancel their postal vote. However, they may change their voting method by submitting a fresh proxy application by 5pm, 11 working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier application for a postal vote. Postal voters with a longer-term postal vote arrangement may cancel their postal vote at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 4 The exception to this is where the completed postal ballot paper has already been returned by the elector for the poll. This is also the case for an elector voting by proxy, where their proxy has a postal vote and has already voted on behalf of the elector by returning their completed postal proxy vote. 5 It is the return of the ballot paper that is relevant in determining whether or not an elector can make changes to their postal voting arrangements to take effect at that poll. Returning Officers will therefore need to have in place a system that will allow them to identify promptly whether or not a postal ballot paper has been returned. 1. Reg 78A (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 78A(2)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 56(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Changing or cancelling a postal vote at a poll (Post commencement) Confirming the outcome of a postal vote application (Post commencement) Cancelling a postal vote (Post commencement) Cancelling a postal vote (Post

commencement of Elections Act measures) There are no provisions for those electors with a postal vote at a particular poll to cancel their postal vote. However, they may change their voting method by submitting a fresh proxy application by 5pm, 11 working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier application for a postal vote. Postal voters with a longer term postal vote arrangement may cancel their postal vote at any time and up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 1 However, since postal ballot papers may be issued to electors as soon as practicable, an elector who has received their postal ballot and has returned their completed postal ballot paper for the poll will not be allowed to cancel or make any changes to their absent voting arrangements so that they take effect at the poll (except if the ballot paper has been returned as spoilt or lost).

2 This is also the case for an elector voting by proxy, where their proxy has a postal vote and has already voted on behalf of the elector by returning their completed postal proxy vote. 3 1. Reg 56(5) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Cancelling a postal vote (Post commencement) Changing or cancelling a postal vote at a poll (Post commencement) Changes from postal to proxy (Post commencement) Changes from postal to proxy (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Electors with a postal vote arrangement in place for a particular poll who decide they want a proxy vote arrangement instead may change their voting method by submitting a fresh proxy application by 5pm, 11 working days before the poll. This proxy arrangement would replace the earlier postal vote arrangement. Postal voters with a longer term postal vote arrangement may change their voting method from postal to proxy at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 1 The exception to the ability to change a postal vote arrangement to a proxy arrangement is where the completed postal ballot paper has already been returned by the elector for the poll. Our guidance on applying to vote by proxy has more information on the contents of a proxy application. 1. Reg 56(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Changes from postal to proxy (Post commencement) Cancelling a postal vote (Post commencement) Redirection requests for existing postal voters (Post commencement) Redirection requests for existing postal voters (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Electors with a postal vote for a particular poll may not alter their postal vote delivery details but may submit a fresh application with a new address for the postal vote to be sent to. Existing postal voters with a longer-term postal vote arrangement may ask for their postal vote to be redirected at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 1 The exception to this is where the completed postal ballot paper has already been returned by the elector for the poll. The request must be made in writing and may be posted, hand-delivered or emailed to you and must contain: 2 the elector's full name and registered address the redirection address the circumstances that require, or will require, the redirection the date of the request Where a request for redirection has been granted, you must confirm this to the elector in writing at their registered address. 3 1. Reg 56(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulation 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 51 and 51B RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 57(4A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Redirection requests for existing postal voters (Post commencement) Changes from postal to proxy

(Post commencement) Proxy voting (Post commencement) Proxy voting (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) This section contains guidance on proxy voting. It covers the range of proxy vote options for electors, and eligibility and application requirements for proxy voting, including the attestation process in support of an application where required. It also includes guidance on processing proxy vote applications, including the exceptions and attestation processes used to verify an elector's ID if required, information about how an elector can cancel or amend their proxy voting arrangements, and the ongoing requirements to maintain the lists of proxy voters. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Proxy voting (Post commencement) Redirection requests for existing postal voters (Post commencement) Transitional arrangements for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Transitional arrangements (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) The commencement of The Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 will take place from 31 October 2023. New applications received on or after the 31 October 2023 commencement All proxy vote applications received on or after commencement must satisfy the new requirements including information for the verification of personal identifiers 1 . Where an application does not contain the required information, you should, where possible, make enquiries to obtain the missing information. If the missing information is not submitted, the application cannot be accepted. You should write to the elector, explain why the application has not been accepted and how to make a fresh application. New applications received but not determined by 31 October 2023 commencement Any applications that have been received but have not been determined by 31 October 2023 commencement must be rejected. You must write to the elector, explain why the application has been rejected and how to make a fresh application. Notifying existing proxy voters of the requirement to reapply You must send a notice to every domestic elector with an existing proxy vote arrangement from 31 October 2023 when the new provisions commence and tell them that: their proxy vote entitlement is to end on 31 January 2024 they will need to re-apply if they want to continue to vote by proxy and how to make a fresh application 2 . Transitional arrangements for overseas electors with proxy votes Proxy arrangements will end on 31 January 2024 for overseas electors who, before the commencement of The Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, applied for a new proxy voting arrangement or have an existing proxy voting arrangement, unless they make a new application. 3 Proxy vote applications made after the commencement of The Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 on 31 October 2023 will require the signature to be refreshed at the point the existing overseas declaration expires. If the proxy vote application is made before the commencement of the overseas elector regulations on 16 January 2024, or after commencement and the overseas elector is not yet on a 3 year renewal cycle, the overseas elector will be required to provide a fresh signature when their current overseas registration expires, which will not exceed 12 months. However, an automatic signature extension will be applied where: the new proxy vote application is made post-commencement of The Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 the elector's overseas registration has not yet moved from the 12 month renewal process to the new 3 year renewal process the proxy application was made less than 3 months before the existing overseas elector declaration is due to be renewed If the elector does renew their declaration, the effect of that extension will be that the elector will not be required to provide a signature until their declaration is next due for renewal. Our guidance on overseas electors is being

updated to reflect changes as a result of the Elections Act 2022. A link will be provided here once this guidance has been published. Applications for a proxy vote from attainers made and determined before commencement on 31 October 2023 If an applicant who is registered as an attainer makes an application for a proxy vote and it is determined before 31 October 2023, the arrangement will come into effect once they turn 18. 1. Regulation 51(2) (aa) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) (as amended); Para 11(1)(a) and (aa) Schedule 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO 2012) (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 8(3), Sch4, Elections Act 2022; Section 24 (2), Part 6, The Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 8(3), Sch4, Elections Act 2022; Section 24 (2), Part 6, The Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Transitional arrangements for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Proxy voting (Post commencement) Eligibility to vote by proxy (Post commencement) Eligibility to vote by proxy (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should ensure that electors are made aware that they have the option to vote by post, proxy or in person. This will allow them to make an informed choice about the option that is most appropriate to their circumstances. Electors who are or will be registered are entitled to apply for a proxy vote. For someone to meet the 'will be registered' criteria, the five day objection period must have passed and you must have positively determined their registration application, which means they will be added to the register on publication of the next notice of alteration or on publication of the revised register, whichever is first. 1 A proxy vote arrangement can be in place for one of the following: 2 an indefinite period a definite period a particular poll Reasons for making an application to vote by proxy for a definite or indefinite period While everyone is entitled to a proxy vote at a particular poll, applications for a definite or indefinite period require a specific reason. These reasons are: 3 blindness other disability (the disability must be specified) occupation/employment/service/attendance on a course (details must be provided) registered as a service voter or overseas voter registered as an anonymous elector journey necessary by sea or air to get from the registered address to their polling station In some cases, an attestation in support of the application is also required. More information can be found in our guidance on attestations . Voting by proxy at a particular poll Applications for a proxy vote for a particular poll only require the applicant to give a reason for voting by proxy. 4 There are many reasons why a person may decide to vote by proxy at a particular poll. If no explanation of the reason is given on the application it will be incomplete and you should write to the elector to ask them to provide an explanation. If no explanation is provided, you should reject the application on the grounds that it does not meet the prescribed requirements. The decision as to whether a reason given is satisfactory is made at your discretion. However, you cannot reject a proxy vote application solely on the grounds that you are not satisfied with the explanation. You should accept applications at face value. If the reason does cause suspicion, or if you have concerns because of other circumstances linking the application to others in the area, or to a particular address, this should be reported to your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC). 1. Sections 9(2), 10ZC (1), 13 and 13A Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 4 Paragraphs 3(2) and 4(2) RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4 Paragraph 3(3) RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at

footnote 3 4. Regulation 55(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulation 2001 (RPR 2001) (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Eligibility to vote by proxy (Post commencement) Transitional arrangements for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Reasons a proxy application may require a supporting attestation (Post commencement) Reasons a proxy application may require a supporting attestation (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Proxy applications for a definite or indefinite period require specific reasons and, in some cases, an attestation in support of the application is also required. 1 These include: applications for reasons of blindness or other disability (excluding those who are registered blind or severely sight impaired by the local authority or who are in receipt of the higher rate of the mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment) applications due to occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations provide that an attestation from a medical professional in support of an application to vote by proxy due to disability must be provided free of charge. 2 Those having to make a journey by sea or air to get to their polling station do not require their application to be attested. You will be able to verify whether a journey by sea or air is required to get from the qualifying address to the relevant polling station from your own local knowledge. This provision only covers journeys from the qualifying address to the polling station, and not any such journeys required due to being temporarily absent from the qualifying address, such as being on holiday. 1. Regulations 53 and 54 Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 22 and Schedule 2, The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Reasons a proxy application may require a supporting attestation (Post commencement) Eligibility to vote by proxy (Post commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? (Post commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Application forms for the appointment of a proxy on the grounds of disability or blindness must be attested by: 1 a registered medical practitioner or registered nurse treating the applicant for their disability or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability a person registered as a member of a profession to which the Health Professions Order 2001 applies (i.e. arts therapists, chiropodists, clinical scientists, dieticians, medical laboratory technicians, occupational therapists, orthoptists, paramedics, physiotherapists, prosthetists and orthotists, radiographers, and speech and language therapists) treating the applicant for their condition or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability a registered dentist, dispensing optician, optometrist, pharmaceutical chemist, osteopath or chiropractor treating the applicant for their disability or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability the manager of a care home service registered under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000 the warden of residential premises provided for persons of pensionable age or disabled persons, where the applicant states that they reside in such an establishment the manager (or their authorised representative) of a hospital registered in accordance with Section 145 of the Mental Health Act 1983 a registered social worker who has arranged care or assistance for the applicant a registered chartered psychologist who is treating the applicant for their condition or from whom the applicant is receiving care in respect of that disability In most circumstances, the person attesting the form must provide

their name and address. 2 The only exception is where an application is made by an elector detained in a hospital under Section 145 of the Mental Health Act 1983. 3 In this case, there is no need for the attestor to provide their address. In all cases, the attestor must state: 4 the post or office that qualifies them to attest the application that to the best of their knowledge and belief the applicant cannot reasonably be expected to go to the polling station or to vote there unaided by reason of their disability that the medical condition or disability is likely to continue either indefinitely or for a period specified by the attestor Where an application is made by an elector detained in a hospital under Section 145 of the Mental Health Act 1983, the person attesting the application must also state the statutory provision under which the applicant is liable to be detained. 5 1.

Regulation 53(2) and (3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 53(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 53(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 53(4) and (5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 53(5A) (iv) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? (Post commencement) Reasons a proxy application may require a supporting attestation (Post commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? (Post commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Application forms for the appointment of a proxy on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course must be attested: 1 by the applicant's employer or an employee delegated to do so on the employer's behalf if the applicant is self-employed, by a person aged 18 years or over who knows the person but is not related to them, or if the applicant is attending a course, by the tutor of a course or the principal of the educational institution where a course is taking place, or an employee delegated to do so on the principal's behalf 1.

Regulation 54(2) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? (Post commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of disability or blindness? (Post commencement) The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Post commencement) The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Any person who is, or will be, registered and is entitled to vote in the type of poll they are appointed for can be appointed as a proxy. 1 Where the proxy is resident in your local authority area, you will be able to check your own register. However, where the proxy is registered in another local authority area you should confirm these details with the ERO for that area. You can require another ERO to provide information as soon as reasonably practicable 2 and should let the ERO know if you require an urgent response due to an imminent poll. You should draw their attention to the urgency of any required response, for example, by using a clear subject heading in your email, such as ERO registration status check for proxy application. You need to have in place a mechanism for monitoring and following up on any non-responses. Equally, you should ensure you provide this information as quickly as possible to any other ERO. If the nominated person is not and will not be registered, you should contact the applicant to explain the qualification criteria. You should ask them to nominate someone else who is or will be registered as their proxy, or suggest they ask their proxy to register (and

explain how to do so) then notify you if the registration application is successful. If the proxy application is made close to a registration deadline you should attempt to contact the applicant quickly, such as by phone or email if you have their contact details. A person is not entitled to vote as proxy in any electoral area on behalf of more than four electors. Within the four electors, no more than two electors can be domestic electors. Domestic electors are those electors who are neither service voters nor overseas electors. 3 It is an offence: 4 for a person to knowingly appoint a proxy who is already acting as a proxy for two or more domestic electors to vote as proxy for more than two domestic electors for a person who is registered as an overseas elector or a service voter to knowingly appoint a proxy who is already acting as a proxy for four or more electors (of which no more than two electors can be domestic electors) to vote as proxy for more than four electors (of which no more than two electors can be domestic electors) 1. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(1), (3) and (3A) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 2(1), Representation of the People (Provision of information regarding proxies) Regulations 2013 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Schedule 4, Paragraph 6 (5C) (a), RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 61 (1A), RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Post commencement) Who can attest a proxy application on the grounds of occupation, employment, service or attendance on a course? (Post commencement) Applications for proxy votes (Post commencement) Applications for proxy votes (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Electors can apply for a proxy vote in a number of ways: online via GOV.UK (in some circumstances) in writing (e.g. on a paper application form) in person at your office (if you decide to offer the service) Online applications When the proxy vote application is for a particular poll or, if the applicant is an overseas elector or service voter, for any period, overseas electors can apply online using the proxy vote application service, which is hosted on GOV.UK Paper applications Proxy vote application forms are not prescribed; however, an application must contain all the required information and the applicant's signature and date of birth must be presented in a specific format . When you receive a request for a paper application form, before providing one you should check that the applicant is registered to vote or has made an application to be registered to vote. If they have not, you should explain that the applicant needs to be registered to vote and should offer them the opportunity to apply to register online or send a voter registration form with the proxy vote application. We produce printable proxy vote application forms which you can use. These printable proxy vote application forms are published on our website and GOV.UK. A paper proxy vote application can be in any format 1 : a letter, an email with a scanned attachment or a paper application form are acceptable, as long as the signature and date of birth is clear and is provided in the prescribed format. Where a person is unable to provide a written signature, they can request a waiver . If you receive a written application that is not on an application form, you should check that it contains all the required information. If it is incomplete, you should follow the process outlined in our guidance on incomplete applications . In-person applications People may have difficulties completing a proxy vote application. For the benefit and convenience of your electors and to help you to meet your duties under the Equalities Act 2010, you should offer in-person application services so that individuals have the opportunity to apply without the need to provide application information in writing. If you are unable to provide in-person applications for proxy votes for everybody, you should still provide this at your

discretion in certain circumstances. When dealing with in-person applications before proceeding you should check that an applicant is registered to vote or has made an application to be registered to vote. If they have not, you should explain that an applicant needs to be registered to vote before they can be issued with a proxy vote and should offer them the opportunity to apply to register. You should check whether the applicant has all the required information for you to complete an application in full on their behalf. This includes their National Insurance number (NINo) or a reason why this cannot be provided, date of birth and their ability to provide a written ink signature on a paper form or a photograph of their ink signature for uploading to the proxy vote application service. You can assist the applicant with taking a photo of their signature and uploading it if necessary. Where a person is unable to provide a written signature, they can request a waiver . Applications made using the proxy vote application service cannot be partially completed and returned to at a later time, so if an applicant cannot provide all of the information, you will need to ensure that their application is captured on a paper form to allow you to add any missing information later. Once you have taken the required information you should read it back to the applicant, giving them the opportunity to review the information provided and to satisfy themselves that it is true and accurate. If you accept applications in person, it is important that you keep accurate records of the information provided by applicants.

2 Before collecting any information, you should make the applicant aware of your privacy notice and give general information about how their data will be used and alert them to the offence of making a false statement.

1. Regulation 51(3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Schedule 4, Paragraph 3, Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for Applications for proxy votes (Post commencement)

The qualifications for acting as a proxy (Post commencement)

Availability of paper proxy vote application forms (Post commencement)

Availability of paper proxy vote application forms (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

You should ensure that you have an adequate supply of paper proxy vote application forms available in case an elector is unable to print forms off themselves and is not able to use the proxy vote application service. You must supply, free of charge, a reasonable quantity of paper proxy vote application forms to people who wish to use them in connection with a poll, which includes political parties.

1 Paper proxy vote application forms should also be made available at all public offices of the local authority and at other premises frequented by electors. A number of organisations, including the Electoral Commission and political parties, also provide proxy vote application forms. You should liaise with local political parties and any local organisations or groups who produce proxy application forms to make them aware of the requirements for proxy applications and to provide advice on the content and format of their forms. This should help avoid unnecessary delays in processing applications and help to avoid electors having to re-submit an application that has not been made correctly. This is particularly important at poll time when any delay could result in the elector missing the deadline. You should ensure that local political parties, candidates and agents at elections are aware of their responsibilities in relation to handling proxy applications. If they are given completed paper proxy application forms, they should forward them directly and without delay to the elections office. The Commission has developed a Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums. You should liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) at any elections that are taking place to ensure that all

candidates and agents are provided with copies of the code and know how to obtain additional copies if required. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 The code provides a guide as to what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community during the lead-up to polling day, including in relation to proxy vote applications. Any concerns that the code has been breached should be raised first with the candidate, agent, political party or campaigner in question. If you have any further concerns or wish to report a breach of the code, you should first contact your local Commission team. This code has been agreed by the political parties represented on the House of Commons Parliamentary Parties Panel and the panels for the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd and is endorsed by the members of the Electoral Commission's UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board of senior Returning and Electoral Registration Officers and by the Electoral Integrity Roundtable.

1. Regulation 4(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Availability of paper proxy vote application forms (Post commencement) Applications for proxy votes (Post commencement) What information must a proxy vote application contain? (Post commencement) What information must be included in a proxy vote application? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) An application for a proxy vote must include the following information: 1 the full name of the elector the address where the elector is (or has applied to be) registered to vote the elector's date of birth the elector's National Insurance number (NINo) or, if they are not able to provide that information, the reason why they are not able to do so the elector's signature (or a request for a signature waiver) whether the application is for a poll on a particular date (and, if so, identify which one), a particular period (and, if so, the date range of the period) or an indefinite period an indication of which polls the application applies to The applicant's full name, National Insurance number (NINo), and date of birth (DOB) are also known as their personal identifiers and these pieces of information are used to perform a data match with DWP to verify an applicant's identity. Our guidance for Electoral Registration Officers on National Insurance numbers and Dates of birth provides more information on personal identifiers. If an applicant is unable to provide a NINo they may provide with their application a copy of the documents listed in acceptable documents for the exceptions process . 2 If provided, these documents can be used to verify an applicant's identity. This may be particularly useful close to the deadline for a poll to ensure that an application can be processed without delay. An application may also contain an applicant's previous name, email address and telephone number, but they are not a requirement.

1. Schedule 4 Paragraphs 3(2)(c) and 4(2)(c) Representation of the People Act 2000, Regulation 51(1), (2), (4) and (5) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 51(9) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for What information must a proxy vote application contain? (Post commencement) Availability of paper proxy vote application forms (Post commencement) Incomplete proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Signature waivers for proxy voters (Post commencement) Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Signature waivers for proxy voters (Post commencement) What information must a proxy vote application contain? (Post commencement) Required format for signature and date of birth included on a proxy application (Post commencement) Incomplete proxy vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Online applications An applicant will not be able to submit an incomplete proxy vote application online. The

only exceptions are: where an applicant is unable to provide their NINo and they provide a statement of the reasons why as part of the application where an applicant is unable to provide their signature and they indicate that they will require a waiver Where an applicant is unable to provide their NINo and they provide a statement of the reasons why, you must try to verify the applicant's identity using the exceptions process . 1 Paper applications You may receive paper proxy vote applications which do not contain all the required information. You are not able to determine a proxy vote application if any of the required information is missing or incomplete. If the applicant has not been able to provide their NINo they must provide a statement of the reasons why as part of the application. Where an applicant is unable to provide their NINo, and they provide a statement of the reasons why, the application is not rejected as incomplete and you must verify the identity of the applicant using the exceptions process . 2 If no explanations are provided as to why the required information is missing for a paper application you should where possible, make enquiries to obtain the missing information. If the missing information is not submitted, you must reject the application. You should contact the applicant, explain why the application has been rejected and how to make a fresh application. If the application is made in the run up to a poll, you should explain that a new application must be received by 5pm, 6 working days before the poll for it to be able to be processed in time for that poll. Where an applicant is unable to provide their signature, they should indicate that they will require a waiver and you should provide a signature waiver application for completion. 1. Reg 51(9) The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Incomplete proxy vote applications (Post commencement) What information must a proxy vote application contain? (Post commencement) Required format for signature and date of birth included on a proxy application (Post commencement) Required format for signature and date of birth included on a proxy vote application (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Although there is no prescribed form for applying for a proxy vote, the regulations require that the applicant's signature and date of birth are set out as follows: 1 the signature shall appear against a background of white unlined paper of at least 5 cm long and 2 cm high, and the applicant's date of birth shall be configured numerically in the sequence of day, month and year, i.e. DD MM YYYY The location of the signature and date of birth on an application is not prescribed. You cannot impose any other conditions on the way the information is presented. As long as the signature and date of birth meet the legislative requirements, the application must be accepted. If you are producing paper proxy vote application forms you should ensure that these meet accepted good practice in terms of accessibility and usability, and that you lay out the form clearly to help ensure that it is completed accurately. For example, you could position the date of birth box before the signature box, followed by the space for date of completion, to reduce the risk that applicants will give the date of completion first by mistake. If the application is made online, the photograph of the applicant's signature must meet the requirements set out above and be sufficiently clear and unambiguous. 2 1. Regulation 51(3A) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 51(3A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Required format for signature and date of birth included on a proxy application (Post commencement) Incomplete proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Signature waiver requests for proxy voters

(Post commencement) Signature waiver requests for proxy voters (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) If an applicant is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write, the requirement for a signature on the application can be waived. An elector can request a signature waiver application form from you at any time. The request may be made by any means including as part of an online proxy vote application. The applicant must provide with their waiver application the reason for the request and the name and address of any person who has assisted them with completing the application. 1 You should be satisfied that the request is genuine and not being used as an attempt to avoid security measures. It is for you to decide the proof or evidence needed in order to be satisfied that the applicant is unable to provide a signature, or a consistent signature, due to a disability or an inability to read or write. You have no power to investigate or to make judgements on the nature or extent of an elector's disability. You should take a consistent approach to considering requests for signature waivers that balances both the accessibility and integrity of the proxy voting process. If making further enquiries, you should bear in mind that the person requesting the waiver may not be able to respond themselves. However, you can ask any person who has or is assisting the applicant for clarification or further information. You could, for example, ask this person to complete a signed declaration that to the best of their knowledge and belief the elector in question is unable to provide a signature or a consistent signature due to any disability or inability to read or write. You should make clear to anyone you request information or a declaration from that it is an offence to provide false information in connection with an application for a proxy vote and make clear the maximum relevant penalty. If, having made enquiries, you are not satisfied as to the authenticity of the request, you should refuse it. If refused, you must reject the proxy vote application and notify the applicant in writing of the reasons for your decision. You should remain vigilant as to any trends which may be revealed through the receipt of waiver requests and the following should raise suspicion: large numbers of applications assisted or signed by one person with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible for nursing or care home staff to assist a number of electors to complete their waiver requests, it is less plausible that ordinary members of the public who do not have a connection with such establishments, would need to assist a large number of applicants) large numbers of applications from one street or area with no plausible explanation (for example, while it may be plausible that a larger than usual number of waivers are requested by residents in a nursing or care home, it is less plausible that a high number of residents in an ordinary HMO would need a waiver) If you are satisfied as to the waiver request and the accompanying proxy vote application, you should give confirmation in writing to the elector that you have accepted the application and the waiver. 1. Regulation 51(2)(f) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Signature waiver requests for proxy voters (Post commencement) Required format for signature and date of birth included on a proxy application (Post commencement) Name changes on proxy vote record (Post commencement) Name changes on proxy vote record (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) An elector can apply to change their name on the register by submitting a completed change of name form with supporting evidence. 1 The change of name will need to be reflected in the proxy voting record. When an elector with a proxy vote changes their name, you should contact them to tell them that although their existing proxy vote arrangement will remain in place, they will need to make a new application

if they are now using a new signature. 1. Section 10ZD(1) Representation of the People Act 1983; Regulation 26A Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Name changes on proxy vote record \(Post commencement\)](#) [Signature waiver requests for proxy voters \(Post commencement\)](#) [Proxy vote application deadlines \(Post commencement\)](#) [Proxy vote application deadlines \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Applications can be made at any time, and you should process all applications as soon as possible. There are, however, deadlines in legislation by which proxy vote applications must have been received in order to apply at a particular poll. Deadline for changes to existing proxy and postal proxy arrangements (including cancellations) 5pm - 11 working days before the date of the poll 1 Deadline for new proxy applications (excluding emergency proxies) and new proxy appointments 5pm – 6 working days before the date of the poll 2 Deadline for emergency proxy applications 5pm – polling day 3 Deadlines for the receipt of proxy vote applications at polls are statutory. There can be no extension to the deadlines for any reason. Proxy vote applications received after the deadline for a particular poll cannot be accepted and must be disallowed for that poll, and the elector notified of the fact. 4 If, however, it is an application for a definite or indefinite period going beyond the poll, and the application meets all the prescribed requirements, the elector should be advised they missed the deadline to be given a proxy vote for that poll but that their proxy vote will be in place for future polls. If the application is refused, you must notify the applicant of the decision and the reason for it. 5 Recall Petitions A person is entitled to sign a petition by proxy if they have been granted an application to vote by proxy for a definite or indefinite period at parliamentary elections before 5pm on the cut-off day (3 working days before the first day of the signing period). Where a person has been granted an application to vote by proxy for a definite period and that period expires during the signing period of a particular petition, that entitlement to vote by proxy is deemed to end at the expiry of that definite period. 6 Calculating deadlines Deadlines are calculated in working days by excluding Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. Bank holidays that apply when calculating proxy voting deadlines are ones that apply anywhere across the area in which the election as a whole takes place. So, at a UK Parliamentary general election, a bank holiday in Scotland will also apply in England and Wales. The only exception to this is where the proceedings at a UK Parliamentary general election in a particular constituency are commenced afresh because a candidate has died. In this case, only the bank holidays that apply in the affected area will be included in the calculation of the proxy voting deadlines. However, at UK Parliamentary by-elections and local government elections, only the bank holidays that apply in the area that has the election must be taken into account. 7 1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 56(2) and (3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Regulation 56(3A) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) 4. Regulations 56(1) – (4) and 57(5) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#) 5. Regulation 57(1) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#) 6. Regulation 50 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ [Back to content at footnote 6](#) 7. Regulation 56 (4) and 57(5) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 7](#) Last updated: 13 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Proxy vote application deadlines \(Post commencement\)](#) [Name changes on proxy vote record \(Post commencement\)](#) [Processing proxy vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Processing proxy vote applications \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Proxy vote applications made online will be

electronically date and time-stamped when received into the ERO Portal (EROP). You should date stamp paper applications upon receipt. On deadline day for applications in advance of a particular poll, it is advisable to also record the time applications are received so that you have an audit trail of which applications were received before and after the deadline. This will enable you to tell which proxy vote applications were made by the relevant legal deadline and are eligible to be processed for an upcoming poll. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Processing proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Proxy vote application deadlines (Post commencement) Verification of an applicant's identity (Post commencement) Verification of an applicant's identity (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Any person making a new application for a proxy vote must provide personal identifiers which are used to verify the applicant's identity against DWP records. 1 The results of these checks, which will appear in the ERO Portal, must be taken into account in determining the application. 2 If an applicant's identity cannot be verified using DWP records, you should follow the exceptions process or failing that the attestation process. 3 Unlike applications for electoral registration and Voter Authority Certificates, you cannot use local data to verify proxy vote applications.

1. Reg 56B Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR) (as amended), Para 16B Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO) (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56B(9) RPR 2001 (as amended), Para 16B(9) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56C RPR 2001 (as amended), Para 16C Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Verification of an applicant's identity (Post commencement) Processing proxy vote applications (Post commencement) How to interpret DWP match results for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) How to interpret DWP match results for proxy vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Customer Information System (CIS) is an amalgamated data source, containing data received from internal DWP systems, as well as other government sources, such as His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). A match level is sent to the Electoral Registration Online Portal (EROP) which shows either a match or a no match result against each application. You will need to assess whether the applicant's identity has been established. Match If DWP returns a match result for an applicant's identity, you can be confident that the applicant is the person they claim to be on their application. No match If a no match result is returned by DWP, this indicates that it has not been possible to establish that person's identity and you should not be satisfied that the applicant is the person that they claim to be on their application at this stage. You may contact the applicant to query the information given on the application using any communication channel that you have contact details for. You should ask the applicant to supply their full application information - name, address, DOB and NINo. These details should be checked against the original application. You should not supply any details of any information given in an application to the applicant. If the information provided by the applicant confirms they have made an error on their application, you can correct the application and should resubmit their personal identifiers for a further check. If you make a change to an applicant's application based on additional information supplied by them, you should tell them that in their confirmation letter. You should not include any personal identifier information (NINo and DOB) in the letter. If no error has been made on the application, you should write to the elector to inform them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and request they supply

documentary proof of their identity; this is known as the exceptions process . Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for How to interpret DWP match results for proxy vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Verification of an applicant's identity \(Post commencement\)](#) [Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for proxy vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for proxy vote applications \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) [Processing errors may occur when inputting personal identifier information for ID verification.](#) This may result in an applicant who has properly submitted an application not having their identity verified in time to vote by proxy at a poll. For example, a paper application form that contains personal identifier information may be received but misplaced and not properly dealt with, or an online application may be incorrectly processed, resulting in the application not being sent to DWP. You can correct the error and determine an application for a proxy vote at any time before the close of poll. However, if the proxy vote is needed for a forthcoming poll you should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of proxy vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining applications close to the deadline provides more information on this. On discovering this type of processing error, before you determine the application, you must still: be satisfied that the application was submitted before the deadline (for example, it was time and date-stamped upon receipt) send the applicant's personal identifiers to be verified When processing errors are identified close to the close of poll, and you are concerned that the results of the DWP matching process may not be returned in time, you may in these circumstances, proceed straight to the documentary exceptions process before you receive the result of the DWP matching process to mitigate the impact of the processing error. Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for proxy vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [How to interpret DWP match results for proxy vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Determining proxy vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Determining proxy vote applications \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) Only electors who are, or will be, registered can apply for a proxy vote. All proxy applications (except for emergency proxy applications) will be processed in the EROP. A check of the relevant electoral register held in your electoral management system (EMS) will be conducted for these applications and the result of this check will appear in the EROP to confirm whether or not a person who has applied for a proxy vote is a registered elector. Emergency proxy applications will be processed in the EMS and a manual check that the elector is or will be registered will need to be conducted. Where an applicant is a registered elector, you will be able to consider the rest of the application details. Where an applicant is found to have an entry waiting to be added to the register, you can determine the application for a proxy vote once the five day objection period has passed. You will need to ensure that you return to the EROP to process the applications of those waiting to be added following the objection period. If the results show an applicant is not included on a relevant electoral register or has not applied to be included on a relevant electoral register, you should decide whether to reject the application at this point, wait and check again at a later date, or make such other manual check as may be helpful. This could be to see if the applicant has made an application to register at the same time as they made an application for a proxy vote and the data check from the registration process has not yet been returned or may be to establish if the reason a match cannot be found is due to a minor difference. For example, an

elector's name may have been misspelt or may have legally changed since they applied to register. You should contact the elector to make any enquires necessary so that you can be satisfied that the entry on the register is the same person who has made the application for a proxy vote. Once the application has passed the registration check, it must be scrutinised to ensure that it satisfies the prescribed requirements. 1 Where it does, you must confirm to the elector and their proxy the outcome of the application. 2 Where it appears that the elector has made a mistake when completing their application (for example, where they have transposed their date of birth figures), you should contact the elector and ask them to resubmit an application form. You should take extra steps to contact the elector where possible by email or by phone, if it is close to the proxy voting deadline for a poll. Where you have any integrity concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice and handle the application form in accordance with any instructions provided by them on evidence handling. Guidance on how to access and use the EROP will be provided by DLUHC. 1. Reg 51 Representation of the People Regulations (England and Wales) (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 57(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Determining proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Processing errors when inputting information for ID verification for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions and attestation processes for proxy applications (Post commencement) The exceptions and attestation processes for proxy applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should require applicants to provide additional evidence where you consider it is necessary to verify the applicant's identity. This may be because: they are unable to provide their NINO the personal identifiers cannot be matched against DWP records This additional evidence may be in the form of supporting documents verifying that they are who they say they are, known as the exceptions process , or failing that by providing a statement from another individual confirming the applicant's identity, known as the attestation process . The types and quantities of documents and the content of attestations that are acceptable to establish an applicant's identity vary depending on the category of elector the applicant is registered as. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for The exceptions and attestation processes for proxy applications (Post commencement) Determining proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) To support the verification of personal identifiers (NINo and DOB) for domestic electors you may require additional documentary evidence in respect of their application. You should inform them of the following: the deadline for submitting the additional documentary evidence that their application may be rejected if they fail or refuse to provide the additional evidence If the proxy vote is needed for a forthcoming poll you should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of proxy vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining applications close to the deadline provides more information on this. If an applicant for a proxy vote is a special category elector and you require additional evidence to verify their identity, our guidance on documentary evidence that can be required in connection with proxy vote applications made by special category electors provides more information on this. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for The exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions and attestation processes for proxy applications (Post commencement) Document types for the exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Document types

for the exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Proxy vote applications which fail to match with DWP should be referred to the exception process. The documents required to successfully establish an applicant's identity should refer to the applicant by name and the types and quantities of documents that must be supplied for domestic electors are as follows: any one document from list 1 one document from list 2 and two additional documents from either list 2 or list 3

List 1

- 1 the applicant's passport the applicant's identity card issued in the European Economic Area the applicant's biometric immigration document issued in the United Kingdom in accordance with regulations made under section 5 of the Borders Act 2007 the applicant's electoral identity card issued in Northern Ireland the applicant's photocard driving licence granted in the United Kingdom or driving licence granted by a Crown Dependency, which bears a photograph of the applicant

List 2 the following documents must have been issued in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, except for the final document in this list 2 the applicant's birth certificate the applicant's marriage or civil partnership certificate the applicant's adoption certificate the applicant's firearms certificate granted under the Firearms Act 1968 the record of a decision on bail made in respect of the applicant in accordance with section 5(1) of the Bail Act 1976 the applicant's driving licence, which is not in the form of a photocard the applicant's driving licence, granted other than in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, which bears a photograph of the applicant, and which must be valid for at least 12 months from the date the applicant entered the United Kingdom

List 3 any of the following kinds of evidence must bear the applicant's full name as stated on their application

- 3 a financial statement, including but not limited to— a mortgage statement a bank or building society statement or a letter from a bank or building society confirming that the applicant has opened an account with that bank or building society a credit card statement a pension statement a council tax demand letter or statement a utility bill a Form P45 or Form P60 issued to the applicant by their employer or former employer a statement of benefits or entitlement to benefits, such as a statement of child benefit, within the meaning of section 141 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, or a letter confirming that the applicant is entitled to housing benefit, within the meaning of section 130 of that Act

If a domestic elector applying for a proxy vote cannot provide the quantity and types of documentary evidence set out in this guidance, they should be asked to provide an attestation in support of their application.

Exceptions process for proxy vote applications from overseas electors

The types of documents that can be provided to successfully establish an applicant's identity for a proxy vote where they are registered as an overseas elector are the same as detailed above, but with the exception that: electors can alternatively provide a photocard driving licence issued other than in the UK or a Crown Dependency and there is no requirement relating to the timing of that document's validity the documents in list 3 must have been issued in the United Kingdom or a Crown Dependency

If an overseas elector who has applied for a proxy vote cannot provide the quantity and types of documentary evidence set out in this guidance, they should be asked to provide an attestation in support of their application

Exceptions process for applicants registered via a service declaration on the grounds that they are the spouse or civil partner of a member of the forces, a Crown Servant or the spouse or civil partner of a Crown Servant

If an applicant for a proxy vote is registered via a service declaration on the grounds that they are the spouse or civil partner of a member of the forces, a Crown Servant or the spouse or civil partner of a Crown Servant and you require additional evidence

to verify their identity you should write to them and ask them to provide one of the following documents 4 : the applicant's passport; the applicant's identity card issued in the European Economic Area. The document must be certified by a Crown servant or British Council employee or an officer of the forces, who is not the applicant's spouse or civil partner. 5 There is no exceptions process for applicants who are registered by a service declaration or as member of the armed forces for more information on the attestation process for these electors see our guidance . 1. Reg 56C (2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C(3a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56C (4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 56C(10)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 56C(10)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Document types for the exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement) Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Where proxy vote applications require verification of personal identifiers, and an applicant has been asked to provide documentary evidence, you should request that the applicant provide copies of the evidence. Documentary evidence may be provided as part of an online application or delivered to your office by hand or by post or as an attachment to an email. If an applicant provides an original document, you must make a copy of that document and return the original document to the applicant. 1 Any copies of documents provided by applicants or taken by you of original documents should be stored securely in the same way as application forms. Please see guidance on the retention of information submitted with applications for more information on this. You should be satisfied that the documents or copies provided to you appear to be genuine. Where you have a doubt as to whether a copy is genuine or where the copy is of such poor quality that you cannot assess the document, you may ask the applicant to present the original document(s) in person at your office or to send original documents to you to be copied and returned. You should be aware that you would become responsible for the secure transit of the document in the latter case. Where you have doubt as to whether an original document is genuine, you may ask the applicant to provide alternative documentary evidence in the first instance. Where alternative documentary evidence is not available, you should direct the applicant to the attestation process or reject the application. Where documentary evidence does not appear to be genuine, you should advise the applicant of the penalties for supplying false information and inform your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) where you suspect that false information may have been supplied. For more information, see our ERO guidance on document authenticity checks . 1. Regulation 56D (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Should applicants submit copies or original documents? (Post commencement) Document types for the exceptions process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The attestation process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) The attestation process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Where proxy vote applications require verification of personal identifiers, and an applicant has been unable to provide documentary evidence to the type and quantity required by the exceptions process to prove their identity, you should write to them and ask them to provide an attestation in support of their application. For applications made by domestic electors, you must inform the applicant of the following: the deadline for submitting the attestation

that their application may be rejected if they fail or refuse to provide it The attestation must:

- 1 confirm that the applicant is the person named in the application be in writing and signed by the qualifying attester state the qualifying attester's full name, date of birth, occupation, residential address and (if different) the address at which they are registered as an elector) state the qualifying attester's electoral number (where not registered as an overseas elector) or their digital registration number if the qualifying attester is registered at an address in Northern Ireland if the qualifying attester is registered as an overseas elector, the attester's British passport number together with its date and place of issue include an explanation that the qualifying attester's is able to confirm the applicant is the person named in the application, their connection to the applicant, including (but not limited to) the length of time that the connection has existed include an indication that the qualifying attester is aware that it is an offence to provide false information to the registration officer include a declaration by the qualifying attester that all information provided in the attestation is true state the date on which it is made You could either design a form containing the necessary legal statements and requirements for an attestation or set the required detail out in your communication with the applicant. You should also provide examples of a person of good standing to help an applicant who to identify a suitable attester. You should advise the applicant that an attester is not permitted to charge for providing an attestation. Our guidance for EROs provides information on how to decide if an attestation is valid . If the proxy vote is needed for a forthcoming poll, you should encourage the applicant to supply the attestation to you as soon as possible. You should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of proxy vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining application close to the deadline provides more information on this. An attestation may be delivered to your office by hand, by post or by electronic means, such as email. If the attestation is sent electronically, the signature of an attester must be a photograph of a handwritten wet signature attached to an email' The attester is required to supply their electoral number as part of their attestation.
- 2 You should be aware that you may receive requests from potential attestors to supply this information and be prepared for how you will manage such requests in practice Applicant is registered via a service declaration as a member of the armed forces There is no exceptions process for applicants who are registered by a service declaration as a member of the armed forces. If an applicant for a proxy vote is registered via a service declaration as a member of the armed forces and you require additional evidence to verify their identity you should write to them and ask them to provide an attestation in support of their application. The attestation must:
- 3 Confirm that the applicant is the person named in the application, Be in writing and signed by an officer of the forces (within the meaning of section 59(1) of the 1983 Act) who is not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant, state the full name, address and rank of the person signing the attestation and the service (whether naval, military or air forces) in which they serve; and state the date on which it is made.

1. Reg 56C (6) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) (RPR); Para 16C (5) Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO 2012) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 16C (5) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 16C (10) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for The attestation process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Should applicants submit

copies or original documents? (Post commencement) Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement) Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) When you receive an attestation, you should ask the following questions to assess whether the attestation is complete: Question – Has the attestor: Notes Answer confirmed the applicant is the person named in the application? this would be confirmed by written statement and attestor signing the attestation Yes/No confirmed they are aware of the penalty for providing false information? this would be confirmed by written statement and attestor signing the attestation Yes/No confirmed their connection to the applicant including (but not limited to) the length of time that connection has existed? this would be confirmed by written statement and attestor signing the attestation Yes/No given their full name? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their date of birth? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their registered address (and residential address if different) this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their electoral number, or, if they are an overseas elector, their British passport number this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No given their occupation? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No dated the attestation? this should be written or printed on the attestation Yes/No signed the attestation? this should be written on the attestation Yes/No If the answer to all of these questions is yes, then the applicant has provided a complete attestation. If one or more of the questions are answered with a no, then the attestation is not complete, and the applicant must be directed to ask the attestor to supply the missing information. If an attestor cannot supply the missing information, the applicant should be told that they must seek an attestation from another source, otherwise their application will be rejected. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement) The attestation process for proxy vote applications (Post commencement) Is the attestation valid? (Post commencement) Is the attestation valid? (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) When a complete attestation is received, you must assess whether the attestation has been made by a qualifying attestor and is valid. Some of the criteria differs depending on whether an attestor is registered as a domestic or overseas elector. 1 All qualifying attestors must: confirm they are not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the applicant not have already signed identity attestations for two other applicants since either the last publication of the annual register, or when the attestor was first added to the register whichever is the most recent Where an attestor is a domestic elector they must be: registered as an elector to vote in a local authority area in England or Wales a person of good standing in the community Where an attestor is registered as an overseas elector they must be: registered to vote aged 18 or over Good standing There is no precise definition of good standing; however, for the purposes of an attestation, you should consider it to mean someone who has credentials that can be checked and would suffer professional or reputational damage if they were to provide a false attestation. The list in the table below is not definitive but is intended to illustrate which professions could be described as of good standing: Examples of professions which could be described as of good standing accountant airline pilot articled clerk of a limited company assurance agent of recognised company bank/building society official barrister chairman/director of limited company chiropodist commissioner of oaths civil servant (permanent) dentist director/manager of a VAT-registered charity director/manager/personnel officer of a VAT-registered company engineer (with professional qualifications) financial services

intermediary (e.g. a stockbroker or insurance broker) fire service official funeral director insurance agent (full time) of a recognised company journalist Justice of the Peace legal secretary (fellow or associate member of the Institute of Legal Secretaries and PAs) licensee of public house local government officer manager/personnel officer (of a limited company) medical professional member, associate or fellow of a professional body Merchant Navy officer minister of a recognised religion (including Christian Science) nurse (RGN and RMN) officer of the armed services optician paralegal (certified paralegal, qualified paralegal or associate member of the Institute of Paralegals) person with honours (an OBE or MBE, for example) pharmacist photographer (professional) police officer Post Office official publicly elected representative (MP, Councillor etc) president/secretary of a recognised organisation Salvation Army officer social worker solicitor surveyor teacher, lecturer trade union officer travel agent (qualified) valuer or auctioneer (fellows and associate members of the incorporated society) Warrant Officers and Chief Petty Officers It is important to note that an unemployed/retired person who is of good standing in the community is not precluded from attesting an application. You must judge each attestation on its individual merits rather than apply a blanket policy. You must assess whether the attestation satisfies the relevant requirements, by answering two further questions: Is the qualifying attester registered as either a domestic elector in a local authority area in England or Wales or as an overseas elector? The qualifying attester must be registered as either an overseas elector or an elector in a local authority area in England or Wales. 2 If the qualifying attester's address is in the same local authority area as the applicant, you should check your electoral register and your electoral management software to check that the qualifying attester satisfies this condition. If the qualifying attester's address is not in the same local authority area as the applicant, you should contact the attester's ERO to check if the qualifying attester fulfils these conditions. Has the qualifying attester signed no more than two identity attestations since either the last publication of the register or since the attester was added to it, whichever is the most recent? Qualifying attestors are limited to signing identity attestations for no more than two applicants in any one electoral year (normally from 1 December to 30 November), or since their entry was added to the register in that local authority area, whichever is the shortest period. This allows the attester's ERO to confidently supply the required information without being required to account for attestations made whilst the attester was registered elsewhere. Electoral management software should record each time an elector has signed an attestation. Where the limit has been reached, you should reject the attestation for this reason. This does not prevent the applicant from seeking another attestation from a different elector. You should process attestations in the order they are received. If the attester fulfils all the conditions, the attestation will be accepted, and the attester's ERO will be able to record this against the elector's record. This will then count towards this elector's total allowable attestations. 1. Regulation 56C (6) and (7) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended) (RPR) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 56C (7) RPR 2001 (as amended), Para 16C (6) Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Is the attestation valid? (Post commencement) Is the attestation complete? (Post commencement) Determining applications for proxy votes following the exceptions or attestation process (Post commencement) Determining applications for proxy votes following the exceptions or attestation process (Post commencement of Elections Act

measures) Where proxy vote applications require verification of personal identifiers and the proxy vote is needed for a forthcoming poll, you should liaise with the RO (where you are not already the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of proxy vote applications for that poll. Our guidance on determining application close to the deadline provides more information on this. Determining an application where additional documentary evidence has been provided Where you are satisfied that an applicant's identity has been verified as a result of providing additional documentary evidence, you should determine the application for a proxy vote as approved. Where you are not satisfied with the documentary evidence provided you may request further additional evidence, an attestation or refuse the application. Determining an application where an attestation has been provided If you have been able to determine an attestation as valid and therefore successfully established the identity of the applicant, you should determine the application for a proxy vote as approved. If you are not satisfied that the attestation is valid you may request another attestation, ask for additional evidence or refuse the application. If an applicant refuses or does not respond to your request on or before the deadline to provide additional documentary evidence or an attestation If an applicant refuses or does not respond to your request on or before the deadline to provide additional evidence or an attestation, you may refuse the application for a proxy vote. Whatever determination decision you make, you must write to the elector to notify them. Our guidance on confirming the outcome of proxy vote applications contains more information. Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Determining applications for proxy votes following the exceptions or attestation process \(Post commencement\)](#) Is the attestation valid? (Post commencement) [Determining proxy vote applications close to a poll \(Post commencement\)](#) [Determining proxy vote applications close to a poll \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) If an elector applying for a proxy vote close to the deadline for a poll fails the DWP check, their application can be determined using the exceptions or attestation process up to and including polling day. Whilst the processing of applications is the responsibility of the ERO, the RO is responsible for the issuing of proxy information. You should liaise with the RO (where you are not also the RO) to establish the latest practicable point for determination of these applications. Our guidance on communicating proxy appointments to polling station staff has more information on this. Whatever determination decision you make, you must write to the elector to notify them. 1 Our guidance on confirming the outcome of proxy vote applications contains more information. 1. Reg 57 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 (as amended), Para 17 Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (as amended) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Determining proxy vote applications close to a poll \(Post commencement\)](#) [Determining applications for proxy votes following the exceptions or attestation process \(Post commencement\)](#) [Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application \(Post commencement\)](#) [Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) You must write to applicants to let them know whether their application has been accepted 1 or rejected 2 . If an application is rejected, you must give the reason(s) why. 3 There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed. When you grant an application, you must confirm that the proxy has been appointed, the name and address of the proxy and the duration of their appointment. 4 The proxy must also be notified of their appointment. 5 Where an application will not be determined in time for the proxy to be able to vote at a forthcoming poll, you

should notify the applicant that the determination will not be made in time for that particular poll, but that the proxy vote will be in place for future polls. The form of the proxy paper for confirming the proxy of their appointment is prescribed. 6 Confirmations are an opportunity to safeguard against potential fraud or misunderstanding on the part of the elector or the proxy. You may, additionally, decide to acknowledge receipt of applications. If an elector receives an acknowledgement for a proxy vote that they have not requested, receipt of the acknowledgement would give the elector an opportunity to get in touch with you. All responses, along with any confirmation notices or acknowledgements returned to you as undelivered/not known at this address, should be monitored and, if you have concerns, you should contact your SPOC for advice. For further information, see our guidance on identifying suspicious absent vote applications . 1. Reg.57(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 (as amended, Para 17(1) Sch 2 Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 (PCCEO 2012) (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 57(1) RPR 2001, Para 17(3) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 57 RPR 2001, Para 17(3) Sch 2 PCCEO 2012 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 57(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(9) Representation of the People Act 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 57(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application (Post commencement) Determining proxy vote applications close to a poll (Post commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Post commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Changing an appointed proxy Proxy voters who have a proxy vote for a definite or indefinite period may apply to change their appointed proxy at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 1 The application must state the full name and address of the person whom the elector wishes to appoint as their new proxy. It must also contain a statement that the person to be appointed as the proxy is capable and willing to vote as the applicant's proxy. 2 Where the change of proxy is to a definite or indefinite proxy arrangement, the person newly appointed as proxy remains until the proxy arrangement ends or the elector decides to make another change. 3 You should inform the elector in a confirmation letter that - the person most recently appointed as their proxy will remain in place, as described above. Alternatively, they may submit a fresh application to vote by proxy for a definite or indefinite period, by 5pm six working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier one. There are no provisions for those electors with a proxy vote at a particular poll to change their proxy appointment. However, they may submit a fresh application to vote by proxy, by 5pm six working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier one. Emergency change of proxy on grounds relating to voter identification After the deadline of 5pm, six working days before the poll, a proxy voter can make an application to change their appointed proxy on grounds relating to voter identification. The application must include a statement that to the best of the applicant's knowledge and belief their appointed proxy meets one of the conditions provided for . An application made under these provisions must reach the ERO by 5pm on the day of poll. 4 Changing from a proxy vote to a postal vote Proxy voters who have a proxy vote for a definite or indefinite period may change their voting option from proxy to postal at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 5 Applications to change the method of voting from proxy to postal must be made by submitting an application to vote by post. If the postal vote application is

determined and approved, you must amend the record accordingly. Cancelling a proxy vote Proxy voters who have a proxy vote for a definite or indefinite period may cancel their proxy vote at any time up until 5pm, 11 working days before a poll to be effective at that poll. 6 There are no provisions for electors with a proxy vote at a particular poll to cancel their proxy vote. However, they may change their voting method by submitting a postal application by 5pm, 11 working days before the poll, which would supersede the earlier application for a proxy vote. An elector who has appointed a proxy may still vote in person, provided they do so before their appointed proxy and that the appointed proxy has not successfully applied to vote by post. Changing or cancelling a proxy vote where a postal proxy exists If a postal proxy returns their postal ballot paper (unless they have spoilt it or claim it has been lost or not received) before you have determined an application from the elector to change or cancel their proxy, or from the proxy to change their method of voting from postal to voting in person, you must disregard the application for the poll for which the postal ballot paper has been issued. 7 Please see our guidance on the cancellation of postal votes , which also applies in the case of a postal proxy. Requirement to notify the Returning Officer at a poll of changes to proxy voting arrangements You must notify the Returning Officer whenever you have granted: 8 cancellation of proxy vote or postal proxy vote arrangements change from proxy to postal appointment of proxy application for a proxy postal ballot paper to be sent to a different address 1. Regulation 56(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 52 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Para 6(11)(b) Schedule 4 Representation of the People Act 2000 (RPA 2000) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 56(3F) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 56(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Schedule 4 Paragraph 6(10) RPA 2000 and Regulation 56(5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 56(5A) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Regulation 78A(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Post commencement) Confirming the outcome of a proxy vote application (Post commencement) Voting by post as proxy (Post commencement) Voting by post as proxy (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Those appointed as a proxy can choose to apply to vote by post . It is not possible for a nominated proxy to apply for a postal vote online so you should consider sending application forms for this purpose when notifying the proxy of their appointment. The application made by the proxy to vote by post must meet the requirements as for any application to vote by post, including the requirement to provide personal identifiers . Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Voting by post as proxy (Post commencement) Changing or cancelling a proxy vote (Post commencement) Emergency proxies (Post commencement) Emergency proxies (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) An elector may appoint an emergency proxy at a poll up to 5pm on polling day in the following circumstances: 1 in the case of a medical condition, illness or disability arising after the deadline for ordinary proxy applications if they are a mental health patient detained under civil powers if their occupation, service or employment means they cannot go to the polling station in person and they became aware of this after the deadline for ordinary proxy applications if they meet any of the conditions relating to emergency proxies on the grounds of voter identification after the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document Emergency proxies on the grounds of voter identification 2 The grounds on which an elector can appoint an emergency proxy relating to voter identification are covered

in our guidance on emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification . Any application under this provision must state that it is made on the grounds of voter identification and include which of the acceptable conditions apply to the applicant. An application made on the grounds of voter identification does not require an attestation. The grounds of voter identification also enable a change to the person appointed as proxy. 3 1. Regulation 56(3A) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 55B and 56A RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 56A(2)(b) RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Emergency proxies (Post commencement) Voting by post as proxy (Post commencement) Attestations for emergency proxies (Post commencement) Attestations for emergency proxies (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Emergency proxy application forms must be attested except where either: the elector is registered anonymously 1 the application is made on grounds relating to voter identification 2 Where the application is due to a medical condition, illness or disability, the attestor must be one of the individuals included in the list of people who may attest proxy applications made on the grounds of disability or illness. The attestation must include the day on which, to the best of the knowledge and belief of the person attesting, the applicant became ill or disabled, which must be after 5pm on the sixth working day before polling day if the application is to be accepted. 3 Where a person applies for an emergency proxy because they have been called away as a result of their occupation, service or employment, the application must include the date on which they became aware of the circumstances which will not allow them to vote in person. 4 Applications on the grounds of occupation, service or employment must be attested by either: 5 the applicant's employer or an employee delegated to do so on the employer's behalf if the applicant is self-employed, by a person aged 18 years or over who knows the person but is not related to them A person is related to another in this context if they are their spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild. 6 1. Regulation 55(1) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 55B RPR 2001 (as amended) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulations 53, 55(2), (3), (4) and (5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 55A (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 55A(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 55A(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Attestations for emergency proxies (Post commencement) Emergency proxies (Post commencement) Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station staff (Post commencement) Communicating proxy appointments to polling station staff (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) If an application is determined or a new emergency proxy application is made after the list of proxies has been dispatched to the polling station, the Presiding Officer at the polling station where the proxy will be voting will need to be made aware, as they will not be on the list of proxies originally supplied. Every effort should be made to contact the Presiding Officer directly to notify them that a proxy has been appointed, particularly as there is no requirement in law that a proxy must provide any documentation in order to be permitted to vote on behalf of an elector. Where possible, it is recommended that a supplementary list of proxies be issued to the polling station, which should then be added to the list originally supplied. Local arrangements between you and the Returning Officer will be required in order to determine how any proxy appointments will be notified to a Presiding Officer. For example, you could give the proxy of any

voter whose application has been accepted a letter authorising them to act as a proxy, which would also include details of the person for whom they are voting. The proxy could then be instructed to take that authorisation with them when they go to vote and hand it to the Presiding Officer. The letter should then be retained with the list of proxies as a record that the proxy has been issued with a ballot paper.

Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station staff \(Post commencement\)](#) [Attestations for emergency proxies \(Post commencement\)](#) [Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote \(Post commencement\)](#) [Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) You must make enquiries of all proxy vote applications granted on the specific grounds of occupation, service, employment or attendance on an educational course within three years of granting the application, or of the last such enquiry. 1 The purpose is to establish whether there has been a material change in circumstances that would mean that the person is no longer entitled to their proxy vote. You may make additional enquiries at any time. You will need to put arrangements in place to schedule and track the progress of any such enquiries. You could, for example, include this in your monthly procedures for publishing a notice of alteration. The format and content of these enquiries is not prescribed. You may contact the elector via email, phone or letter. Where you make an enquiry by phone, you should keep a written note for your records. Your communications should clearly state any deadline period of one month for replying and the consequences of not responding. If an elector fails to respond within one month, you are entitled to cancel the absent vote. 2 Cancellation in these circumstances is discretionary and you may wish to send the elector further reminders before cancelling. If the cancellation would fall immediately before a poll, you should consider not exercising the discretion until after the poll to avoid the elector potentially being disenfranchised. Whatever approach you take, you should ensure that it is applied consistently. 1. Regulation 60(3) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 60(3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote \(Post commencement\)](#) [Communicating emergency proxy appointments to polling station staff \(Post commencement\)](#) [Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications \(Post commencement\)](#) [Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications \(Post commencement of Elections Act measures\)](#) There is an appeal procedure for applications for an absent vote which have been disallowed (in the case of proxy applications, this applies to applications to appoint a proxy for a definite or indefinite period only). Any appeal must be made to you within 14 days of the date of the decision on the application and must specify the grounds of appeal. You must immediately forward the notice to the county court together with a statement containing: 1 the material facts which have, in your opinion, been established in the case your decision upon the whole case any point which may be specified as grounds of appeal If there are several appeals, all made on the same or similar grounds you must inform the court of this to enable the appeals to be consolidated, if appropriate, or a test case to be selected. 2 Legislation does not specify the procedure that should be followed should the court allow the appeal, but you should be prepared to add the electors to the record and, if appropriate, to the list for an election. 1. Regulation 58(2) Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Regulation 58(3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 4 September 2023 [Book traversal links for Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications \(Post](#)

commencement) Establishing continued eligibility for a proxy vote (Post commencement) Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Post commencement) Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Although there are no definitive signs of fraud, you should ensure that you have mechanisms in place to identify suspicious absent vote applications. Applications for absent votes do not have to be taken at face value. You can require additional information where necessary, such as an attestation, to verify the identity of an applicant. The following could, depending on the context of the local area and the specific circumstances surrounding any application or applications, be indicators of possible fraud: a number of application forms completed in the same handwriting unusually large numbers of absent vote applications in a particular area unusually large numbers of postal and postal proxy redirections to one particular property or properties unusually large numbers of proxy attestations unusually large numbers of signature waiver requests. For example: large numbers of applications assisted or signed by one person with no plausible explanation large numbers of applications from one street or area with no plausible explanation signature and/or date of birth provided on the application form is inconsistent with data that you already hold acknowledgements or confirmation notices returned as undelivered You should put in place mechanisms that will help to identify suspicious absent vote applications including: training for office staff on what to look out for regular data reviews to identify patterns considering how to share data about patterns of applications with local political parties and elected representatives to improve transparency and confidence, so that they can help identify any applications which might be suspicious. Our guidance on identifying suspicious registration applications has more information on liaising with your local police Single Point Of Contact (SPOC). Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Post commencement) Appeals procedure for disallowed absent vote applications (Post commencement) Retention of documents supplied as part of an absent vote application (Post commencement) Retention of documents supplied as part of an absent vote application (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You must retain the following documents and information if supplied as part of an application, including any copies taken of original documents, until the application has been determined: 1 the application form itself the information that you receive as a result of an online application any evidence you receive under the documentary exceptions or attestation processes The signatures and dates of birth of postal and proxy voters must be stored securely. Paper applications may be scanned and stored electronically, or you may keep the originals in paper form. You may keep these documents and information after your determination of the application. 2 Data protection legislation does not specify maximum periods for retention of personal data but says that personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose. You will therefore need to consider whether it would be appropriate for you to hold on to the information for a specific period to take account of the possibility of a legal challenge and any analysis the police may need to carry out if there are any integrity concerns. It is important that your document retention policy sets out the period you will retain documents and your reason for doing so. Unless there is a legal challenge or investigation, you should not retain any documents relating to a particular elector for more than 12 months after they have been removed from the register, as this is the usual time limit for any prosecutions. In any case, unless there is a legal challenge, make sure that you do not retain documents for longer than the period specified in your

document retention policy and securely destroy them at the appropriate point. This should include ensuring that you have processes in place to manage any scanned images held on your electoral management system (EMS). The Information Commissioner's Office provides general advice on the retention of personal data. Where you decide to keep any application-related documents beyond the point of determination, you must redact the applicant's National Insurance number from any documentation you have, including the application form, within a period of 13 months from the date the application was determined. 3 The requirement to redact the applicant's National Insurance number does not apply where this documentation is required for the purpose of any civil or criminal investigations or proceedings. 4 You need to ensure that you can carry out such redactions, which may include using special redaction software. The council's Data Protection Officer should be able to give you advice on redaction of personal information. You also need to keep a record of the day on which you have made your determination on an application, so that you can accurately calculate the 13 month period. Your EMS system may facilitate this. National Insurance numbers will only be available on paper applications, or where someone has applied in person or by telephone; for applications made online, you will not receive the National Insurance number. For more information, see our guidance on data protection considerations which contains further information the storage of personal data and on document retention, including what should be included in a document retention policy. 1. Reg 56D(2) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 56D(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 56D(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 56D(4) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Retention of documents supplied as part of an absent vote application (Post commencement) Identifying suspicious absent vote applications (Post commencement) Absent voting records, lists and registers (Post commencement) Absent voting records and lists (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) What absent voting lists am I required to keep? You are required to keep up to date and accurate records of absent vote applications that have been granted. Three separate records are required, as follows: 1 Postal voters The record must indicate the elector's full name (unless the elector is registered anonymously) and the address to which the ballot paper is to be sent. It should also include the elector number. Proxy voters The record must indicate the elector's full name (unless the elector is registered anonymously) and the full name and address of the proxy. It should also include the elector number. Postal proxy voters The record must indicate the elector's full name (unless the elector is registered anonymously) and the full name of the proxy and the address to which the ballot paper is to be sent. It should also include the elector number. Producing the absent vote lists for a poll For any particular poll, you must produce a postal voters list, a list of proxies and a postal proxy list based on the information contained in these records and supply the lists to the Returning Officer for the poll, 2 where you are not also the Returning Officer, and those others entitled to receive the list. 3 If an elector is registered anonymously only the elector number and period of anonymous registration is included on the lists. 4 You should ensure that the records and lists are accurate and should take steps to ensure that electors who are deleted from the register are also removed from the absent voting lists. Keeping the records of personal identifiers which contain the signatures and dates of birth provided on absent vote applications You are required to maintain the personal identifier record 5 which must include the names, signatures and dates of birth of all absent voters. Where a waiver has been granted the record

will not include a signature. Record of signatures and dates of birth of absent voters for a particular poll In the case of the signature and date of birth belonging to an elector who has been granted an absent vote for a particular poll, you must keep the record until the expiry of twelve months from the date of the poll for which the absent vote was granted. Record of signatures and dates of birth for longer term absent voters In the case of the signature and date of birth belonging to an elector who has been granted an absent vote for a definite or the maximum period, you must keep the record until the expiry of twelve months from the date of which the elector is removed.

1. Schedule 4 Paragraph 5 and 7(8) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 61(6)(b) and (6A) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 61(1) and 61A 2001 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Schedule 4 paragraph 5(4) and 7(8A) RPA 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. Regulation 61B RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for Absent voting records, lists and registers (Post commencement)

Retention of documents supplied as part of an absent vote application (Post commencement)

Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Post commencement)

Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

Absent voting lists and information contained on the absent voting record which would be used to generate the lists in case of a poll are available for public inspection. Copies of the relevant part may be supplied, free of charge, to:

- 1 elected representatives
- local constituency parties
- political parties
- candidates

The relevant part is the same part that is specified in the regulations for the supply of the electoral register. Details can be found in our resource: List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF)

A record should be kept of every person or organisation who has been supplied with absent voting lists. This will help to show that you are complying with data protection legislation and the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.

Before a poll

Ahead of a poll, you should explain to candidates and parties that absent voting lists for that poll are available and set out how a request can be made. If you receive a request for the absent voting lists, you should action it promptly. Sharing absent voting lists with candidates and parties in a timely manner will help promote confidence in the administration of the poll and help candidates and parties to campaign. A request must be made in writing and specify:

- 2 the information being requested
- whether the request is for the current lists only, or whether it includes a request for the final lists
- whether the information is required in printed or data form

Updates you need to make to the lists include the details of those who have had absent vote applications determined after the deadline or who have made successful emergency proxy applications must also be shared with those who have requested a copy of the final lists.

3 Ahead of a poll, you must make the absent voting lists available for public inspection as soon as practicable after 5pm on the sixth working day before the poll.

4 For more information about making lists available for inspection see our guidance on access and supply .

Supply of records containing signature and date of birth provided on an absent vote application

The personal identifiers record (which contains the signatures and dates of birth provided on an absent vote application) are not open to public inspection and are not available for supply. You must provide a copy or allow access to the postal voting records to the Returning Officer for the purposes of carrying out the personal identifier checks on returned postal voting statements.

5 Candidates and agents are not entitled to inspect application forms,

unless it is their own. However, the RO is permitted to show the relevant entry in the personal identifiers record (i.e. the name, signature (unless a waiver has been granted) and date of birth of the relevant voter) to agents when verification is taking place. 6 Additionally, a data subject is entitled to see personal information held about them. Information requested by data subjects must be provided without delay and in any event within one month (although it can be extended to two months in certain conditions). Under data protection legislation, information must be provided free of charge. Subsequent copies may be charged for, but the charge must be reasonable and based on administrative costs. There is no requirement for the request to be made in writing; you must, however, be satisfied of the requester's identity before fulfilling the request. A postal voter who has received a postal vote identifier rejection notice, for example, may request to see their postal voting statement. More information about the inspection of postal vote identifier rejection notices can be found in our FAQs for postal vote rejection notices resource: FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC) 1. Regulation 61 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 61(7) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 61(6) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Schedule 4 Paragraph 7C Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 85A RPR 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 6 September 2023 Book traversal links for Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Post commencement) Absent voting records, lists and registers (Post commencement) Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (post-commencement) Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (post-commencement) You must, on request, supply free of charge a copy of the absent signers and proxy postal signers list to: 1 a registered political party the MP to whom a petition relates the Electoral Commission the Security Service, Government Communications Headquarters and the Secret Intelligence Service any police force in Great Britain, the National Crime Agency and any body of constables established under an Act of Parliament an accredited campaigner As soon as practicable after 5pm on the cut-off day (3 working days before the first day of the signing period) you must: publish the absent signers, proxies 2 and postal proxies 3 lists send to the Petition Officer a copy of those lists Inspection of the lists Where inspection takes place by providing a copy of the information on a computer screen or in another data form, you must ensure that no person is permitted to: search it by electronic means by reference to the name of any person copy or transmit any part of that copy by electronic or any other means A person who inspects a copy of the information whether in printed or data form may not: make copies of any part of it or record any particulars in it otherwise by means of hand-written notes 1. Regulation 80 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 55 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 58 Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 13 September 2023 Book traversal links for Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (post-commencement) Supply and inspection of the absent voting lists (Post commencement) Absent voting register markers (Post commencement) Absent voting register markers (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) After the sixth day before the poll has passed and all absent vote applications have been determined ahead of a poll, you will need to prepare the electoral registers which are to be used in the polling stations. Electors allowed to vote by post and electors

whose proxies have been allowed to vote by post must have the letter 'A' marked alongside their names in the polling station register. 1 Your EMS should have the facility to print registers for use in the polling station at a poll. There is no prescribed way of marking proxy voters on polling station registers, although in many cases, they will be prefixed with the letter 'P'. 1. Regulation 62 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Absent voting register markers (Post commencement) Supply and inspection of absent voting lists at a recall petition (post-commencement) Requirement for electors to re-apply or refresh their absent vote arrangements (Post commencement) Requirement for electors to re-apply or refresh their absent vote arrangements (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) A domestic elector can apply for a postal vote arrangement to be in place for a definite period or a maximum period of up to three years. The restriction on the length of time a postal vote arrangement can be made for means that if the elector wishes the arrangement to remain in place for longer than that, they will be required to make a new application when their current arrangement period ends. You must notify domestic electors who have a postal vote arrangement in place for the maximum period before their existing arrangement ends to inform them of the date on which their arrangement will end and how to make a fresh application. For more information, see our guidance on managing the process for informing postal voters of the requirement to re-apply . A domestic elector who has a proxy voting arrangement is required to refresh their signature every 5 years. For more information, see our guidance on refreshing proxy vote signatures . Overseas electors absent voting arrangements are linked to their electoral registration and they are required to reapply for their postal voting arrangement or refresh their proxy vote signature in line with when they renew their registration as an overseas elector. Our guidance on overseas electors is being updated to reflect changes as a result of the Elections Act 2022.

A link will be provided here once this guidance has been published. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Requirement for electors to re-apply or refresh their absent vote arrangements (Post commencement) Absent voting register markers (Post commencement) Process for informing postal voters of the requirement to re-apply (Post commencement) Process for informing postal voters of the requirement to re-apply (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You must identify the numbers of domestic postal voters whose longer term arrangement will reach the end of the maximum period allowed on the 31 January each year. 1 You must notify those postal voters identified: when their current arrangement will end 2 that if wish to continue to vote by post, they will need submit a new postal vote application 3 Timing of sending postal vote re-application notifications Where the postal voting arrangement of a domestic postal voter or a proxy who votes by post has been made for the maximum period, it will end if a new application is not made by the third 31 January following the date on which the application was determined. For example, if an elector's application was determined on 1 February 2024, the elector's postal vote arrangement will last for the full 3 years and cease on the third 31 January following its determination date, i.e. 31 January 2027. If an elector's application was determined on 1 April 2024, the maximum period the elector's postal vote arrangement would last is up to the third 31 January following its determination date, i.e. 31 January 2027. You must inform those postal voters whose arrangement is ending on 31 January of any given year of the need to reapply. You must do this before the date their arrangement ends. 4 The legislation does not provide a timeframe for sending the notice, but to ensure sufficient time for electors to

respond to the notification and submit a new application before their current postal voting arrangement ends, allowing a period of around six weeks would be reasonable. After three weeks of the date of the original notification, if no reply is received, you may choose to send a reminder. Whilst there is no requirement to send a reminder notice doing so may minimise the risk of a postal vote arrangement ceasing inadvertently if the original notice has not been received. Reminder notices can be sent by email where you hold the electors email address. The signature refresh process for proxies will likely coincide with the sending of notifications as this also needs to be concluded by 31 January each year. You may therefore be able to manage the write out and follow up to all absent voters as one exercise. Overseas electors – requirement to re-apply or refresh absent voting arrangements The process for overseas electors who have absent voting arrangements will be linked to their electoral registration. They will be required to re-apply for their postal vote in line with when they renew their registration. Our guidance on overseas electors is being updated to reflect changes as a result of the Elections Act 2022. A link will be provided here once this guidance has been published.

1. Regulation 60ZA (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 60ZA (2)(a) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 60ZA (2)(b) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 60ZA (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for Process for informing postal voters of the requirement to re-apply (Post commencement)

Requirement for electors to re-apply or refresh their absent vote arrangements (Post commencement)

Contents of the postal vote re-application notification (Post commencement)

Contents of the postal vote re-application notification (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

The notification must:

- 1 inform the postal voter of the date that their entitlement to vote by post is to end contain information about how to make a fresh application to vote by post You should also include information to explain the following: the types of polls at which the person would no longer be able to vote by post in if they do not re-apply that their current arrangement ending does not prevent the elector from re-applying for a postal vote at a later date how the required signature and date of birth are used to assist in deterring misuse of the entitlement to vote by post the circumstances in which the signature requirement may be waived You must send the notification to the current or last known address of the postal voter or proxy who votes by post.
- 2 You should keep a record of the name of each person you have sent a notification to, the address to which you sent it, and the date of the notification.

1. Regulation 60ZA (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 60A (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for Contents of the postal vote re-application notification (Post commencement)

Process for informing postal voters of the requirement to re-apply (Post commencement)

Removing postal voters from the absent voting records and lists when they have expired (Post commencement)

Removing postal voters from the absent voting records and lists when they have expired (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

If you have not received a new application in response to a postal vote re-application notification by the date the arrangement ceases, you must remove the entry from the absent voting records and relevant list (postal voters list or proxy postal voters list) as soon as practicable.

- 1 You must also remove that person’s entry from the relevant record of granted absent vote applications. You must, however, keep the elector’s signature and date of birth previously provided on the record of personal

identifiers for a period of twelve months from the date on which the elector is removed from the record of granted applications. 2 You must notify the elector in writing that their postal vote has been removed. 3 The notice must include information to: 4 explain that the person's postal vote has been removed because a new application has not been received, and if they wish to vote they can now only do so at a polling station inform them of their polling station remind them that they may make a new postal vote application or apply to vote by proxy Where a postal proxy is removed from the record and list of postal proxies, you may also write to the elector who appointed the proxy and explain that while the proxy appointment remains in place (provided the elector has not also lost their entitlement to vote by proxy), their proxy must now attend the elector's polling station to vote on their behalf or make a new application for a postal vote. 5 1. Schedule 4 Paragraph 3 (5)(ca) of the Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61B Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 57(4B) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation Reg 60A (8)(c) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 60A (8) and (9) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Removing postal voters from the absent voting records and lists when they have expired (Post commencement) Contents of the postal vote re-application notification (Post commencement) Refreshing proxy vote signatures (Post commencement) Refreshing proxy vote signatures (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) The proxy vote refresh exercise for electors other than those registered as overseas electors must be carried out each year for those proxy voters whose signatures became more than five years old in the 12 months since the last refresh. By 31 January each year, you must send a notice in writing 1 to every proxy voter whose signature is more than five years old. Proxy voters who have been granted a waiver do not have a signature held on record and are therefore not affected by the refresh provisions. Indefinite proxy voting arrangements for overseas electors An overseas elector's indefinite proxy voting arrangement is directly linked to their electoral registration and will require a fresh signature to be provided by the third 1 November calculated from the original date of their addition to the register. An exception exists where the proxy vote application has been made on or after the 1 July but before the 1 November in the same year as the overseas elector declaration is due to expire. In these circumstances the overseas elector will not be required to provide a fresh signature when the existing declaration expires on the 1 November and will only need to do so when the declaration is next due for renewal 3 years later. For example, if an overseas elector's declaration is due to expire on the 1 November 2024 and they apply for a proxy on the 1 July 2024 and providing they renew their overseas declaration before it expires on 1 November 2024, they will not be required to provide a signature refresh until the declaration renewal period in 2027. 1. Regulation 60A (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Refreshing proxy vote signatures (Post commencement) Removing postal voters from the absent voting records and lists when they have expired (Post commencement) Identifying the size of the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement) Identifying the size of the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should check the number of signatures for proxy voters that will be subject to the refresh process in each year. The age of the signature is calculated based on the latest signature provided and your EMS system should be able to run a report to identify these for you. You should ensure that template notices are ready

to send to electors to obtain refreshed signatures, and to notify any electors whose absent vote you have cancelled because they did not provide a fresh signature. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Identifying the size of the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement) Refreshing proxy vote signatures (Post commencement) Calculating deadlines for the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement) Calculating deadlines for the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) Proxy voters will lose their entitlement to vote by proxy if no response is received within six weeks of the original notice being sent. 1 The six-week period is calculated from the date the notice is sent to proxy voters. You should therefore date the notice on the day you expect to send it. The entitlement would be lost on the last day of the six-week period following the date the notice is sent. Where the end of the six-week period falls on a non-working day, the deadline is extended to the next working day. After three weeks of the date of the original notice, if no reply is received, a reminder notice must be sent to the proxy voter. 2 In this instance, the three weeks are inclusive, i.e. proxy voters have a full three weeks to complete the notice and for it to arrive back at the ERO's office before a reminder should be sent. 1. Regulation 60A (1)(b) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 60A (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Calculating deadlines for the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement) Identifying the size of the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement) Contents of the proxy vote refresh notice (Post commencement) Contents of the proxy vote refresh notice (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You should keep a record of the name of each person you have sent a notice to, the address to which you sent it, and the date of the notice, so that you can calculate the point at which the proxy voter will lose their entitlement if they have not provided a fresh signature. The initial notice must: require the proxy voter to supply a specimen of their signature explain that if this is not received within six weeks of the date of the notice, their proxy vote will be cancelled 1 inform them of the date on which they would no longer be entitled to vote by proxy You should also include information to explain the following: the types of polls at which the person would no longer be able to vote by proxy if they do not provide the required signature that cancellation of the proxy vote for failure or refusal to supply a new sample signature does not prevent the elector from re-applying for a proxy vote or applying for a postal vote how the required signature and date of birth are used to assist in deterring misuse the circumstances in which the signature requirement may be waived the deadline for the ERO to receive the signature (i.e. by no later than six weeks from the date of the notice) What is not included on proxy voter refresh notices? There is no provision in law for the elector's date of birth to be pre-printed on the refresh notice. Existing proxy voters do not need to provide their date of birth again in order for their proxy vote to continue. Where should the proxy vote refresh notice be sent? You must send the notice to the current or last known address of the proxy voter. 2 You must enclose a pre-addressed pre-paid postage reply envelope with every notice sent to a UK-based proxy voter. 3 Notices sent to proxy voters with non-UK addresses must also enclose a pre-addressed reply envelope but this is not required to have pre-paid postage. 4 Reminder notices You will need to scan in or otherwise record which notices are returned to allow you to produce an accurate list of those who need a reminder notice. If, within three weeks of the original notice date, a proxy voter has not responded and has not in the meantime been cancelled by the voter, you must send a reminder notice as soon as is practicable. 5 The reminder

notice is a copy of the contents of the original notice. Templates We have produced a template proxy vote identifier request letter which you may find helpful. Proxy vote identifier request letter - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. 1. Regulation 60A (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 60A (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 60A (5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 60A (5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 60A (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Contents of the proxy vote refresh notice (Post commencement) Calculating deadlines for the proxy vote refresh (Post commencement) Refresh notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Post commencement) Refresh notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) A refreshed signature must meet the prescribed requirements of an absent vote application, i.e. it must appear against a background of white unlined paper of at least five centimetres long and two centimetres high. 1 If you receive a notice that does not include a signature or where the signature does not meet the prescribed requirements, you should send another notice to request a new signature. You should include an explanation as to why the notice originally returned could not be accepted, provided there is time left for the absent voter to complete and return it before the deadline. If there is not enough time left for the absent voter to complete and return it before the deadline, you should treat the absent voter as having failed to return the notice. 1. Regulation 51 (3A) (a) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Refresh notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Post commencement) Contents of the proxy vote refresh notice (Post commencement) Return of the refresh notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Post commencement) Return of the refresh notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) You cannot accept a notice or reminder containing a fresh signature after the deadline. You should send the person a letter explaining that the notice cannot be accepted and that if they wish to continue to have an absent vote they must re-apply and provide their identifiers on the new application. You should include a new application form with the letter. There is no provision for you to pre-print the date of birth you already hold on the new application form. Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Return of the refresh notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Post commencement) Refresh notices returned without a signature or where the signature is not in the prescribed format (Post commencement) Removing a proxy voter from the absent voting records and lists (Post commencement) Removing a proxy voter from the absent voting records and lists if a fresh signature is not received (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) If you have not received a fresh signature before the end of the six week period following the date of the original notice you must immediately remove the proxy vote entry from the records and relevant list (list of proxies or proxy postal voters list). 1 You must also remove that person's entry from the relevant record of granted proxy vote applications. The records and lists should be updated on the day after the deadline. Where the deadline falls on a non-working day, it is extended to the next working day. You must, however, keep the elector's signature and date of birth previously provided on the record of personal identifiers for a period of

twelve months from the date on which the elector is removed from the record of granted applications. 2 You must notify the elector in writing that their proxy vote has been removed. The notice must: 3 explain that the person's proxy vote has been removed because of a failure to provide a fresh signature and if they wish to vote, they can now only do so at a polling station inform them of their polling station remind them that they may make a fresh proxy vote application, which must include their identifiers You should include a new proxy vote application form with the removal notice. There is no provision to pre-print the date of birth that you already hold for the elector on the new application form. You should also write to any proxy or postal proxy where the elector has failed to respond to the request notices to inform them that their proxy or postal proxy appointment has been cancelled. We have produced a template cancellation letter due to a failure to supply a fresh signature which you could use. Cancellation letter when available (due to failure to provide a fresh signature) - We are updating this resource to reflect new measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022. It will be available again once the updates have been completed. 1. Schedule 4 Paragraph 7(9)(d) of the Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61B(1)(b) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 60A (8) and (9) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Removing a proxy voter from the absent voting records and lists (Post commencement) Return of the refresh notice or reminder notice after the deadline (Post commencement) Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Post commencement) Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Post commencement of Elections Act measures) After a poll, where an absent voter appears on the list of rejected postal ballot papers, you must tell the elector or postal proxy that the ballot paper was rejected because the Returning Officer was not satisfied that the postal voting statement was duly completed. 1 When must I send a postal vote identifier rejection notice? Where a postal voting statement was rejected, you must within three months of the date of the poll send the elector a rejection notice informing them of the rejection. You do not need to send a rejection notice if: 2 the person is no longer shown in your records as an absent voter at the time you send out the rejection notice, or the Returning Officer suspects that an offence may have been committed in relation to the postal ballot paper, postal voting statement or the absent voter's registration as an elector If you are not also the Returning Officer for the poll you should: arrange for the Returning Officer to send you the list of rejected postal voting statements liaise with them after the poll, so you do not send a rejection notice to a postal voter where fraud is suspected What information must a rejection notice include? The rejection notice must include the reason the postal vote was rejected, 3 i.e. whether: the signature provided on the postal voting statement did not match the example held by you; and, or the date of birth provided alongside the postal voting statement did not match the one held by you; and, or no signature was provided on the postal voting statement; and, or no date of birth was provided on the postal voting statement The notice may also include any other information that you consider appropriate but must not include the date of birth or signature. 4 1. Regulation 61C (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 61C (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 61C (1)(c) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 61C (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book traversal links for Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Post commencement) Removing a proxy voter from the absent voting

records and lists (Post commencement) Requirement to provide a fresh signature following a rejection notice (Post commencement) Requirement to provide a fresh signature following a rejection notice (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

If you have sent a rejection on the grounds that the signature provided on the returned postal voting statement does not match the example held on the personal identifiers record (and the person continues to be shown on your records as an absent voter) you may require the absent voter to provide a fresh signature for the personal identifiers record. This could be done at the same time as you send them the rejection notice.

- 1 Where you do require the absent voter to provide you with a fresh signature, you must inform them of the date (six weeks from the date of the notice) on which they would cease to be entitled to vote by post in the event of a failure or refusal to provide a fresh signature.
- 2 If the absent voter has not responded to the notice within three weeks from the date on which the notice was sent, you must send a reminder notice that is a copy of the contents of the original notice.
- 3 The notice and any reminder notice must be sent to the current or last known address of the absent voter and must be accompanied by a pre-addressed, prepaid reply envelope for any address in the United Kingdom.
- 4 It is important for you to establish a clear audit trail for this process as the date specified on the notice sent to the absent voter determines whether the absent voter has failed or refused to provide a fresh signature within the specified time frame. If they have not responded by the deadline, you must:
- 5 remove that person's entry from the postal voters list or postal proxy voters list, as appropriate, and where a person has been removed from the postal proxy list, you must also notify the elector

1. Regulation 60B (1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 60B (2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 60B (3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 60B (4) and (5) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. Regulation 60B (8) and (9)(c) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for Requirement to provide a fresh signature following a rejection notice (Post commencement)

Postal vote identifier rejection notices (Post commencement)

Notification of removal of an absent vote (Post commencement)

You must notify the person in writing that their absent vote has been removed. The notice must:

- 1 explain that their absent vote has been removed because of a failure to provide a fresh signature
- explain that if they wish to vote they can only do so at a polling station
- and inform them of the location of their polling station
- explain that they can make a fresh absent vote application, which must include their identifiers

The notice must also set out that they have a right to appeal your decision and set out how an appeal may be made. A postal voter who has received a postal vote identifier rejection notice may make a request to see their postal voting statement. More information about the inspection of postal vote identifier rejection notices can be found in our FAQs for postal vote rejection notices resource: FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC)

We have also produced template postal vote rejection notices which you may find helpful. Template postal vote rejection notices (DOC)

1. Regulation 60A(8) and (9) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 4 September 2023

Book traversal links for Notification of removal of an absent vote (Post commencement)

Requirement to provide a fresh signature following a rejection notice (Post commencement)

Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Post commencement)

Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a

postal vote identifier rejection notice (Post commencement of Elections Act measures)

Any person wishing to appeal must give notice to you within 14 days of the date of your decision to remove their postal vote and must specify the grounds of appeal. 1

The date on the rejection notice is deemed to be your decision date. You must immediately forward the appeal notice to the county court together with a statement:

2 of the material facts which have, in your opinion, been established in the case of your decision upon the whole case, and upon any point which may be specified as

grounds of appeal If there are several appeals all made on the same or similar grounds, you must inform the court of this to enable the appeals to be consolidated,

if appropriate, or alternatively a test case to be selected. If the appeal is

successful, you must add the person's details to the relevant records and lists. 3 1.

Regulation 58(1) Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 58(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to

content at footnote 2 3. Section 56(4) and 57 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 4 September 2023 Book

traversal links for Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Post commencement) Notification of removal of an

absent vote (Post commencement) Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting

Cancellation letter (due to failure to provide a fresh signature (DOC) Code of

conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC) List of people entitled to be supplied with the

electoral register (PDF) Postal vote identifier request letter (DOC) Proxy vote

identifier request letter (DOC) Template postal vote rejection notices (DOC) Last

updated: 6 September 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral

Registration Officers - Absent voting Appeals against the removal of an absent vote following a postal vote identifier rejection notice (Post commencement) Voter

Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Voter Authority Certificates

and Anonymous Elector's Documents From May 2023 individuals, who wish to vote in

person, including those acting as a proxy on behalf of another individual, will be

required to produce an accepted form of photographic ID to prove their identity

before they will be issued with a ballot paper. This will apply at: UK parliamentary

by-elections Recall petitions Police and Crime Commissioner elections Local

government elections in England The requirement for voter ID to be provided at UK

Parliamentary General elections will only take effect for polls after 5 October 2023.

References in this guidance to a local government election should be read to include

local government referendums unless otherwise stated. The accepted forms of

photographic ID are 1 : a passport issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the

Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state, or a Commonwealth country

(including an Irish Passport Card) a driving licence issued by the UK, any of the

Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state (this includes a provisional

driving licence) a biometric immigration document an identity card bearing the Proof

of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card) a Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence

Identity Card) a Blue Badge a national identity card issued by an EEA state an Older

Person's Bus Pass funded by the Government of the United Kingdom a Disabled Person's

Bus Pass funded by the Government of the United Kingdom an Oyster 60+ Card funded by

the Government of the United Kingdom a Freedom Pass a Scottish National Entitlement

Card issued in Scotland a 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales

a Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales a Senior

SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland a Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's

SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland a War Disablement SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland a 60+ SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland a Half Fare SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland an Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland Expired photographic identification documents can still be used as accepted photographic ID at the polling station or signing place, as long as the photograph is still a good likeness of the elector. Where an individual does not have or does not wish to use one of these accepted forms of photographic ID, they can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. This is a document containing an elector's name and photograph which can be obtained free of charge from their local Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), following verification of an applicant's identity. Anonymous electors wishing to vote in person will also need to produce photographic ID. Due to their entry on the polling station register being linked to their electoral number, rather than their name, the only accepted form of photographic ID for an anonymous elector will be an Anonymous Elector's Document. This is a document containing an anonymous elector's elector number and photograph which can be obtained free of charge from their local ERO, following verification of an applicant's identity. The Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document cannot be used as proof of identity for any other purpose than for voting. This guidance covers how individuals can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document, and how you as ERO should process and determine these applications. It also includes information on the production and delivery of these documents and what data should be retained following applications. 1. Rule 37, Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 February 2023 Book traversal links for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Resources for Electoral Registration Officers - Absent voting Applications for Voter Authority Certificates Applications for Voter Authority Certificates Electors can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate in a number of ways: online on GOV.UK by providing the necessary information in writing (e.g., on a paper application form) in person at your office (if you decide to offer the service) Online applications The online application portal is hosted on GOV.UK. Paper applications When you receive a request for a paper application form, before providing one you should check that the applicant is registered to vote or has made an application to be registered to vote. If they have not, you should explain that the applicant needs to be registered to vote and should offer them the opportunity to apply to register online or send a voter registration form with the Voter Authority Certificate application. You should also explain to them the other forms of photographic ID that are accepted before providing them with an application form. We are producing printable Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document application forms which you will be able to use. The printable Voter Authority Certificate application form will be published on our website and GOV.UK when available. We will also provide versions of the forms in a range of accessible formats such as large print and easy read. Receipt of completed paper applications Completed paper application forms can be sent to you by post, delivered by hand or sent electronically, such as a scanned copy sent by email. Application forms are not prescribed, so if you receive a written application for a Voter Authority Certificate that contains all the required information in any other format it should still be processed. Electors must submit a suitable photograph with a paper application. Wherever possible, you should make the elector aware of this before they submit their application and provide advice on how they can provide this to you, which may include offering to take a photo of the elector at one of your offices. In-person applications People may have difficulties completing the paper or

online form. For the benefit and convenience of your electors and to help you to meet your duties under the Equalities Act 2010, you should offer in-person application services so that individuals have the opportunity to apply without the need to provide information in writing. If you are unable to provide in-person applications for Voter Authority Certificates for everybody, you should still provide this at your discretion in certain circumstances. When dealing with in-person applications before proceeding you should check that an applicant is registered to vote or has made an application to be registered to vote. If they have not, you should explain that an applicant needs to be registered to vote before they can be issued with a Voter Authority Certificate and should offer them the opportunity to apply to register. You should explain to them about the other forms of photographic ID that are accepted before assisting them with an application. You should check whether the applicant has all the required information for you to complete an application in full on their behalf. This includes the need to provide a suitable photograph with the application. You should make the applicant aware of this and provide advice on how they can provide this to you, which may include offering to take a photo of the applicant at one of your offices. Applications made using the online application portal cannot be partially completed and returned to at a later time, so if an applicant cannot provide all of the information, you will need to ensure that their application is captured on a paper form to allow you to add any missing information later. Applicants must make a declaration of truth as part of the application. Once you have taken the required information you should read it back to the applicant, giving them the opportunity to review the information provided and to satisfy themselves that it is true and accurate. If you accept applications in person, it is important that you keep accurate records of the information provided by applicants. Before collecting any information, you should make the applicant aware of your privacy notice and give general information about how their data will be used, and alert them to the offence of making a false statement. 1 You may also consider working with partners inside and outside the local authority, to support people who may need help with making an application. This could include community groups or charities who already have links with the local community. Telephone applications The legislation does not envisage applications being made by telephone, and there would be a number of practicalities in managing this given the need to provide a photo for an application to be able to be submitted. However, in order to maximise the accessibility of the process, you should consider offering this to electors on request where they have a particular need for telephone support. If you do offer this, you will need to think through the practicalities of how you will collect the applicant's photograph in order to add this to the application before it is submitted. 1. Section 13CZA Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 February 2023 Book traversal links for Applications for Voter Authority Certificates Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Promotion of the application channels available for Voter Authority Certificates Promotion of the application channels available for Voter Authority Certificates Your own website and social media accounts will be key tools for amplifying the messages about the need to produce accepted forms of photographic ID when voting in person at polling stations at the relevant elections. Our website will contain information about the need for photographic ID when voting in person at a polling station at relevant elections, what types of ID are accepted and how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate if an elector does not have, or does not wish to use, any of the other forms of accepted photographic ID. Promoting this information may help to reduce enquiries and

questions, and where an applicant needs to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, make it easy for them to do so online. This may in turn make it simpler and more efficient for you to process applications. The online application portal has the following benefits for applicants including: improved accessibility for individuals with particular communication needs, who may be able to complete the application more easily online, for example those with visual impairments who use electronic screen readers assurance that the application that they have made is complete, as the online application portal will not allow incomplete applications to be submitted, for example applications cannot be submitted without an accompanying photograph providing assurance that the application is received which is particularly beneficial close to the deadline for applications ahead of any relevant election or petition There are also benefits for you, including: reduced need for manual data input fewer errors due to the validation of information entered into the online application portal no need to decipher handwriting applications will be complete when received, reducing the need to follow up any missing information photographs will need to be submitted in an acceptable resolution and format reducing the need to follow up not having to receive, open, scan and store a paper form and photograph Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Promotion of the application channels available for Voter Authority Certificates Applications for Voter Authority Certificates Availability of Voter Authority Certificate application forms Availability of Voter Authority Certificate application forms You should ensure that electors are made aware that if they do not have one of the accepted forms of photographic ID, they have the option to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. They can do so online or by using a paper application form. You should include a link to the GOV.UK Voter Authority Certificate application portal on your local authority's website. You could also make the form available to download, or include a link to the forms that are available from our website. You should also consider publicising the closing date for the return of applications ahead of any relevant elections. You should ensure that you have an adequate supply of paper application forms in case an elector is unable to print it off themselves and is not able to use the online application portal. Promotional materials highlighting the requirement for photographic ID, such as posters and leaflets, should also be made available at all public offices of the local authority and at other premises frequented by electors, such as: post offices libraries doctors' surgeries Citizens Advice Bureaux You should ensure that local political parties, candidates and agents at elections are aware of their responsibilities in relation to handling Voter Authority Certificate applications. They should be free to inform voters of the requirements for photographic ID and how they can apply, but they should not handle any completed application forms as they contain sensitive personal information. The Commission has developed a Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums. You should liaise with the Returning Officer (if you are not also the Returning Officer) at any elections that are taking place to ensure that all candidates and agents are provided with copies of the Code of conduct for campaigners at elections and referendums, and know how to obtain additional copies if required. Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 The code provides a guide as to what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community during the lead-up to polling day, including in relation to Voter Authority Certificate applications. Any concerns that the code has been breached should be raised first with the candidate, agent, political party or campaigner in question. If you have any further concerns or wish to report a breach of the code you should first contact your

local Commission team. This code has been agreed by the political parties represented on the House of Commons Parliamentary Parties Panel and the panels for the Scottish Parliament and the Senedd, and is endorsed by the members of the Electoral Commission's UK Electoral Coordination and Advisory Board of senior Returning and Electoral Registration Officers and by the Electoral Integrity Roundtable. Last updated: 8 February 2023

[Book traversal links for Availability of Voter Authority Certificate application forms](#)

[Promotion of the application channels available for Voter Authority Certificates](#)

The requirement for anonymous electors to have an Anonymous Elector's Document to vote in person

The requirement for anonymous electors to have an Anonymous Elector's Document to vote in person

Anonymous electors wishing to vote in person in relevant elections at the polling station or sign a signing sheet at a signing place for a petition will need to produce an Anonymous Elector's Document as their photographic ID. This is a document containing an elector's elector number and photograph produced by you as ERO, following verification of an individual's identity. Anonymous electors cannot use other forms of photographic ID. Anonymous electors will still also be required to produce their poll card when voting in person or signing a petition.

Notifying existing anonymous electors about the requirement to have an Anonymous Elector's Document

You must notify all existing qualifying anonymous electors on your register of the new requirement to have an Anonymous Elector's Document if they want to vote in person in relevant elections at the polling station or sign a signing sheet at a signing place for a petition. A qualifying anonymous elector means a person who has an anonymous entry in: a register of parliamentary electors a register of local government electors in England

You must send this notice by post no later than the end of the period of two months beginning with the day on which this regulation comes into force, unless the qualifying elector's entry is removed from the register of electors, or the registration officer has already sent a notice with a registration renewal 1 .

Notifying new anonymous electors about the requirement to have an Anonymous Elector's Document at the point of application

When a person registers as an anonymous elector in: a register of parliamentary electors a register of local government electors in England for the first time you must send them a notice by post as soon as is reasonably practicable to tell them that they must have an Anonymous Elector's Document if they want to vote in person at relevant elections at the polling station or sign a signing sheet at a signing place for a petition 2 .

Notifying anonymous electors about the requirement to have an Anonymous Elector's Document when they are due to renew their registration

You are required during the relevant period to send all qualifying anonymous electors on your register a reminder notice, by post, of the requirement to have an Anonymous Elector's Document if they want to vote in person in relevant elections at the polling station or sign a signing sheet at a signing place for a petition. The relevant period means the one-month period that begins on the day which is nine months after the day on which the person's anonymous entry first takes effect and ends with the day which is ten months after the day on which that entry first takes effect 3 .

This notice should be combined with the annual reminders sent to anonymous electors to renew their registration 4 .

You are not required to send this notice to an anonymous elector who has a postal vote or who votes by proxy. 1. Regulation 26(2) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Reg 25(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Reg 25(6)(c) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Reg 25(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

Last updated: 17 November 2022

[Book traversal links for The requirement for anonymous electors to have an Anonymous Elector's Document to vote in](#)

person Availability of Voter Authority Certificate application forms Applications for Anonymous Elector's Documents Applications for Anonymous Elector's Documents Anonymous electors can only make an application for an Anonymous Elector's Document using a paper application form. You will be able to produce paper application forms for applicants who request them from the Electoral Registration Officer portal (EROP). When you receive a request for a paper application form before sending this out you should check that an applicant is registered to vote as an anonymous elector or has made an application to be registered as an anonymous elector in a: • a register of parliamentary electors • a register of local government electors in England If they have not, you should explain that an applicant needs to be registered to vote anonymously to apply for an Anonymous Elector's Document and send them an anonymous elector registration form with the Anonymous Elector's Document application. Forms can be sent to you by post, delivered by hand or sent electronically, such as a scanned copy sent by email. The application form is not prescribed, so if you receive a written application for an Anonymous Elector's Document that contains all the required information in any other format it should still be processed. Anonymous electors must submit a suitable photograph with their application. If possible, you should make the elector aware of this before they submit their application and provide advice on how they can provide this to you, which may include arranging for a photo of the elector to be taken at one of your offices. Applications for Anonymous Elector's Documents and information associated with them are sensitive and must be stored securely 1 . 1. Regulation 21(6) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 24 November 2022 Book traversal links for Applications for Anonymous Elector's Documents The requirement for anonymous electors to have an Anonymous Elector's Document to vote in person Deadlines for applications for Voter Authority Certificates or Anonymous Elector's Documents for a particular election or petition Deadlines for applications for Voter Authority Certificates or Anonymous Elector's Documents for a particular election or petition Applications for Voter Authority Certificates or Anonymous Elector's Documents can be made at any time. You should determine applications as soon as practicable. The deadline for applications for a particular election or petition are: election - 5pm, 6 working days before polling day petition - 5pm, 6 working days before the last day of the signing period for that petition The deadlines are statutory - there can be no extension to the deadline for any reason. Applications received after the relevant deadline cannot be processed for the particular election or petition. Applications received before the deadline can be determined after the deadline and at any point up to and including the day of the relevant election or last day of a signing petition. For more information on determining applications see our guidance Determining an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document . Regardless of the relevant date on a paper form, you must have received the application for a Voter Authority Certificate by 5pm, 6 working days before polling day or before the last day of the signing period for that petition to be able to issue a Voter Authority Certificate in time for that specific election or petition. 1 You should notify an applicant if their application arrives too late to be processed for a particular election or petition. You should explain that: their application arrived after the deadline for the particular election or petition their application will still be processed, and a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document will be produced for use at future elections or petitions if they are an ordinary elector, they will still be able to vote or sign the petition if they are able to provide another form of

photographic ID. You should include the list of accepted forms of photographic ID they can use if they are an anonymous elector, they will only be able to vote or sign a petition by appointing an emergency proxy 1. Regulation 10(3)(b)(i) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 18 November 2022 Book traversal links for Deadlines for applications for Voter Authority Certificates or Anonymous Elector's Documents for a particular election or petition Applications for Anonymous Elector's Documents What information must a Voter Authority Certification application contain? What information must a Voter Authority Certification application contain? An application for a Voter Authority Certificate must contain the following information: 1 the applicant's full name the address at which the applicant is registered to vote, or has applied to be registered, or in the case of special category electors , their present/correspondence/BFPO number address (in each case the relevant delivery address) the applicant's date of birth or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason why they are not able to do so and a statement as to whether the applicant is under the age of 18 the applicant's National Insurance number (NINo) or, if they are not able to provide that information, the reason why they are not able to do so a statement as to whether the applicant considers it necessary to collect the Voter Authority Certificate in person instead of it being delivered to the relevant delivery address and, if so, the reason why the applicant considers that collection is necessary an indication as to whether, if the Voter Authority Certificate application is granted, the applicant requires a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the document issued a declaration that the contents of the application are true (in practice, on paper, this involves a signature or at least a mark on the form that shows that they have made the declaration) the date of the application An application must also contain a suitable photograph of the applicant or give a reason why they are not able to do so. 2 You must consider the application incomplete if any of the above is not provided. You should follow up on the missing information with the applicant. An application may also contain an applicant's email address and telephone number, but this is not a requirement. 3 If an applicant is unable to provide a NINo they may provide with their application a copy of the documents listed in acceptable documents for the exceptions process . 4 If provided, these documents can be used to verify an applicant's identity. This may be particularly useful close to the deadline for an election or petition to ensure that an application can be processed without delay. 1. Regulation 4(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 4(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 4(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 4(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for What information must a Voter Authority Certification application contain? Deadlines for applications for Voter Authority Certificates or Anonymous Elector's Documents for a particular election or petition What information must an Anonymous Elector's Document application contain? What information must an Anonymous Elector's Document application contain? An application for an Anonymous Elector's Document must contain the following information: 1 the applicant's full name the address at which the applicant is registered to vote, or has applied to be registered, or in the case of special category electors , their present/correspondence/BFPO number address (in each case the relevant delivery address) the applicant's date of birth or, if they are not able to provide this, the reason why they are not able to do so and a statement as to whether the applicant is under the age of 18 the applicant's National Insurance number (NINo) or, if they are not able to provide that information, the reason why

they are not able to do so a statement as to whether the applicant considers it necessary to collect the Anonymous Elector's Document in person instead of it being delivered to the relevant delivery address and, if so, the reason why the applicant considers that collection is necessary the relevant delivery address for ordinary electors is the address at which the applicant is registered to vote, or has applied to be registered to vote the relevant delivery address for special category electors is their present, correspondence or BFPO address. 2 an indication as to whether, if the Anonymous Elector's Document application is granted, the applicant requires a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the document issued a statement as to whether the applicant already has, or is applying to have, an anonymous entry on the register a declaration that the contents of the application are true (in practice, on paper, this involves a signature or at least a mark on the form that shows that they have made the declaration) the date of the application An application must also contain a suitable photograph of the applicant or give a reason why they are not able to do so. 3 You must consider the application incomplete if any of the above is not provided. You should follow up on the missing information with the applicant. An application may also contain an applicant's email address and telephone number, but this is not a requirement. 4 If an applicant is unable to provide a NINo they may provide with their application a copy of the acceptable documents for the exceptions process in the case of an application for an Anonymous Elector's Document. If provided, these documents can be used to verify an applicant's identity. This may be particularly useful close to the deadline for an election or petition to ensure that an application can be processed without delay.

1. Regulation 4(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 4(7) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 4(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 4(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 17 November 2022

Book traversal links for What information must an Anonymous Elector's Document application contain? What information must a Voter Authority Certification application contain? Personal identifiers for Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's document applications Personal identifiers for Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's document applications An applicant's personal identifiers are their full name, National Insurance number (NINo), and date of birth (DOB). These are used to perform the data match with DWP to verify an applicant's identity. For more information you can see our Electoral Registration Officer guidance on National Insurance numbers and Dates of birth . Last updated: 17 March 2023

Book traversal links for Personal identifiers for Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's document applications What information must an Anonymous Elector's Document application contain? Photograph requirements Photograph requirements An application for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document must also include a photograph which meets the following requirements. 1 The photograph must be: a close-up photograph of the head and shoulders of the applicant without any other person visible without any covering of the head unless worn for religious beliefs or medical reasons in sharp focus and clear in colour and taken against a plain, light background free from redeye, shadows which obscure the face, or reflections undamaged a true likeness of the applicant, without amendment or manipulation The photo must show the applicant: facing forward with nothing covering the face – this includes any covering worn for religious reasons looking straight at the camera with a plain facial expression with eyes open and clearly visible (e.g., without sunglasses and not obscured with hair, etc.) Where the applicant indicates in their application that they are unable due to any

disability to provide a photograph which complies with the requirements for the applicant to have a plain facial expression and for their eyes to be open and clearly visible, those requirements can be disregarded. 2 Where the application is made on paper, in person or via telephone, the photograph supplied must be: at least 45 millimetres in height and 35 millimetres in width, and no larger than 297 millimetres in height or 210 millimetres in width Where the application is made via the digital service, the photograph must be: at least 750 pixels in height and 600 pixels in width, and contained in an electronic file in a standard format image such as JPEG, PNG or GIF which is no more than 20MB in size How can photos be submitted? Photos can be uploaded to GOV.UK when the application is made online. Guidance and an example photo will be available to support applicants in providing an acceptable photo. Photos supplied with applications submitted on paper or by email will need to be scanned or downloaded and saved in a standard format image such as JPEG, PNG or GIF and then be uploaded to the EROP so that they can be added to the application. These photos must also meet the minimum pixel requirements and be of the right size and file type. You will be able to crop or rotate photos in the EROP when you upload them using a fixed ratio to ensure the image is the correct size to be printed on the certificate. Each photo in the EROP will need to be reviewed to check that the face is clearly visible, and it meets the photograph requirements. How will photos be checked to ensure that they meet the requirements? Photos provided as part of an online application that: do not meet the minimum pixel requirements are in an incorrect file type are in a file that is too big or too small will be rejected and applicants will be asked to upload an alternative photo. If you receive a hard copy photo with a paper application that is not of a sufficient quality to be scanned, or a photo provided as an email attachment that: does not meet the minimum pixel requirements is in an incorrect file type is in a file that is too big or too small you should contact the elector and ask them to provide a different photo of better quality and/or a photo which complies with the requirements above. Managing submitted photos There are steps you can take to ensure that photos are managed consistently and processed to maximise their usability: before making a decision on the usability of a photo, you can test how the photo would appear on the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document by printing out an example copy making use of the editing tool within the EROP to crop photos to remove objects that may appear in the background use a panel of staff to make any challenging decisions by involving staff from the wider team or colleagues from your local authority, utilising expertise from other areas establish a document which sets out how photos will be assessed and processed, which can be updated to include examples of decisions as they arise 1. Schedule 2 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Para 3(2), Sch 2 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 March 2023 Book traversal links for Photograph requirements Personal identifiers for Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's document applications Assisting applicants to provide a suitable photograph Assisting applicants to provide a suitable photograph It may be that an applicant needs assistance with providing a photograph with their paper application. The types of assistance required could include: taking a photo of themselves understanding the specific requirements of a photo uploading a photo to send by email You could advise an applicant to deliver their paper application by hand and make arrangements to take their photo when they deliver the form. You will need to provide an area for these photos to be taken, with a plain background. In the case of electors who may need to remove a face covering for the purpose of the photo, you will also need to consider

how you can provide: a private area a member of staff the individual is comfortable to remove any covering in front of a mirror for the replacement of face coverings following a photo being taken If the applicant knows someone who can help them by taking a photo, such as a family member, carer, or support worker, you could advise them to deliver the paper application by hand, post or electronically by email and then to send a scanned copy or digital image of the photo by email. It is important that any photo or file clearly indicates the applicant to whom it belongs. Last updated: 17 March 2023 Book traversal links for Assisting applicants to provide a suitable photograph Photograph requirements Incomplete applications made online Incomplete applications made on paper An applicant will not be able to submit an incomplete application online. The only exceptions are where an applicant is unable to provide their date of birth, NINo or a photo that meets the requirements and they provide a statement of the reasons why as part of the application. Where an applicant is unable to provide their date of birth or NINo, you must try to verify the applicant's identity using local data matching or move the application to the exceptions process or attestation process . 1 Where an applicant is unable to provide a photo that meets the requirements, you should consider the reasons provided for any non-compliance and decide whether to accept the photo provided. Following this decision, you can decide whether you should process the application, ask for another photo, or reject the application. 1. Regulation 7(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Incomplete applications made online Assisting applicants to provide a suitable photograph Incomplete applications made on paper Incomplete applications made on paper You may receive paper applications for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document which do not contain all the required information. If the applicant has not been able to provide their date of birth, NINo or a photo that meets the requirements they must provide a statement of the reasons why as part of the application. Where an applicant is unable to provide their date of birth or NINo, and they provide a statement of the reasons why, the application is not rejected as incomplete and you must verify the identity of the applicant using local data matching 1 where possible, or instead move the application on to the exceptions process or attestation process . 2 Where an applicant is unable to provide a photo that meets the requirements, you should consider the reasons provided for any non-compliance and decide whether to accept the photo provided. If no statement is included on the paper application, you should not assume that the applicant cannot provide the missing information or a photo that meets the requirements. You should contact the applicant and ask for it to be supplied. If the application is made in the run up to an election or petition, you should also explain that if the missing information is not provided by 5pm, 6 working days before the poll or the last day of the signing period for a petition, it will not be possible to process it in time. You should contact the applicant in writing or by telephone or email where you hold a telephone number or email address for them. You are not able to determine an application if any of the required information is missing or incomplete. The missing information does not need to be provided in writing, providing you are satisfied that you are speaking to the applicant, it could be provided by phone, e-mail, or in-person. You should ensure that any missing information that is provided to you is transferred to the written application. An application is considered on hold until all required information has been supplied. You should wait for a reasonable period of time after contacting an applicant for them to supply the missing information or provide a reason as to why it cannot be provided. After that period of time has

elapsed, you should reject the application and notify the applicant. While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days. Where there is an election or petition due to take place you should ensure you notify the applicant of the deadline to supply the information for the application to be able to be processed for that relevant election or petition. 1. Regulation 8 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 7 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Incomplete applications made on paper Incomplete applications made online Identifying suspicious Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document applications Identifying suspicious Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document applications Although there are no definitive signs of fraud, you should ensure that you have mechanisms in place to monitor indicators of possible fraud. Applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents do not have to be taken at face value. You can require additional information where necessary, such as an attestation, to verify the identity of an applicant. You should pay particular attention to: multiple applications completed in the same handwriting large numbers of applications received from one property multiple applications with the same photograph submitted More information on identifying suspicious applications can be found in our registration guidance. Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Identifying suspicious Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document applications Incomplete applications made on paper Verification of an applicant's identity for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document Verification of an applicant's identity for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document All applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents will be managed in the ERO Portal (EROP). Access to the functionality for processing Anonymous Elector's Document applications will be able to be restricted to specific users due to the sensitive nature of this data. Guidance on how to access and use the EROP will be provided by DLUHC. On downloading or entering application data to the EROP, the EROP will automatically conduct checks to ensure that an application meets the relevant conditions, which are: 1 that the application is complete and that the person making the application is the person named in the application that the applicant appears on the parliamentary or local government register of electors To satisfy the first condition, any person making a new application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document must provide personal identifiers which are used to verify the applicant's identity against DWP records. The results of these checks, which will appear in the EROP, must be taken into account in determining the application. 2 If an applicant's identity cannot be verified using DWP records, their identifiers may be matched with local data sources . If you are still unable to verify the applicant's identity using local data sources, you should follow the exceptions or attestation process. To satisfy the second condition, a check of the relevant electoral register held in your electoral management system will be conducted. The result of this check will appear in the EROP to confirm whether or not a person who has applied for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document is a registered elector. Where an applicant is found to be a registered elector, the EROP will indicate that the information matches a register entry, and you will be able to consider the rest of the application details. Where an applicant is found to have an entry waiting to be added to the register, you can determine the application for a Voter Authority Certificate once the five day objection period has passed. You will need to ensure that you return to

the EROP to process the applications of those waiting to be added following the objection period. If the results show an applicant is not included on a relevant electoral register or has not applied to be included on a relevant electoral register, you should decide whether to reject the application at this point, wait and check again at a later date, or make such other manual check as may be helpful. This could be to see if the applicant has made an application to register at the same time as they made an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document, and the data check from the registration process has not yet been returned or may be to establish if the reason a match cannot be found is due to a minor difference. For example, an elector's name may have been misspelt or may have legally changed since they applied to register. You should contact the elector to make any enquires necessary so that you can be satisfied that the entry on the register is the same person who has made the application for the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document. 1. Regulation 11(2)(a)(i) & (ii) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Reg 6(11) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) Last updated: 8 February 2023

[Book traversal links for Verification of an applicant's identity for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document](#) Identifying suspicious Voter Authority Certificate and Anonymous Elector's Document applications How to interpret DWP match results How to interpret DWP match results Applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents are matched against the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Customer Information System (CIS) database. CIS is an amalgamated data source, containing data received from internal DWP systems, as well as other government sources, such as His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). DWP use the CIS as the main source of customer information. At the end of the matching process, the match level is sent back to the EROP. The EROP shows either a match or a no match result against each application. You will need to assess whether the applicant's identity has been established. Match If DWP return a match result for an applicant's identity, you can be confident that the applicant is the person they claim to be on their application. No match If a no match result is returned by DWP, this indicates that it has not been possible to establish that person's identity and you should not be satisfied that the applicant is the person that they claim to be on their application at this stage. You may contact the applicant to query the information given on the application using any communication channel that you have contact details for. You should ask the applicant to supply their full application information - name, address, DOB and NINo. These details should be checked against the original application. You should not supply any details of any information given in an application to the applicant. If the information provided by the applicant confirms they have made an error on their application, you can correct the application and should resubmit their personal identifiers for a further check. You should also write to the applicant to tell them that based on additional information supplied by them, a change has been made to their application. You should not include any personal identifier information (NINo and DOB) in the letter. If no error has been made on the application and local data sources cannot be used (or have not been used) to establish the applicant's identity, you should write to the elector to inform them that it has not been possible to verify their identity and request they supply documentary proof of their identity this is known as the exceptions process. Alternatively, you can advise them to provide an attestation as part of the attestation process. Last updated: 17 November 2022 [Book traversal links for How to interpret DWP match results](#) [Verification of an applicant's identity for a Voter](#)

Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document Using local data matching for verification purposes Using local data matching for verification purposes You are not limited to using the match result to decide whether the identity of the applicant has been established. You can use local data to either: verify an applicant's identity where an applicant has been unable to provide a NINO, provided that you are satisfied the reason given for not providing a NINO is valid verify applicants whose personal identifiers fail to be matched against DWP records 1 where you have sent the details of an application to DWP upon receipt, 2 and have received and considered the match results 3 Matching against local data allows you to use data sources available to you to verify that the person making the application is who they claim to be. Where you make an assessment which does not accord with the match result (for example, local data which contradicts the DWP match result), you should record the reasons why you have reached your assessment and the evidence used. Deciding whether to use local data for verification The use of local data for identify verification is not compulsory. Your decision on whether to use local data matching should be taken after consideration of the benefits that local data matching can have in terms of reducing the burden on the applicant to provide evidence and follow-up costs. Before using local data to inform the determination of an application, you must ask the following questions: 4 what sources of local data are available to me? is the data record I intend to use accurate? what benefit will I gain from using local data matching for a particular task? what resources will I need to be able to use local data effectively? what are the costs involved in developing/using local data matching capacity? can I achieve beneficial results in sufficient time to meet the needs of the task? You may decide that the local data sets available cannot be used to verify the identity of the applicant or that directing the applicant to the exceptions or attestation processes would be a more effective way of establishing identity. Potential data sources for local data matching You can require any person to supply you with information required for the purpose of determining an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document. 5 You are therefore entitled to request data sets from organisations where you deem it necessary for the purpose of verifying the identity of an applicant. There are a wide variety of data sources that may be available including, but not limited to: housing and council tax data adult social care data local authority billing and payments data parking permits data school admission data blue badge data customer service records payroll data registrar data on births, deaths, and marriages As ERO, you are legally entitled to access local data sets and to inspect and make copies of records kept in whatever form by: 6 the council which appointed you (and where you are an ERO for a district council in a two-tier area, the county council) any person, including a company or organisation, providing services to, or authorised to exercise any function of the council; this includes those providing outsourced services under any finance agreement. For example, a private contractor appointed to collect council tax on behalf of the local authority any registrar of births, deaths, and marriages, including any superintendent Where EROs who are appointed by a lower tier authority in a two-tier structure request relevant data from their county council, it is at the discretion of the upper tier authority as to whether to supply this data, and EROs should ensure that they have appropriate data sharing agreements in place where this data is supplied. Legislation gives express permission for local authorities who have not directly appointed an ERO to provide data to the ERO but requires a written agreement between the ERO and the authority to be in place before any transfer of data occurs. 7 The written agreement should address the processing of information

including its transfer, storage, destruction, and security. While you have a legal entitlement to your local authority's data, you should conduct any data matching activities in accordance with current data protection legislation, relevant guidance and good practice available on the Information Commissioner's Office website . 1. Regulation 8 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 6 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 6(11) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulations 23, 35, and 35A Representation of the People (England & Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 9(1) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Reg 8(2) and (3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Reg 35A RPR (E&W) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Using local data matching for verification purposes How to interpret DWP match results Processing errors Processing errors In some cases, you may make a processing error which results in an applicant who has properly submitted an application not having their identity verified in time for you to issue a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document in time to vote at a poll or sign a petition. For example, a paper application form may be received but misplaced and not properly dealt with, or an online application may be incorrectly processed, resulting in the application not being sent to DWP. You can correct the error, determine an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document and issue the relevant document at any time before the close of poll or the signing deadline at a petition. On discovering this type of processing error, before you determine the application, you must still: be satisfied that the application is made by someone who appears to be the person named on the application be satisfied that the application was submitted before the deadline (for example, it was time and date-stamped upon receipt) send the applicant's personal identifiers to be verified When processing errors are identified close to the close of poll or petition, and you are concerned that the results of the DWP matching process may not be returned in time or there would not be time to carry out any local data matching or complete the exceptions process if needed, you may in these circumstances, proceed straight to local data matching and/or the documentary exceptions or attestation processes before you receive the result of the DWP matching process to mitigate the impact of the processing error. If following this you determine the application successful, you can issue a permanent Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document as appropriate. If this determination is after the application deadline, and you do not think the Voter Authority Certificate will arrive in time, you may also issue a temporary Voter Authority Certificate. For more information see our guidance on Issuing Temporary Voter Authority Certificates . When the DWP check is complete, if the EROP returns a match, you must ensure that you destroy any documentary evidence provided through the exceptions or attestation process as this will no longer be required for your records. If the DWP check returns a no match result, you should continue to retain any documentary evidence you used to determine the application as successful. You will therefore need to have processes in place to securely destroy documents where necessary. Please see our Data protection resource for EROs and ROs for more information on document retention. Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Processing errors Using local data matching for verification purposes Determining an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document Determining an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document When you process an application, you must make a decision as to whether the applicant is entitled to a Voter Authority Certificate or

Anonymous Elector's Document. This is called determining an application. You should determine an application as soon as you can after it is received. You must determine an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document as approved if you are satisfied that the applicant: 1 is the person named in the application has provided all the required information – including a photograph that meets the requirements is a registered elector in the parliamentary register or local government register of electors, or you have determined their registration application and the five day objection period has passed If after following the steps set out in the Verification of an applicant's identity for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document you are not satisfied with the information provided on an application, you should determine it as refused. Whatever determination decision you make, you must write to the elector to notify them. 2 1. Regulation 11(2) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 12 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 24 February 2023 Book traversal links for Determining an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document Processing errors Determining applications close to a deadline Determining applications close to a deadline For applications received before a deadline , whilst you should still determine them as soon as you can, you can determine them up to and including any time on polling day for an election or the last day for signing at a petition. For applications determined as approved after the deadline, you will need to decide whether the applicant will receive the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document in time to be able to use it at the election or for signing at a petition. If you decide that for an application determined after the deadline a Voter Authority Certificate would not be delivered in time, you may issue a temporary Voter Authority Certificate. 1 More information can be found in our guidance on issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates . To help you make this decision you should consider the expected timescales included in the service level agreement with the UK government procured central supplier for Voter Authority Certificates and royal mail delivery timescales, information on which can be found in our guidance on producing permanent Voter Authority Certificates . If you decide that an Anonymous Elector's Document will not be delivered in time if sent through the post, you should contact the elector and arrange for them to collect the document instead if possible. For more information, see our guidance on delivery or collection of Anonymous Elector's Documents . Whatever determination decision you make, you must write to the elector to notify them. 2 1. Regulation 18(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 12 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Determining applications close to a deadline Determining an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document Postponement of determination of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Document applications Postponement of determination of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Document applications When more than one relevant election or petition is scheduled to take place close to another in the same electoral area for which an ERO is appointed, the processing of all applications received after the deadline for the first poll or petition but before the deadline for the following poll or petition are postponed for a period of time. This postponement period begins from 5pm, 6 working days before the first poll or last day for signing the petition and ends at 10pm on the date of that poll or at the time a petition closes on the last day for signing the petition. 1 Where the deadlines for a relevant poll and petition fall especially close together

(for example you have a poll on Thursday and the last day for a petition is on Friday in the same week) then the postponement period ends earlier - on the working day before the previous poll or last day for the petition. 2 This is to enable an application to be determined and a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document to be processed and issued in time for the elector to use at the subsequent poll. Where an application is received during this postponement period you must not determine an application before the postponement period ends and must notify the applicant as such. 3 While you may not determine any applications received during this period, you can still take all of the necessary steps to verify the application in readiness for determining it once the postponement period ends. You will need procedures in place to ensure that you do not send any documents before the postponement period ends. When you have postponement periods which will only end very close to the next polling day or last day for a signing petition, this will result in determination taking place after 5pm 6 working days before the poll or petition. In these cases, in addition to processing any applications for a Voter Authority Certificates in the standard way, you may also produce temporary Voter Authority Certificates if needed to ensure that everyone who applied in time for a particular poll or petition is able to participate. For more information see our guidance on issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates . 1. Regulation 10(3)(b) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) 2. Reg 10(3)(a)(ii) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#) 3. Reg 10(1)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#) Last updated: 17 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Postponement of determination of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Document applications](#) Determining applications close to a deadline The exceptions and attestation processes for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents The exceptions and attestation processes for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents You must require applicants to provide additional evidence where you consider it is necessary to verify the applicant's identity. This may be because: they are unable to state their personal identifier(s) 1 the personal identifiers cannot be matched against DWP records, or an applicant cannot be matched against local data, or you choose not to use this option This additional evidence may be in the form of supporting documents verifying that they are who they say they are, known as the exceptions process, or by providing a statement from another individual confirming the applicant's identity, known as the attestation process. 1. Regulation 7(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 17 November 2022 [Book traversal links for The exceptions and attestation processes for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents](#) Postponement of determination of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Document applications The exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents The exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents If you require additional documentary evidence from an applicant in respect of their application, you must inform them of the following: 1 the deadline for submitting the additional documentary evidence - this is 28 days after the date you decide that additional evidence is required that their application may be rejected if they fail or refuse to provide the additional evidence the types of documentary evidence that are acceptable 2 depend on whether the application is for a Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document If the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document is needed for a forthcoming poll or petition, you should encourage the applicant to supply the documentary evidence to you as soon as possible up to and

including any time on polling day for an election or the last day for signing at a petition. 1. Regulation 7(2)(a) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 7(2)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for The exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents The exceptions and attestation processes for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Document types for the exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document applications Document types for the exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document applications In all cases the evidence required to successfully establish an applicant's identity should refer to the applicant by name. The types and quantities of documents that can be provided to successfully establish an applicant's identity for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document are: Document applied for? Requirement to provide document(s) listed in: Voter Authority Certificate 1 Three of the documents from list 2, or One of the documents from list 2 and 2 other documents that may be from list 2 or 3, or Four documents from List 3 Anonymous Elector's Document 2 One of the documents from list 1, or Three of the documents from list 2, or One of the documents from list 2 and 2 other documents that may be from list 2 or 3, or Four documents from List 3 List 1 3 the applicant's passport the applicant's identity card issued in the European Economic Area the applicant's biometric immigration document issued in the United Kingdom in accordance with regulations made under section 5 of the Borders Act 2007 the applicant's electoral identity card issued in Northern Ireland the applicant's photocard driving licence granted in the United Kingdom or driving licence granted by a Crown Dependency, which bears a photograph of the applicant List 2 - the following documents must have been issued in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, except for the final document in this list 4 the applicant's birth certificate the applicant's marriage or civil partnership certificate the applicant's adoption certificate the applicant's firearms certificate granted under the Firearms Act 1968 the record of a decision on bail made in respect of the applicant in accordance with section 5(1) of the Bail Act 1976 the applicant's driving licence, which is not in the form of a photocard the applicant's driving licence, granted other than in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, which bears a photograph of the applicant, and which must be valid for at least 12 months from the date the applicant entered the United Kingdom List 3 - any of the following kinds of evidence must bear the applicant's full name as stated on their application 5 a financial statement, including but not limited to— a mortgage statement a bank or building society statement or a letter from a bank or building society confirming that the applicant has opened an account with that bank or building society a credit card statement a pension statement a council tax demand letter or statement a utility bill a Form P45 or Form P60 issued to the applicant by their employer or former employer a statement of benefits or entitlement to benefits, such as a statement of child benefit, within the meaning of section 141 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, or a letter confirming that the applicant is entitled to housing benefit, within the meaning of section 130 of that Act If an applicant for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document cannot provide the quantity and types of documentary evidence set out in this guidance, they should be asked to provide an attestation in support of their application. 1. Regulation 7(2)(b)(ii) The Voter Identity Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 7(2)(b)(i) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 7(3) VID Regs 2022 ■

Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 7(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 7(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Document types for the exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document applications The exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Should applicants submit copies or original documents? Should applicants submit copies or original documents? In the first instance, you should request that the applicant provide photocopies of the evidence. If an applicant provides an original document, you must make a copy of that document and return the original document to the applicant. 1 Any copies of documents provided by applicants or taken by you of original documents should be stored securely in the same way as application forms. Please see guidance on the retention of information submitted with applications for more information on this. Applicants may bring either copies or original documents to your office in person if they don't want to send them through the post. You must be satisfied that the documents or copies provided to you appear to be genuine. Where you have a doubt as to whether a copy is genuine or where the copy is of such poor quality that you cannot assess the document, you may ask the applicant to present the original document(s) in person at your office or to send original documents to you to be copied and returned. You should be aware that you would become responsible for the secure transit of the document in the latter case. Where you have doubt as to whether an original document is genuine, you may ask the applicant to provide alternative documentary evidence in the first instance. Where alternative documentary evidence is not available, you should direct the applicant to the attestation process or reject the application. Where documentary evidence does not appear to be genuine, you should advise the applicant of the penalties for supplying false information and inform your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC) where you suspect that false information may have been supplied. For more information, see our ERO guidance on document authenticity checks. 1. Regulation 14(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Should applicants submit copies or original documents? Document types for the exceptions process for Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document applications The attestation process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents The attestation process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents If you require an attestation for an applicant in respect of their application, you must inform them that the deadline for submitting the attestation is 28 days after the date you notify the applicant it is required 1 and that their application may be rejected if they fail or refuse to provide the attestation. 2 An attestation must: 3 confirm that the applicant is the person named in the application state that the qualifying attester is aware of the penalty for providing false information to a registration officer be in writing and signed by the qualifying attester state the full name, date of birth, address, electoral number, and occupation of the qualifying attester state the date on which it is made You could either design a form containing the necessary legal statements and requirements for an attestation or set the detail out in your communication with the applicant. You should also provide examples of a person of good standing to help the applicant to identify a suitable attester. You should advise the applicant that an attester is not permitted to charge for providing an attestation. Our guidance for ERO provides guidance on how to decide if the attestation is valid. If the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document is needed for a forthcoming poll or petition, you should encourage the applicant to supply the attestation to you as soon

as possible and up to and including any time on polling day for an election or the last day for signing at a petition. An attestation may be delivered to your office by hand or by post. Delivery by electronic means, such as email, is not acceptable. Where an applicant is not physically able to deliver their attestation to you, you may choose to send a member of staff to the applicant's registered address to collect the attestation in person. The attestor is required to supply their electoral number as part of their attestation. 4 You should be aware that you may receive requests from potential attestors to supply this information. 1. Regulation 7(2)(a)(i) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 7(2)(a)(ii) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 7(6) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 7(6)(d) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for The attestation process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Should applicants submit copies or original documents? Determining applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents following the exceptions or attestation process Determining applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents following the exceptions or attestation process Determining an application where additional documentary evidence has been provided Where you are satisfied that an applicant's identity has been verified as a result of providing additional documentary evidence, you should determine the application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document as approved. Where you are not satisfied with the documentary evidence provided you may request further additional evidence, an attestation or refuse the application. Determining an application where an attestation has been provided If you have been able to determine an attestation valid and therefore successfully established the identity of the applicant, you should determine the application as approved. If you are not satisfied that the attestation is valid you may request another attestation, ask for additional evidence or refuse the application. If an applicant refuses or does not respond to your request on or before the deadline to provide additional documentary evidence or an attestation If an applicant refuses or does not respond to your request on or before the deadline to provide additional evidence or an attestation, you may refuse the application. 1 1. Regulation 11(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Determining applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents following the exceptions or attestation process The attestation process for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents Notifying the applicant following a determination decision on a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document application Notifying the applicant following a determination decision on a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document application Approved applications You must notify the applicant when you determine their application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document as approved. 1 Where the Voter Authority Certificate will be sent by post from the central supplier, the covering letter that accompanies the Voter Authority Certificate satisfies the requirement to write to the applicant, and no additional notice is required to be sent. The same applies where you produce and send the Anonymous Elector's Document locally. Sending this document to an elector satisfies the requirement to write to them and no additional notice needs to be sent. Any communications to anonymous electors should be placed in a plain covering envelope to ensure the contents are secure. However, if the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document is to be collected you must notify the

applicant that their application has been approved. You can notify applicants by any method you choose, but you must also write to the applicant at the address provided in their application as soon as practicable.

2 Refused applications You must notify the applicant when you refuse their application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document.

3 The notification must include:

- 4 the reason for refusal
- the right of appeal
- the timescale for an appeal - notice of an appeal must be given within 14 days of the date of the notification of the refusal

You may notify the applicant that their application has been refused by any method you choose, but you must also write to the applicant at the address provided in their application as soon as practicable.

5 There is nothing to prevent an applicant from making a fresh application following a refusal.

1. Regulation 12(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Reg 12(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Reg 12(1) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Reg 12(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

5. Reg 12(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#)

Last updated: 18 November 2022

Book traversal links for Notifying the applicant following a determination decision on a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document application

Determining applications for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents following the exceptions or attestation process

The appeals process

The appeals process A person may appeal against your decision to refuse a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document application. They must:

- 1 give you notice of the appeal within 14 days of the date of the notification of the refusal
- specify the grounds of the appeal

You must forward to the relevant court, in the manner directed by the rules of the court, any appeal notice you receive together with a statement setting out:

- 2 the material facts which in your opinion have been established in the case
- your decision upon the whole case
- your representations on any point specified as a ground of appeal

You must also give the relevant court any other information which they may require, and you are able to give.

3 You must also inform the court where you are aware of other appeal notices that are based on similar grounds, to enable it (where it thinks fit) to consolidate the appeals or select as a test case.

4 The relevant court is the county court where the ERO is appointed for an area in England or Wales.

5

1. Regulation 13(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Reg 13(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Reg 13(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Reg 13(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

5. Reg 13(6)(a) VID Regs 2022 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#)

Last updated: 17 November 2022

Book traversal links for The appeals process

Notifying the applicant following a determination decision on a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document application

Producing permanent Voter Authority Certificates

Producing permanent Voter Authority Certificates Once you have approved an application you must issue a Voter Authority Certificate to the applicant.

1 The data is sent from the EROP to the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC who will ensure Voter Authority Certificates are produced to the relevant specification and will ensure that all security features are included. The Voter Authority Certificate must include:

- 2 the applicant's full name
- the applicant's photograph
- the date of issue
- the appropriate identifier
- the words 'issued by the Electoral Registration Officer appointed by [insert the name of the Local Authority]'
- the recommended renewal date
- one or more security features recommended by the Home Secretary

The appropriate identifier is made up of 20 numbers or letters which you allocate to each Voter Authority Certificate.

3 This will be generated by the EROP. The recommended renewal

date for a Voter Authority Certificate is the date which is the tenth anniversary of the date it was issued. More information about how this process works will be provided in the EROP guidance to be provided by DLUHC. DLUHC expect that Voter Authority Certificates will be printed within a service level agreement of 1-2 working days of each applicant's details being sent to the supplier, and then delivered directly to the applicant first class by Royal Mail. You may issue a temporary Voter Authority Certificate if you have determined an application for a permanent VAC after the application deadline (i.e., after 5pm, 6 working days before polling day at an election or the last signing date for a petition) but before polling day for an election or the last day for signing at a petition and you do not think the VAC will arrive in time. For more information see our guidance issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates.

1. Regulation 16 (1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Reg 16(1)(b)-(f) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Reg 16(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 17 November 2022

Book traversal links for Producing permanent Voter Authority Certificates

The appeals process

Delivery or collection of permanent Voter Authority Certificates

Delivery or collection of permanent Voter Authority Certificates

The Voter Authority Certificate must be delivered by post to the applicant's address.

1 Applicants may indicate on their application that they consider it necessary, for a specified reason, to collect their document in person instead.

2 Where the applicant gives an indication, that they require a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the Voter Authority Certificate the ERO must also arrange for a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the issued document to be delivered or made available for collection with the issued document.

3 Easy read and large print designs will be made available online and a hard copy stock of Braille will be supplied to each ERO via the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC. If you need to reorder more stock, you will need to contact them. It is for you to be satisfied that collection is necessary based on the reason provided by the applicant. If you decide to allow the Voter Authority Certificate to be collected, you must tell the applicant: that the issued document is available to be collected

4 where and at what times the issued document can be collected

5 that the issued document may only be collected in person, by themselves

6 Collection can be from anywhere that the ERO and applicant agree. This could include picking up the document from your offices or a polling station. If you are not also the RO, you would need to work with the relevant RO to decide on the feasibility of and process for arranging collection from a polling station. You should ensure that processes are in place to maintain a clear audit trail and to ensure the security of Voter Authority Certificates while in transit or while awaiting collection from any collection point. If you agree to allow collection of a Voter Authority Certificate, you should consider how you will be satisfied that you have established the applicant's identity, as you cannot simply rely on checking the photograph for integrity purposes. A proportionate approach should be adopted that seeks to use some proof of identity that can be easily verified by staff, but that is not too onerous for the elector.

1. Regulation 17(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Reg 17(3)(a) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Reg 17(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Reg 17(4)(a) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

5. Reg 17(4)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

6. Reg 17(4)(c) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 6

Last updated: 17 November 2022

Book traversal links for Delivery or collection of permanent Voter Authority Certificates

Producing permanent Voter Authority Certificates Producing Anonymous Elector's Documents Producing Anonymous Elector's Documents Once you have approved an application you must issue an Anonymous Elector's document to the applicant. 1 Anonymous Elector's Documents must be produced in house, rather than through the use of an external supplier. This is a security measure to ensure that the applicant's personal information remains safe. You should ensure that you have the resources you require to produce Anonymous Elector's Documents. This will include specialist paper meeting the security requirements for printing Anonymous Elector's Documents. The specialist paper needed to produce Anonymous Elector's Documents will be provided to each ERO via UK Government's arrangement with a specialist printer. This paper will need to be stored securely in the same way that you store anonymous elector application documents. The paper will contain serial numbers and you will be required to keep records of use of this paper to produce Anonymous Elector's Documents. If you need to reorder more paper, you will need to contact the responsible Division in the UK Government (currently Elections Division in DLUHC). An Anonymous Elector's Document must include: 2 the date of issue the applicant's photograph the applicant's electoral number the appropriate identifier The appropriate identifier is made up of 20 numbers or letters which you allocate to each Anonymous Elector's Document. 3 This will be generated by the EROP. More information about how the production process works will be provided in the EROP guidance. 1. Regulation 16(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 16(1)(b), (c), (d) and (e) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 16(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Producing Anonymous Elector's Documents Delivery or collection of permanent Voter Authority Certificates Delivery or collection of Anonymous Elector's Documents Delivery or collection of Anonymous Elector's Documents An Anonymous Elector's Document must be delivered by post to the applicant's address. 1 An Anonymous Elector's Document must be sent in an envelope or covering that does not disclose that the elector is registered anonymously. 2 You should therefore send Anonymous Elector Documents to anonymously registered electors in a plain outgoing envelope. Applicants may indicate on their application that they consider it necessary for a specified reason to collect their document in person instead. 3 Where the applicant gives an indication that they require a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the Anonymous Elector's Document, the ERO must also arrange for a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the issued document to be delivered or made available for collection with the issued document. 4 Easy read and large print designs will be made available online and a hard copy stock of Braille will be supplied to each ERO via the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC. If you need to reorder more stock, you will need to contact them directly. It is for you to be satisfied that collection is necessary based on the reason provided by the applicant. If you decide to allow the Anonymous Elector's Document to be collected, you must tell the applicant: that the issued document is available to be collected 5 where and at what times the issued document can be collected 6 that the issued document may only be collected in person, by themselves 7 that the applicant must bring their certificate of anonymous registration 8 and show it upon request when they collect their document 9 Collection can be from anywhere that the ERO and applicant agree. This could include picking up the document from your offices or a polling station. If you are not also the RO, you would need to work with the relevant RO to decide on the process for arranging collection from a polling station. You should ensure that processes are in place to maintain a clear audit trail and to

ensure the security of Anonymous Elector's Documents while in transit or while awaiting collection from any collection point. 1. Regulation 17(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 17(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 17(3)(a) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 17(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 17(4)(a) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Reg 17(4)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Reg 17(4)(c) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Regulation 45G Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Reg 17(4)(d) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 9 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Delivery or collection of Anonymous Elector's Documents Producing Anonymous Elector's Documents Replacement of Anonymous Elector's Documents where the elector number is changed Replacement of Anonymous Elector's Documents where the elector number is changed The elector number of an anonymous elector may be updated when an electoral register is republished, such as following the conclusion of the annual canvass or because of boundary changes. When the elector number of an anonymous elector who has been issued with an Anonymous Elector's Document changes, you must notify them that: 1 their electoral number has changed the Anonymous Elector's Document previously issued is no longer valid the ERO will issue a new Anonymous Elector's Document if they consider it necessary to collect the replacement document in person instead of it being delivered by post, they need to notify the ERO of the reason why Where the applicant gave an indication that they require a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the Anonymous Elector's Document, the ERO should also arrange for a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the issued document to be delivered or made available for collection with the replacement document. Easy read and large print designs will be made available online and a hard copy stock of Braille will be supplied to each ERO via the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC. If you need to reorder more stock, you will need to contact them directly. 1. Regulation 28 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Replacement of Anonymous Elector's Documents where the elector number is changed Delivery or collection of Anonymous Elector's Documents Issuing replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Issuing replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents An anonymous elector can contact you for a replacement Anonymous Elector's Document if the document which has been previously issued is lost, stolen, destroyed or damaged after 5pm, 6 working days before polling day for a specific election or the last day of the signing period for a petition, but before 5pm on polling day or up to one hour before the close of a petition where a petition is due to close before 5pm. 1 In these circumstances, you must use the original photograph of the anonymous elector which you have retained in the issued document record to create the replacement Anonymous Elector's Document. 2 You must arrange for the replacement Anonymous Elector's Document to be made available for collection in person. 3 Where the applicant gave an indication in their original application that they require a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the Anonymous Elector's Document, the ERO must also arrange for a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the issued document to be made available for collection with the issued document. 4 Easy read and large print designs will be made available online and a hard copy stock of Braille will be supplied to each ERO via the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC. If you need to reorder more stock, you will need to contact them directly. You must notify the anonymous elector: 5 that the replacement Anonymous Elector's Document is

available to be collected where and when the replacement Anonymous Elector's Document may be collected from that the replacement Anonymous Elector's Document can only be collected by the anonymous elector in person that the anonymous elector must bring their certificate of anonymous registration and show it upon request 1. Regulation 30(2) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 30(3)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 30(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 30(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 30(4)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Issuing replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Replacement of Anonymous Elector's Documents where the elector number is changed Issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates Issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates Where a permanent Voter Authority Certificate has been issued (printed by the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC) between 5pm 6 working days before an election (or the last day of a petition) and 5pm on the day of the election or signing of the petition (or the start of the last hour that the petition is available to sign if earlier than 5pm), and you are satisfied that it may not be delivered to an applicant in time to be used on polling day or for a petition, a temporary Voter Authority Certificate may also be produced and issued locally, 1 up until the close of poll on the date of the relevant poll or the close of petition on the last day for signing the relevant petition. A decision on whether a temporary Voter Authority Certificate is needed may be due to the proximity of the forthcoming polling day or final day of petition, or it could be because you are aware of another issue, such as a postal strike. A temporary Voter Authority Certificate is valid only on the relevant date of a specific election or for the remaining period of a petition. It must be collected by the applicant; it cannot be sent via post. A temporary Voter Authority Certificate must include: 2 the elector's full name the date of issue the name of the local authority by which the ERO was appointed an appropriate identifier the date for which the temporary Voter Authority Certificate is valid the applicant's photograph 3 the ERO's signature The appropriate identifier is made up of 20 numbers or letters which you allocate to each temporary Voter Authority Certificate. 4 This will be generated by the EROP. The ERO's signature can be provided by a deputy and should be a wet ink signature. You may need to consider appointing additional deputy ERO's with the power to sign temporary Voter Authority Certificates, for example for use at additional locations where they may need to be produced. You could alternatively use an electronic signature or stamp but if doing so you should also consider what additional local security measure to identify the documents as authentic. The date for which the temporary Voter Authority Certificate is valid will be the date of the election or final day of a petition. In the case of a petition, the certificate is valid for use on any day up to and including the final day of signing. You must update the permanent Voter Authority Certificate issued document record entry to indicate where a temporary Voter Authority Certificate has been produced and this entry should include the appropriate identifier of that temporary document, and the date on which it is valid. 1. Regulation 18(2) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 19(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 19(2)(c) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 19(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 Last updated: 14 March 2023 Book traversal links for Issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates Issuing replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Collection of temporary Voter Authority Certificates Collection of temporary Voter Authority Certificates You must arrange for a temporary Voter Authority Certificate

to be made available for collection in person. 1 Where the applicant gives an indication that they require a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the temporary Voter Authority Certificate, the ERO must also arrange for a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the issued document to be made available for collection with the issued document. 2 Easy read and large print designs will be made available online and a hard copy stock of Braille will be supplied to each ERO via the centrally procured supplier appointed by DLUHC. If you need to reorder more stock, you will need to contact them. You must notify the applicant: 3 that the temporary Voter Authority Certificate is available to be collected where and when the temporary Voter Authority Certificate may be collected from that the temporary Voter Authority Certificate can only be collected by the applicant in person Collection can be from anywhere that the ERO and applicant agree. This could include picking up the document from a polling station. If you are not also the RO, you would need to work with the relevant RO to decide on the process for arranging collection from a polling station. Temporary Voter Authority Certificates may be issued up to the close of poll for the relevant election, or up to the close of petition for the relevant petition, but you may wish to communicate a cut-off time for collection to the applicant so that there is sufficient time for the applicant to vote. You should ensure that processes are in place to maintain a clear audit trail and to ensure the security of Voter Authority Certificates while in transit or while awaiting collection from any collection point other than the ERO's office. If you agree to allow collection of a Voter Authority Certificate, you should consider how you will be satisfied that you have established the applicant's identity, as you cannot simply rely on checking the photograph for integrity purposes. A proportionate approach should be adopted that seeks to use some proof of identity that can be easily verified by staff, but that is not too onerous for the elector. 1. Regulation 19(4)(a) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 19(5) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 19(4)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 8 February 2023 Book traversal links for Collection of temporary Voter Authority Certificates Issuing temporary Voter Authority Certificates Emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification Emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification An elector may apply for an emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification if, after the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document (i.e., 5pm, 6 working days before polling day for a specific poll or last day for a petition) but before 5pm on polling day or the last day for signing a petition, any of the following apply: 1 an elector or proxy's photographic ID, Voter Authority Certificate or an Anonymous Elector's Document is lost, stolen, destroyed or so damaged that it is no longer useable after the deadline for making an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document has passed an elector or proxy has sent their accepted form of photographic ID, that they would otherwise use to vote in person, to another person to prove their identity and they consider it unlikely that it will be returned in time for polling day an elector or proxy applied for a form of accepted photographic ID including a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document in the 3 months before the deadline and immediately before the deadline it has not arrived, and they have not been refused or withdrawn their application an anonymous elector has not been issued with an Anonymous Elector's Document an anonymous elector has been issued with an Anonymous Elector's Document and, after the deadline, has been allocated an elector number that is different to the one shown on their Anonymous Elector's Document an elector or proxy

has a temporary Voter Authority Certificate, valid for use on polling day but before they can vote in person, proceedings at their polling station are adjourned (in the case of a riot) More information on emergency proxies can be found in our guidance for EROs . 1. Regulation 56A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 13 March 2023 Book traversal links for Emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification

Collection of temporary Voter Authority Certificates Maintaining records of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents issued Maintaining records of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents issued You must keep a record in the EROP of all Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents issued. 1 To ensure that the record of Anonymous Elector's Documents issued remains secure, you must keep it separately from the record of Voter Authority Certificates issued. 2 You must make an entry in the relevant issued document record as soon as reasonably practicable after issuing either a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document. 3 Each issued document record for Voter Authority Certificates and for Anonymous Elector's Documents must contain the following: 4 the date of issue and the appropriate identifier of the document the full name of the person to whom the document was issued the address where the applicant is or will be registered if the applicant is a service voter, overseas elector or registered using a declaration of local connection, their present address any indication given that the applicant needs to collect their certificate, and the reason why any indication given as to whether the applicant required a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document to be issued copy of the person's photograph any email address or telephone number provided the name of the local authority by which you are appointed an indication of whether a temporary Voter Authority Certificate was also issued and, if so, the appropriate identifier of that temporary Voter Authority Certificate document the date of which the temporary Voter Authority Certificate is valid You must take proper precautions for the safe custody of these records. 5 More information can be found in disclosure of information . 1. Regulation 20(1) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 20(2)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 20(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 20(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 21(6) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 21 November 2022 Book traversal links for Maintaining records of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents issued Emergency proxy on grounds relating to voter identification Data retention

Data retention Data stored in the EROP will be encrypted and each ERO will have their own secure area. Before access is given to the EROP the user must read and sign an Access User Policy (AUP) and the ERO must agree on a Data Sharing Agreement. When you process applications for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document you are processing individuals' personal data for the performance of a public task. In line with data protection legislation, applicants will not have the right to erase their personal data provided in relation to an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document. For more information, see our guidance on data protection considerations . Retention of relevant documents and information on granted applications You must retain the following relevant documents and information relating to approved applications for a retention period of 28 working days beginning with the date the application was approved: 1 paper application forms or, in the case of an application made through the digital service, the information contained in the application any other information or documents

provided to you in connection with the application the copies of any of the original documents returned to the applicant Your document retention policy should include how you will store these documents for the 28 working day retention period. You will need to ensure that the information relating to Anonymous Elector's Documents is stored securely. More information on document retention can be found in our guidance on data protection considerations . Retention of relevant documents and information on refused applications You must retain the following relevant documents and information relating to applications refused for a retention period of 12 months beginning with the date the application was refused: 2 paper application forms or, in the case of an application made through the digital service, the information contained in the application any other information or documents provided to you in connection with the application the copies of any of original documents returned to the applicant

Removing information from the issued document record There are three statutory retention periods for the information held on the issued document records for Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents. First retention period The first retention period 3 differs for the record of issued Voter Authority Certificates and the record of issued Anonymous Elector's Documents: for a Voter Authority Certificate, the retention period begins with the date on which the entry is made in the record and ends 28 working days after the date it was issued for an Anonymous Elector's Document, the retention period begins with the date on which the entry is made in the record and ends 15 months after the date it was issued At the end of the first retention period, you must delete the following information relating to the applicants from the records: the address where the applicant is or will be registered if the applicant is a service voter, overseas elector or registered using a declaration of local connection, their present address any indication given that the applicant needs to collect their Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document, and the reason why any indication given as to whether the applicant required a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of the Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document to be issued any email address or telephone number provided

Second retention period The second retention period 4 applies only to the record of issued Voter Authority Certificates. It covers the period beginning with the date on which the entry is made in the record and ending on the second 1 July following the date the Voter Authority Certificate was issued. At the end of the second retention period, you must delete the following information relating to the applicants from the record of issued Voter Authority Certificates: an indication of whether a temporary Voter Authority Certificate was also issued The remaining data will be retained for up to 10 years to allow any formal investigations by police to take place (for example, if a suspected forged document is found).

Third retention period The third retention period 5 applies to the issued document records for both Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents. It is the period beginning with the date on which the entry is made and ending on the tenth 1 July following the date of issue for the Anonymous Elector's Document or Voter Authority Certificate to which the entry relates. At the end of the third retention period, you must delete the entire entry from the records. Your document retention policy should explain how you will store these documents for the 28 working day retention period. You will need to ensure that the information relating to Anonymous Elector's Documents will be stored securely. More information on document retention can be found in our guidance on data protection considerations .

1. Regulation 14(3)(a) The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Reg 14(3)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Reg

20(6)(a) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 20(6)(b) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 20(6)(c) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 Last updated: 17 November 2022 Book traversal links for Data retention Maintaining records of Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents issued Disclosure of information Disclosure of information You and any deputy or other person appointed to assist you must not supply copies of, disclose information from or make use of information contained in the records of issued Voter Authority Certificates and Anonymous Elector's Documents. In addition, you may not use information supplied in an application for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document, such as a National Insurance number, to complete a registration application. 1 The only exceptions, where you may disclose information, are: where you are required to do so by order of any court or tribunal 2 to a relevant officer for the purposes of a relevant election or petition (as the case may be) 3 upon request by any police force in Great Britain, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, or the Police Service of Northern Ireland (Reserve), any body of constables established under an Act, or the National Crime Agency. 4 Where a request is made by any police force in Great Britain, the Police Service of Northern Ireland or the Police Service of Northern Ireland (Reserve), any body of constables established under an Act, or the National Crime Agency for any issued document record entry relating to an Anonymous Elector's Document this cannot be supplied unless the request is made in writing by an officer of a rank senior to that of superintendent or in the case of the National Crime Agency, the Director General of that Agency. 5 If a record is supplied upon request to a constable, officer or employee of any police force in Great Britain, the Police Service of Northern Ireland or the Police Service of Northern Ireland (Reserve), any body of constables established under an Act, or the National Crime Agency any of the forces or organisations, they must not supply to any person a copy of the record, disclose any information contained in it, or make use of any such information otherwise than for the purposes of the prevention and detection of crime and the enforcement of the criminal law. 6 Each person with access to these records or who is supplied with a copy of the information from these records must take proper precautions for its safe custody. 7 Anyone who fails to comply with these requirements may unless they can show they took all reasonable steps to comply, be found guilty of an offence on summary conviction, the penalties for which are: 8 in England and Wales, a fine in Scotland a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum 1. Regulation 14 The Voter Identification Regulations 2022 (VID Regs 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Reg 21(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Reg 22 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Reg 23(1) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Reg 23(2) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Reg 23(3) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regs 21(6), 22(3) and 23(4) VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Reg 24 VID Regs 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 Last updated: 9 March 2023 Book traversal links for Disclosure of information Data retention Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Your public engagement strategy and registration plan Example tactics for reaching target audiences (DOC) FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) Factsheet on producing accessible communications (DOC) Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC) Guidance on assisted applications in England and Wales (word) Sharing good practice - Communications Sharing good practice - Effective management of registration processes Sharing good practice - Effective use of available data Sharing good practice - Reaching care home residents

Sharing good practice - Reaching students Template public engagement strategy (XLS)
Template registration plan (XLS) Template risk and issues register (XLS) Eligibility
to register to vote Citizenship and election type check list Guidance on assisted
applications in England and Wales (word) Guidance for care staff in England and Wales
(DOC) List of eligible countries for registration purposes (PDF) Sharing good
practice - Reaching students Special category electors Anonymous registration:
Supporting survivors of domestic abuse to register to vote - England (PDF) Template
certificate of anonymous registration (DOC) Inviting individuals to register to vote
Guidance on electoral registration form designs and letters Part 2 (DOC) Sharing good
practice - Encouraging a response What works – Household notification cards (DOC) How
can individuals register to vote? Guidance for care staff in England and Wales (DOC)
Guidance on assisted applications in England and Wales (word) Processing applications
and other amendments to the register throughout the year Table 1 - Combinations
resulting in positive matches Managing amendments, reviews, objections and deletions
throughout the year Sharing good practice - Effective use of available data Summary
sheet: deletions (DOC) Maintaining the register throughout the year Contract
development and management checklist (PDF) Household notification letter template and
FAQs - E Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) Rolling registration dates 2023 (PDF) Access
and supply of the electoral register Cover sheet for copies of full register for
inspection (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) Cover sheet
for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) Guidance notes
for staff supervising the inspection of the full register List of people entitled to
be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) Publication of data from polling
stations Absent Voting Cancellation letter (due to failure to provide a fresh
signature (DOC) Code of conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from
January 2023 FAQs for postal vote rejection notices (DOC) List of people entitled to
be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) Postal vote identifier request letter
(DOC) Proxy vote identifier request letter (DOC) Template postal vote rejection
notices (DOC) Voter authority certificates and anonymous elector's documents Code of
conduct for campaigners - reserved elections in GB from January 2023 Last updated: 6
September 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers
Disclosure of information

Non-party campaigners: Combined authority mayoral elections in England Introduction
This guidance is for non-party campaigners who are campaigning at combined authority mayoral elections in England. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, non-party campaigners must follow rules about how much they can spend on campaign activities in the run up to certain elections. This guidance explains how the rules apply. [Book traversal links for Non-party campaigners: Combined authority mayoral elections in England](#) What are non-party campaigners? What are non-party campaigners? Non-party campaigners are individuals or organisations that campaign in elections, but are not standing as political parties or candidates. Non-party campaigners have to follow certain rules in the run-up to elections. The types of non-party campaigns There are two types of non-party campaigns. These are: General campaigns Local campaigns Campaigns for or against: one or more political parties parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies other categories of candidate Campaigns for or against: one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area You can find more information about the different types of campaigns in our guidance Non-party campaigners: Where to start . The general campaign rules do not apply at elections in England in May 2022. You therefore do not have to register with us or report donations to us, and spending on activities directed only at your members will still count towards your spending total. Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for What are non-party campaigners?](#) Non-party campaigners: Combined authority mayoral elections in England Local campaigns at local elections Local campaigns at local elections If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a combined authority mayoral election in England, you are covered by the rules for local campaigns. The Electoral Commission does not regulate local campaigning. Complaints about possible breaches should be made to the police. Under the local campaign rules, there are limits on how much you can spend on campaigning for or against particular candidates in a constituency or local electoral area. These limits are different, depending on the size of the electorate in the relevant area. These spending limits cover spending on most campaign activities, including leaflets, meetings and digital campaigning. Last updated: 2 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Local campaigns at local elections](#) What are non-party campaigners? The regulated period The regulated period We call the time when the spending limits and rules apply the regulated period. The regulated period starts on the day after the person you are campaigning for or against officially becomes a candidate, and finishes on polling day. You can find more information about polling dates and when people become candidates on our guidance page for candidates and agents . Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for The regulated period](#) Local campaigns at local elections Spending limits Spending limits During a regulated period, non-party campaigners are subject to limits on their spending on campaign activity. If you are campaigning for or against a candidate at a combined authority mayoral election you have a limit of: £50 plus 0.5p for each elector who is registered to vote on the last day for publication of the notice of election in the combined authority area. For example If there are 500,000 registered electors in the combined authority area, your spending limit for campaigning for or against a candidate for Mayor would be: $\text{£}50 + (500,000 \times 0.5\text{p})$ $\text{£}50 + (\text{£}2,500) = \text{£}2550$ Your local elections office will be able to give you the number of electors in the combined authority. You can find the contact details for your local elections office on our [Elections in your area](#) page . You should keep a record of your spending, to make sure that you do not exceed the spending limit. Any spending over these limits must be authorised by the agent of the relevant candidate. The

authorised spending will count as candidate spending and towards the candidate's spending limit. Last updated: 2 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Spending limits](#) The regulated period Reporting Reporting If authorisation is given, the agent will need to include your spending in the candidate spending return. You will need to give the agent the necessary details for that spending to be included. If you spend more than the limit you must also complete a spending return and declaration and deliver these to the relevant Combined Authority Returning Officer (CARO) within 21 days of the result being declared. You can find contact details for the local elections office using our [postcode lookup](#) . Non party campaigner s75 spending return (PDF) Non party campaigner s75 declaration (PDF) Last updated: 2 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Reporting Spending limits](#) Imprints Imprints Whenever printed election material is published, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an 'imprint') to show who is responsible for the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning. Please see our [imprint factsheet for non-party campaigners](#) for guidance on using imprints on election material: Imprints for Non-Party s: UK Parliamentary elections, and elections in England, Wales and Northern Ireland Last updated: 8 December 2021 [Book traversal links for Imprints Reporting](#)

Guidance for Returning Officers - Assistance with voting for disabled voters

Assistance with voting for disabled voters Every person should be able to register and vote without facing barriers. This guidance provides information and advice on the actions you and your staff can take to help remove some of the barriers and challenges disabled voters face when voting at the polling station. It aims to support you in: identifying and providing equipment at polling stations which will enable or make it easier for disabled voters to vote independently and in secret ensuring those working to support the poll are aware of accessibility needs of disabled voters and the steps they should take to support them We have consulted with a wide range of organisations representing disabled people when drafting this guidance. The responses received informed us about what the voting experience at polling stations is like for disabled voters and the practices and equipment that could help to improve their experience. The guidance reflects the feedback received from those individuals and organisations as far as is possible within the scope of the guidance and the relevant legislation.

How to use this guidance

Throughout this guidance we use the word **must** to refer to a specific legal requirement and the word **should** for recommended practice. As Returning Officer (RO), you must have regard to the guidance on equipment to be provided in polling stations 1 as part of your wider duties to consider the needs of disabled voters at polling stations, make reasonable adjustments and provide equipment. We will keep this guidance under regular review, including in relation to the equipment that should be provided as a minimum and any additional equipment and support. We will ask for feedback from voters and electoral administrators on the equipment provided to support disabled voters as part of our reporting on elections and to support the identification and sharing of good practice.

[Book traversal links for Guidance for Returning Officers - Assistance with voting for disabled voters](#)

Ensuring that voting is accessible

1. Rule 29 (10) Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

Ensuring that voting is accessible

Every voter should have the right to vote independently and in secret. However, we know that disabled people including blind and partially sighted people face barriers to voting which include: their voting rights not being communicated in an accessible way not having the support they need when registering to vote or voting physical, psychological and information barriers when voting at a polling station the method of voting - making a cross in a specific location on a piece of paper - being a principally visual exercise

The Equality Act

The Equality Act defines having a disability as having a physical or mental condition which has a substantial and long-term impact on the ability to do normal day to day activities. A disability can be as a result of a medical condition: for example, someone with arthritis in their hands may have difficulty gripping things without the use of an auxiliary aid. But a disability does not have to be a diagnosed medical condition and can include physical or psychological impairments that can be visible and invisible. For example, if a person experiences depression, they may have difficulty concentrating - as well as physical impairments, such as extreme tiredness. This guidance will help you to consider barriers to voting, how you can ensure you and your staff are aware of them, and how you can identify and provide support and equipment at polling stations to enable, or make it easier for, disabled people to vote independently and secretly. The requirement in the Elections Act 2022 for Returning Officers to provide reasonable equipment to enable or make it easier for disabled voters to cast their vote independently and in secret replaces the previous limited and prescriptive requirements. This requirement also sits within the broader legal framework of rights and protections for disabled people and specific provisions

in electoral law to help to safeguard and improve the experience of disabled voters.

Equality Act 2010 Under the Equality Act 2010, ROs in Great Britain have had a duty to anticipate the needs of disabled voters and make reasonable adjustments to remove substantial disadvantage for those voters. This means ROs must take steps to understand and anticipate on an ongoing basis the needs of disabled voters – with different types of disability, support and access requirements within their area so that they can make informed decisions about how best to meet these needs by making reasonable adjustments, including providing appropriate equipment and support. This is known as the anticipatory duty. Section 149 of the Equality Act also requires public authorities and those exercising public functions to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity by encouraging participation in public life, which would include voting. The Equality and Human Rights Commission have published information on the anticipatory duty and criteria for making reasonable adjustments, and guidance on meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. While this information is not written specifically for Returning Officers, it offers some helpful guidance on: what the anticipatory duty and making reasonable adjustments means practical examples of making reasonable adjustments the steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions, to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty

Northern Ireland Act 1998 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires all government bodies, which includes the Chief Electoral Officer, to promote equality of opportunity between those with a disability and those without when carrying out their functions. This duty applies to policy development, policy implementation and the provision of services (including the running of elections).

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 In Northern Ireland, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires that public authorities, which includes the Chief Electoral Officer, make reasonable adjustments to remove any substantial disadvantage for disabled people.

Representation of the People Act 1983 There are specific provisions in the RPA 1983 which support the accessibility of elections for disabled voters.

Section 199B of the RPA 1983 You must, when you consider it appropriate to do so, ensure election notices are translated or provided in alternative formats. You may produce them:

- 1 in braille
- 2 in languages other than (or, in Wales, and Welsh)
- 3 using graphical representations
- 4 in audio format
- 5 using any other means of making information accessible

Schedule A1 to the RPA 1983 You must consider the accessibility of potential polling stations when considering designating or reviewing a polling place.

6 The relevant authority 7 must seek representations from those who have a particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.

8 Our polling district review guidance contains more information about this duty and includes an accessibility checklist that can be used to assess the suitability of each polling place and polling station.

Elections Act 2022 The Elections Act 2022 introduced provisions to assist blind, partially sighted and other disabled voters at polling stations. The Act: creates a requirement for you to provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons

9 to vote independently and in secret requires you to have regard to the Commission's guidance on the equipment to provide at polling stations.

10 This guidance can be found in Providing equipment at the polling station that enables or makes voting easier for disabled voters extends the rules about who can act as a companion to include anyone who is over the age of 18

11 The wording of the provisions recognises the variations in what people need to be able to vote, so

that they may access the most appropriate support for each of them, ensuring the widest possible assistance, support, innovation and accessibility. The terms used reflect that the duty is for ROs to both enable voting for those who find it impossible, and make it easier for those who find it possible but difficult. These provisions apply to the following polls: UK Parliamentary elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales Local elections in England and Northern Ireland Mayoral elections in England GLA elections Assembly elections in Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Council Tax Referendums The requirements under the Elections Act do not apply to elections to the Scottish Parliament or the Senedd, or to local elections in Scotland and Wales. However, the duties under the Equality Act 2010 which relate to ensuring that voting is accessible to disabled voters do apply to those elections.

1. Section 199B(2)(a) Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. S.199B(2)(b) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2
3. S. 199B(2)(c) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3
4. S.199B(3) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4
5. S.199B(2)(d) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5
6. S.18B(4(c)) Sch A1, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 6
7. S.18E RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 7
8. S.4(1) Sch A1 RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 8
9. Relevant persons are defined in the legislation as those who find it difficult or impossible to vote due to blindness, partial sight or another disability ■ Back to content at footnote 9
10. Rule 29(3A)(b) Sch1, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 10
11. Rule 39(2)(b)(i), Sch 1, RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 11

Last updated: 29 March 2023

Book traversal links for Ensuring that voting is accessible

Guidance for Returning Officers - Assistance with voting for disabled voters

Understanding the barriers to voting for disabled people

Understanding the barriers to voting for disabled people

By identifying and understanding the physical, psychological and information barriers disabled people may face when voting, you will be better able to make appropriate arrangements to help support them. Some of the barriers and challenges disabled voters face include:

- not having accessible information about the voting process
- written instructions not being available in plain or easy read format
- lack of information about a companions assisting with voting
- lack of information about the experience of voting at a polling station
- causing anxiety about things such as: travelling to the polling station, especially if it is for the first time
- being able to find and access the polling station
- knowing what will happen once there
- knowing what the process for voting is
- the possibility of lots of people being there at the same time
- the possibility that there will be lots of noise
- feeling rushed to make decisions quickly
- queueing the building/polling station not being accessible for example, if there are steps or the layout inside is unsuitable for wheelchairs
- to access instructions not being provided in a format that is accessible to assist people with: visual impairments or blindness
- hearing impairment or hearing loss
- dyslexia
- learning disabilities
- cognitive impairments
- polling station staff not having the skills, training or experience to communicate effectively
- support or auxiliary aids not being easily accessible or available to help voters to vote independently and secretly
- seating or other arrangements not being available to support those unable to stand in a queue
- polling station staff not having the skills, training or experience to support voters with neurodivergence and hidden disabilities to vote independently and secretly.

Additional barriers for blind and partially sighted people

The method of voting – by making a cross in a specific location on a piece of paper – is principally a visual exercise. For this reason, blind and partially sighted people face additional barriers that other people without sight loss do not

face: absence of additional equipment or sufficient light can make it difficult or impossible for blind or partially sighted people to: read the names on the ballot paper make a mark in a specific location on the ballot paper verify their vote independently after making their mark on the ballot paper polling station staff being unaware that blind and partially sighted people may experience barriers when navigating the polling station environment polling station staff not having the skills, training or experience to support voters with sight loss to vote independently and secretly. For example, being unfamiliar with accessible voting equipment polling stations not having the equipment or polling station staff being unaware of the equipment that can support blind and partially sighted people – for example, the handheld copy of the large print sample version of the ballot paper and the correct tactile voting device polling station staff not having sufficient awareness about sight-loss and not knowing how to appropriately interact with someone with sight loss

Last updated: 29 March 2023

Book traversal links for Understanding the barriers to voting for disabled people

Ensuring that voting is accessible

Providing equipment at the polling station that enables or makes voting easier for disabled voters

Providing equipment at the polling station that enables or makes voting easier for disabled voters

This section outlines the information for voters that must be provided at the polling station as well as a list of equipment that we advise should be provided at polling stations to help reduce or remove known barriers and ensure that voting is as accessible as possible for disabled voters. It also highlights further additional equipment that it may be appropriate to provide if you identify or are made aware of specific needs of disabled voters. To help voters understand the voting process and how to mark their ballot paper you must provide:

- a notice inside and outside the polling station providing instructions on how to vote at the election
- 1 a notice in each polling booth providing information on how to mark the ballot paper at the election
- 2 at least one large sample copy of the ballot paper must be displayed inside the polling station,
- 3 ideally in a well-lit location where voters can easily see it before being issued with their ballot paper. Large print sample ballot papers displayed clearly in the station will assist voters who are partially sighted and also voters who would like some time to look at the ballot paper before entering the booth an enlarged hand-held copy of the ballot paper. This can be given to voters who are partially sighted or on request to any other voter who would find it useful to take into the polling booth for reference when marking their ballot paper. You must consider whether it is appropriate to make notices more accessible to a wider range of voters
- 4 by providing them in alternative languages and formats, e.g. in Braille, languages other than or Welsh, in pictorial formats
- 5 or in audible form.
- 6 The Government Communication Service provide guidance on their website about making communications accessible. As well as meeting the minimum statutory requirements set out above, you should also make any additional sample copies and enlarged copies of the ballot paper resources easily available and visible in the polling station – keeping them in full view and clearly marked will help to make sure that voters can access them easily. Equipment to support voters to participate

You have a duty to provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently and in secret.

- 7 We have a duty to give guidance in relation to your duty to provide this equipment.
- 8 You must have regard to this guidance when discharging your duty to provide appropriate equipment but it is ultimately for you as RO to decide the arrangements and equipment that are reasonable to enable or make it easier for disabled voters across your area to cast

their vote independently and in secret. This guidance aims to support you by highlighting the types of equipment that may help to remove barriers to voting for disabled voters. Factors unique to your local area - relating to the size and scale of polling stations, or specific requirements of your local electorate, may shape the approach you decide to take. Decisions about appropriate equipment should be carefully considered, transparent and regularly reviewed. More information about this can be found in Making decisions about providing additional information and support for voters . Additional funding will be provided to you by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to support the delivery of accessible elections. The UK Government has provided details and guidance on the funding available, including for national polls. Through our work with civil society organisations and charities we have identified a range of equipment that can help to overcome the known barriers faced by disabled people. Many of these items are readily available at limited cost and can have a real and positive impact on the experience of voters in the polling station. The following equipment should, as a minimum, be provided in all polling stations to support disabled voters: chairs/seating – this provides a place to rest for voters who cannot stand for long periods and a seat for voters who would like to take some time to think before entering the polling booth magnifiers – these can provide support for voters who are visually impaired to vote independently by increasing the size of the text on a document. The strength of magnifier needed will vary depending on the amount of vision a voter has. You may need to provide more than one strength of magnifier depending on the needs of the voters at a particular polling station tactile voting device – tactile voting devices provide support for voters who are visually impaired to mark their vote on the ballot paper in the correct place, provided it is placed on the ballot paper correctly. They have been found to provide assistance in completing the ballot paper once visually impaired voters know the position on the ballot paper of the candidate for whom they wish to vote. They do not allow blind voters to vote independently unless they also have accessible information about the order of the candidates on the ballot paper polling booth at wheelchair level – helps to ensure that voters who use a wheelchair are able access a lower writing surface to ensure they can cast their vote in secret in a booth that is accessible badges identifying polling station staff – these help voters more easily identify who is a member of staff in the polling station and can therefore be approached for assistance. The type of badge and text used can be tailored to suit individual local circumstances. For example, you could provide polling station staff with a badge stating their first name and making clear their role and that they are happy to help pencil grip – these can help voters with dexterity impairments to more easily hold and use a pencil independently ramps (for buildings with steps) – these support access to a polling station for voters who use a wheelchair or have difficulty using steps temporary alerters or temporary doorbells for any doors that are required to remain shut during the day (for example, fire doors) – these provide a way for voters to let polling station staff know that they need assistance to open the door so they can access the polling station. These do not need to be permanently fixed or installed in a building used as a polling station but can be temporarily placed at an accessible level on a table or chair next to any doors that must remain closed appropriate lighting – some polling station venues have good lighting but others may need additional lighting at the desk; to ensure that voters can clearly see the faces of staff, and in the polling booths; to support voters with visual impairments to be able to read and complete the ballot paper parking spaces reserved for disabled voters (where parking is available at the venue)

– this ensures that disabled voters can park as close as possible to the polling station. You are not limited to providing only the equipment shown in the list above, and you should not reduce or remove any equipment that you have previously provided to support disabled voters at polling stations in your area. There is other equipment that it might also be appropriate to provide in polling stations where you have been able to identify that it would enable or make it easier for blind, partially sighted or disabled voters to vote independently and in secret. Examples of other equipment you could provide include the following:

- Hearing induction loop – these provide support to voters who wear hearing aids to communicate in the polling station. Some buildings have an induction loop installed as standard, in which case you should make use of it, and where this is not one available then a portable hearing loop could be used.
- Audio devices – audio devices are pieces of equipment that reproduce, record or process sound. An audio device can be used together with the tactile voting device enabling blind and partially sighted voters to listen to candidate lists and then mark their ballot paper independently.
- Information available in easy read format - easy read refers to the presentation of text in an accessible, easy to understand format. It is often useful for people with learning disabilities and may also be beneficial for people with other conditions affecting how they process information.
- Information available in large print formats – Large print is defined as being 16pt Arial or bigger and conform with clear print guidelines concerning layout, use of fonts and images. It is often useful for voters who have a visual impairment and may also be beneficial to elderly voters, dyslexic voters and voters who have dementia.

The equipment and resources you provide to support disabled voters should be kept in full view and clearly marked so that they can be identified and accessed easily.

1. Rule 29(4) Sch 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983); Rule 26(4) Sch.5 Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 – prescribed notice ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Rule 29(5), Sch 1 RPA 1983; Rule 26(4) Sch.5 Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 – prescribed notice ■ Back to content at footnote 2
3. Rule 29(3A)(a), Sch 1 RPA 1983; Rule 26(3A(a)) Sch.5 Electoral Law Act (NI) 1962 ■ Back to content at footnote 3
4. S 199B(2) of the RPA 1983; s.199B RPA 1983 applies to NI in accordance with s.2 Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Commencement No.7) Order 2008 ■ Back to content at footnote 4
5. S 199B (2) of the RPA 1983; s.199B RPA 1983 applies to NI in accordance with s.2 Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Commencement No.7) Order 2008 ■ Back to content at footnote 5
6. S 199B (3) of the RPA 1983; s.199B RPA 1983 applies to NI in accordance with s.2 Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Commencement No.7) Order 2008 ■ Back to content at footnote 6
7. Rule 29(3A)(b) Sch.1 RPA 1983 (as amended by s.9 Elections Act 2022) ■ Back to content at footnote 7
8. Section 9 (8), Elections Act 2022 ■ Back to content at footnote 8

Last updated: 29 March 2023

Book traversal links for Providing equipment at the polling station that enables or makes voting easier for disabled voters

Understanding the barriers to voting for disabled people

Making decisions about providing additional support and equipment for voters

Making decisions about providing additional support and equipment for voters

As RO, you can proactively use local data that may be available to inform your decisions about the additional support and equipment you provide at polling stations to enable or make it easier for blind, partially sighted or disabled voters to vote independently and in secret. More information on accessing and using data held by your local authority about disabled residents can be found in our guidance on Communicating information directly to disabled voters . You may receive requests for additional support or equipment to be provided, beyond those that you already have or are planning to put in place. For example, you may be informed by a

voter with a particular type of impairment that they remain at a substantial disadvantage (i.e. a disadvantage that is more than minor or trivial) despite your adjustments, as they have additional needs. In such instances, as part of your duty under the Equality Act 2010 you must consider the request and decide if it is reasonable to provide additional support and/or equipment to remove the substantial disadvantage the voter has identified and brought to your attention. There is no set process in law for how you will determine what equipment is reasonable. The Equality and Human Rights Commission publish advice about making reasonable adjustments in the workplace . While not written specifically for Returning Officers, it may be useful in helping you determine whether it is reasonable to make an adjustment. Each request must be considered on its merits and with a view to continuing to support the right of every voter to be able to cast their vote. When making your decision about whether it is reasonable to make an adjustment, there are a range of factors you should take into account, including: whether providing the additional support or equipment that has been requested will enable or make voting easier for disabled voters? how easy or practical is it to provide the additional support or supply the equipment requested? For example: is the equipment readily available for purchase? are the cost implications reasonable? are there any more cost-effective or readily available alternatives? is the equipment single-use or can it be used for future polls? is the requested equipment portable and can it be transferred to another polling station if required (for example, due to a last-minute polling station change)? are there any training implications to consider in order for staff to provide the required support or to support the use of the equipment? have you engaged with individuals at your local authority with expertise in equality, diversity and inclusion for advice? You are not required to grant every request for additional support or equipment, but you must be able to demonstrate that you have met your anticipatory duty under the Equality Act 2010 and given every request proper consideration using fair and consistent criteria. You should keep sufficient information about requests for future planning purposes and to enable you to review the effectiveness of your provision for disabled voters. Retention of information when contacted by a disabled voter for additional support or equipment Where you are contacted by a disabled voter asking for additional support or equipment, you may receive sensitive special category data about that individual and their specific needs. You will be considered the data controller for this sensitive data and it is your responsibility to ensure that you manage the processing of that data in line with data protection requirements including ensuring that the individual is aware of how their data will be processed. You should take advice from your Data Protection Officer about what to do with the data once processed and whether you need to update any relevant privacy notices. Our data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers contains more information on managing special category data. Last updated: 29 March 2023

[Book traversal links for Making decisions about providing additional support and equipment for voters](#)

[Providing equipment at the polling station that enables or makes voting easier for disabled voters](#)

[Ensuring those working to support the poll are aware of accessibility needs](#)

[Ensuring those working to support the poll are aware of accessibility needs](#)

To help ensure that all voters are provided with equal access to voting and receive appropriate support, it is important that all of those who work to deliver the election or provide information to voters are aware of the needs of disabled people. You should provide accessibility awareness training for all staff who interact with voters, including staff who support electoral services, to help improve their understanding of the needs of disabled voters and the importance of

clear communication. Working with external partners, we have developed resources that could help your staff to understand barriers to voting and experiences of disabled voters at the polling station including: RNIB video which shares the experiences of voting in the polling station for those with sight loss Mencap videos which share the experiences of Charlotte and Harry of voting in a polling station with a learning disability You can take advice from your Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) officer or HR department on other accessibility awareness training that you could access. Staff should also be made aware of the resources we have available on our website and YouTube channel to assist disabled people with particular impairments to help with understanding about voting and what to expect at the polling station. For more information and updates about our resources we create you can subscribe to Roll Call our voter registration newsletter and your guide to supporting voter registration and participation. In addition you could think about sourcing or developing evergreen resources that are not election specific and so can be used year round over multiple years in partnership with civil society organisations that advocate for and support their stakeholders on issues surrounding the accessibility of voting. Training for polling station staff to support accessibility It is also vital that your training for polling station staff addresses the importance of being aware of the accessibility needs of voters at the polling station and what steps they should take to support them. The actions and behaviours of polling station staff are key to making voters' experience in the polling station a positive one. Simple things like offering assistance and listening to voters' questions can make a real difference. In addition to general awareness raising of accessibility needs, it is important that your training for polling station staff covers: the barriers faced by disabled voters at the polling station and how polling station staff can help reduce them awareness that there are no legal barriers to prevent disabled people from voting, including voters with any learning disability or cognitive impairment awareness that not all disabilities are visible or obvious, and that polling station staff should not make assumptions about what equipment voters might need the importance of considering the needs of the person, not a specific disability awareness that some voters may have more than one impairment – for example, a visual impairment and dementia the importance of clear communication about the voting process the importance of clearly communicating that assistance is available if required awareness of the equipment provided at the polling station to enable or make easier voting in the polling station for disabled voters, and how to use it including in particular equipment that polling station staff may be less familiar with, such as hearing loops awareness that a companion assisting a voter can be anyone over the age of 18 and if they have completed the declaration, can accompany a voter into the booth to assist them awareness that disabled voters may have an assistance animal with them and that assistance animals should not be prevented from entering the polling station awareness that voters with sight loss may use apps on their mobile phones or carry pocket-sized assistive equipment, such as video magnifiers, to help them read documents in the polling booth or in conjunction with a tactile voting device awareness that the use of text to speech apps are acceptable for use in polling stations awareness of alternative methods of communication that voters may use such as Makaton and British Sign Language (BSL) In our core guidance for Returning Officers for each type of election , we link to resources for training polling station staff which contain information about the role polling station staff have in ensuring that voting is accessible and the equipment that is available to support disabled voters on accessibility which you should highlight when briefing

polling station staff. Last updated: 29 March 2023 Book traversal links for Ensuring those working to support the poll are aware of accessibility needs Making decisions about providing additional support and equipment for voters Raising awareness about the voting process and support available Raising awareness about the voting process and support available This section of the guidance covers the actions you can take to raise awareness of the voting process and the support that is available for voters. It is important that you have a clear communications strategy to help tackle the barriers some voters face, as well as to ensure voters are aware of the support available to enable or make it easier for them to vote independently and in secret. This is equally important for by-elections or unscheduled polls, which may take place at short notice, as for scheduled elections. You should update your public awareness strategy by identifying how and when you will: identify and communicate with relevant partners and disability organisations to explore opportunities to work together to raise awareness promote and communicate information to disabled voters about the process of voting at a polling station and the support and equipment available ask for feedback on the support and equipment provided – for example, by proactively inviting comment via your website or social media To support you in planning and developing your public awareness activity we will provide a suite of template social media assets and web copy templates which will be available on our website. We will update this guidance with a link to the new resources once they are available. Last updated: 29 March 2023 Book traversal links for Raising awareness about the voting process and support available Ensuring those working to support the poll are aware of accessibility needs Communicating information directly to disabled voters Communicating information directly to disabled voters Communicating directly with disabled residents can be a useful way to find out more about the types of provision disabled voters need as part of your anticipatory duty under the Equality Act. Engaging with electors is an opportunity to provide information about the type of support that could be given to assist them to participate in elections and to ask about their preferred format for accessible communications, which is particularly beneficial for blind or partially sighted people who are digitally excluded. You should explore how you can work with others across your local authority who may be able to assist you with identifying disabled electors in your area, to enable you to communicate with them directly. Sight loss registers list people in the local area who have a certification of vision impairment. In England, under The Care Act 2014, sight loss registers can be used by the local authority to ensure that information about services is made accessible to that person for example to ask if support could be given to assist them to participate in electoral events. 1 The access you have to this information may vary depending on whether you have been appointed by a district or unitary authority. In Wales and Scotland you can contact the relevant adult social care departments and in Northern Ireland, the relevant Health and Social Care Trusts for advice on how you can access information from the sight loss registers held by them. Proactively using local data by seeking information from the sight loss register or by using a resource like the sight loss data tool provided by the RNIB can help you find out how many electors in your area are affected by sight loss. Knowing more about the number of electors affected can help you: anticipate the needs of blind and partially sighted people in your area for example, ensuring poll cards are sent in individuals' preferred formats enabling them to access the information on them independently comply with your duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments to assist individuals on the register to participate in elections 1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory->

guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 29 March 2023 Book traversal links for Communicating information directly to disabled voters Raising awareness about the voting process and support available Communicating the voting process and support available Communicating the voting process and support available There are a range of ways that you can provide and promote information about the voting process and support available to voters. The communications work you carry out can help to overcome some of the known barriers for disabled voters and can make a real difference to helping them participate with confidence. We will provide a suite of resources which can support you to promote information about the voting process and support available, including resources which will signpost to guidance on accessible communications. We will be working directly with disability organisations nationally to inform the resources we provide, and will look to build on these resources year-on-year as part of our ongoing evaluation and improvement work. We will update this guidance with links once the resources are available. Providing information on the location of polling stations Feedback from organisations representing disabled people is that some voters find it difficult to access information on polling station locations. We provide, in partnership with Democracy Club, a postcode look-up tool on our website . To increase the visibility of this information, you should promote the postcode search tool as widely as possible. You could embed the tool on your own website, using the widget we've made available, or add a link to our website. You could also share the link with existing internal networks or external organisations you are working with and encourage them to share it with their stakeholders. Additionally, you could include the link on the notice of situation of polling stations. Should you need any further information or support in using the search tool, please visit Democracy Club's website . Providing advance information on voting at the polling station To help overcome concerns and anxiety about what voting at the polling station will be like, in addition to any information you display on public notice boards, you could provide a dedicated page on your website that contains accessible content to help voters who want to know more about voting at the polling station. Your accessible web content could include: information about the assistance and support available at the polling station including: awareness that a companion assisting a voter can be anyone over the age of 18 and if they have completed the declaration, can accompany a voter into the booth to assist them that a Presiding Officer is able to help a voter the type of equipment that will be available and how to make a request for additional equipment to be provided to meet a particular need information about what to expect when voting at the polling station including: links to videos about voting in BSL and Makaton easy guides to voting videos by Mencap when the station is likely to be busy and when it is likely to be quiet availability of quiet space We will be developing a resource presenting information about voting written in an accessible way. You can use this resource to develop your own accessible web content to engage and raise awareness with voters. We will also host a range of voter facing resources and information about the voting process on our website which you can point electors to via a link to on your web pages. We will update this guidance with links to the resources once they are available. Including additional information on poll cards and making the information accessible Although the content that must be included on poll cards is prescribed in legislation, you may also add further information that you think is appropriate. 1 The only exception to this is for Northern Ireland local elections where the poll card is prescribed exactly and makes no allowance for any other information to be included. 2 The Elections Act 2022 introduces other changes to the

electoral process that need to be communicated to voters in advance of the poll. This will mean that for relevant elections the poll card may need to become a letter to enable the relevant information to be included. Using a different format of the poll card would also provide an opportunity for you to include additional information to voters about their polling station and the accessibility of the voting process. You could include a link to an accessible web page or provide a QR code on the poll card letter that takes the voter directly to a web page that provides information about the voting process or the equipment that will be available. As some voters find the information provided on the poll card inaccessible, you should also think about how you can make the information contained on the poll card more accessible by additionally publishing it in an alternative way. For example you could: put the poll card information on your website in an accessible format, compatible with screen readers make easy-read or large print versions available on request, and publicise this via the poll card itself and on your website send poll card and other information directly to an elector in their preferred format as well as by post, for example if you know that they need information to be communicated electronically in an accessible format More information about proactively using local data to contact individuals about their preferred formats for poll cards can be found in

Communicating information directly to disabled voters Sending these additional communications could also provide an opportunity to raise awareness about what will happen on polling day, what to expect in the polling station and the equipment that will be available. Providing accessible sample ballot papers Some voters may find it useful to look at the ballot paper in advance of going to the polling station to help them to prepare for the process of voting. You could provide sample ballot papers on your website to support this, and ensure that any you do provide are accessible to electors who use screen readers. Providing information to political parties, candidates and agents about accessible voting at polling stations You should include information in the briefings you provide for candidates and agents about the support and equipment available at polling stations as well as how to make a request. Candidates and agents may know individual voters who require support or specific equipment and can help ensure that they are aware of the support that is available for them and how they can access it.

1. Rule 28(3)(e) Sch.1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Rule 25(3) Sch.5 Electoral Law Act (NI) 1962 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 29 March 2023

Book traversal links for Communicating the voting process and support available

Communicating information directly to disabled voters Working with local networks and civil society organisations in your area Working with local networks and civil society organisations in your area You may have existing relationships with networks of disability groups and civil society organisations. If you do not have these relationships, you may need to work with others who do, for example: teams across your local authority who may have contact with disabled people social care providers, including the likes of care homes and day centres equalities officers communications teams housing officers partnership/Community Engagement officers County Voluntary Councils/People First Groups (Wales) Establishing relationships with disability groups and civil society organisations that are active in your local area can be beneficial as they can advise you on specific steps you can take to improve the accessibility of voting at polling stations in certain locations. They can also provide advice on the types and methods of communication you should use to promote the equipment and support available at polling stations as well as information on elections more generally. Some teams within your local authority or other local

organisations may also be able to provide advice to you about how to determine whether any particular equipment should be provided in specific polling stations to enable or make it easier for disabled voters to vote. They may also have access to specialist equipment which may benefit disabled voters locally with particular impairments and needs which you could borrow or hire. Local organisations and partners may also be able to advise you on the types of resource or support you could provide to reduce barriers to voting for disabled voters. Last updated: 29 March 2023

[Book traversal links for Working with local networks and civil society organisations in your area](#)

[Communicating the voting process and support available](#)

[Reviewing the election](#)

After each election you should evaluate the equipment and support provided in polling stations and how you communicated with voters about their needs and what they could expect. To help with your evaluation activities, we have provided a template survey for use with polling station voters who required additional assistance when voting. The survey can be used to gather their feedback on their experience of voting and the support that was made available. [survey \(DOCX\)](#)

[survey - easy read \(DOCX\)](#)

You should invite feedback from voters and accessibility groups on their experience of voting in polling stations, about what worked well and what didn't, to help inform what you do to support disabled voters at future polls. Mechanisms you could use to gather feedback include: providing an easy read survey at the polling station about the voting experience inviting voters and partnership organisations to attend focus groups to discuss their experiences of voting in the polling station inviting polling station staff to discuss their experience working in a polling station where specific equipment was provided, how they dealt with any difficult situations on the day, and their feedback on the training they received reviewing any feedback provided in reports returned by Presiding Officers and polling station inspectors monitoring the use of the equipment you provide in polling stations by asking polling station staff to keep a record in the polling station log book or via post poll surveys or feedback To ensure you get a wide range of external feedback you should consider providing a range of options for gathering views. A good way of finding out the most appropriate approach to reaching specific groups of voters would be to ask the partnership organisations you work with what would work best for the voters they support. The Elections Act requires the Commission to report on the implementation of the new accessibility provisions. In order to meet that requirement, we will ask you for data on the provision of equipment and support in polling stations which should be information you already have available to support your own planning processes. We will use our engagement and reporting work to highlight examples of good practice that emerge and reflect these in future versions of this guidance to support your work in ensuring voting is accessible. Last updated: 5 April 2023

[Book traversal links for Reviewing the election](#)

[Working with local networks and civil society organisations in your area](#)

Delivering the annual canvass - Scotland Delivering the annual canvass - Scotland The following guidance has been produced to support Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) in planning for and delivering the annual canvass. It has been developed in close consultation with colleagues across the electoral community including the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Association of s (AEA), the Scottish Assessors Association (SAA), the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG) and the Welsh Electoral Practitioners Working Group (WEPWG). The guidance is directed towards the ERO and the duties they carry out. As these duties may, in practice, be carried out by deputies and/or appointed staff, we use the term 'you' throughout this guidance to mean the ERO and whoever is carrying out the ERO's functions on their behalf. Throughout this guidance we use 'must' to refer to a specific legal requirement and 'may / should' for recommended practice. The guidance has been produced based on, and should be read in accordance with, the requirements set out in section 9D of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and in the Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001. The endnotes in this guidance refer to the relevant provisions that have been amended by The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Amendment) Regulations 2019, The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) Amendment (Scotland) Order 2020 and The Representation of the People (Annual Canvass) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. To help you use this guidance we have produced a Q&A document that should answer any initial queries you may have. Questions and answers document for the new style ERO guidance Updates to our guidance Change log Date of update Description of change February 2023 Updates to the requirement to Notify anonymous electors with Anonymous Elector's Documents about a replacement document Book traversal links for Delivering the annual canvass - Scotland Developing plans for the annual canvass Developing plans for the annual canvass Developing plans for the annual canvass This section contains guidance on how to develop your plans for the annual canvass. It covers project planning and risk management as well as some considerations for planning the delivery of specific processes. What is the annual canvass? The annual canvass requires you to contact all residential addresses in your area to help you establish if the information you currently hold on the electoral register is complete and accurate. There is a legal framework that sets out the statutory requirements of the annual canvass. Within this framework you, as Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), will need to make a number of decisions, helping you to determine the most appropriate approach to the canvass within your area each year. Last updated: 25 March 2021 Book traversal links for Developing plans for the annual canvass Delivering the annual canvass - Scotland Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Part of your statutory duties as ERO includes the delivery of an annual canvass. As part of this, you must: disclose data to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of a national data matching exercise known as the national data match step 1 (and, in addition, you also have the discretion to carry out local data matching) take into account the results of national data matching when making a decision on the allocation of properties to canvass routes carry out the required statutory steps for properties allocated to each canvass route provide training, where necessary, to staff who will deliver the canvass on your behalf publish the revised version of the register by 1 December (except for where an election is held between 1 July and 1 December, in which case the publication of the register can be delayed until up to 1 February the following year) 2 provide statistical information about your revised

register to the Secretary of State as required, for example the number of parliamentary and local electors you have registered by constituency. 3 As ERO, you are also a data controller and have a statutory responsibility under data protection legislation to ensure that personal data is kept securely. Any breach could constitute an offence and could result in a loss of confidence in the electoral registration process. 1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 13(1)(a) of RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 44, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Developing plans for the annual canvass What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Project plans and risk registers are vital in helping to support the effective delivery of the annual canvass. We have developed a template registration plan that you might find helpful. Template registration plan (XLS) To inform these, you will need to make some key decisions which will help you map out how you will deliver the whole canvass process. These should include: when your canvass will begin when and how you will identify any properties you want to canvass via Route 3 – the defined property route, including how you will identify the responsible person for those properties and when you will contact them when you plan to undertake the national data match step whether to carry out local data matching and, if so, when you will do so a review of the size of your canvass areas to ensure they are suitable to support your plan for canvass delivery and follow up how and when you will allocate properties to canvass routes what type of communication methods you will use for each route what response mechanisms you will make available for the canvass and how you will ensure they are set-up in advance the timescales for sending your canvass communications for all routes how you will follow up with any non-responders (where required) when, and on what basis, canvassers will be recruited and paid what contingency arrangements you will need should an election take place during your canvass, including how you will redeploy resources to target registration in those areas where the election is taking place when and how you will publish your revised register Once you have established your high level plan you can start to plan the specific detail of the canvass process. You will need to identify the activities you need to carry out to deliver your high level plan, and capture these and the timescales for their delivery. Some of the key activities you will need to ensure are covered in your plan are outlined on the following pages. Last updated: 17 December 2020 Book traversal links for What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Delivering the annual canvass: what are my duties as ERO? Preparing for data matching Preparing for data matching Preparing for data matching preparing your register for data matching, ensuring that it is as up to date as possible to help increase the number of successful matches returned as part of your results booking the date for your national data match and confirming when it will take place and when the results will be received establishing which individuals or groups of data will be excluded from the data match (for example, special category electors) preparing for any local data matching, including identifying what data sets you will use and when you will carry out the matching for each of these sets establishing when and how you will analyse all data matching results and determine which canvass route households will be allocated to ensuring flexibility in your plans, when and how you will revise them if the outcomes of data matching are not as you expected preparing an audit trail of any actions and decisions taken which relate to changing a route

allocation from one route to another based on data matching results Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for Preparing for data matching What should be included in my project plan for the annual canvass? Staffing and resources Staffing and resources Staffing and resources checking your resource assumptions and ensuring that sufficient funding will be available ensuring the availability of support staff from across the organisation, such as IT and frontline/call centre staff reviewing your staffing structure to identify if current staffing levels remain sufficient developing a staff training schedule, to include data protection considerations, for the different types of staff involved in the canvass ensuring any storage requirements are sufficient, both for printed forms and scanned forms, and that you are not retaining personal data for longer than is necessary establishing how and when you will promote and communicate key canvass messages briefing your media and communications teams about the key messages and dates and establishing how you will use your local authority website, press releases and social media platforms to encourage responses Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Staffing and resources Preparing for data matching IT and suppliers IT and suppliers IT and suppliers reviewing any supplier arrangements that are in place and considering what, if anything, may need to be revised; and, if necessary, liaising with your procurement team to ensure that any procurement complies with legislation engaging with your chosen printer to agree written contracts and establish timescales deciding on and making arrangements for any automated response mechanisms you will offer (for example, telephone and online response channels) scheduling the proofing of materials and detailing when any data is due to be sent or received reviewing your IT arrangements, including checking your scanners and other hardware is in good working order Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for IT and suppliers Staffing and resources Data protection considerations Data protection considerations engaging with your Data Protection Officer regarding your plans for delivery of the canvass reviewing your document retention policy and any privacy notices in line with data protection legislation developing any necessary data sharing agreements ensuring written contracts are in place with contractors or suppliers Last updated: 23 May 2023 Book traversal links for Data protection considerations IT and suppliers What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Your project plan should also detail how you will monitor the effectiveness of the decisions you make and the activities you undertake to enable you to evaluate the impact of your actions. This should help you to refine your approach for the current canvass, wherever possible, and should also inform your plans for future canvasses. The performance standards for EROs , and the tools and templates available to support them, will assist you in understanding the impact of your activities, help identify where improvements can be made and support you to report on your own performance locally. You should use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities to identify what works and what doesn't and where improvements can be made. The framework is designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and what is not working so well. The standards, and the supporting tools and templates, should also help you to demonstrate locally – whether within your local authority, to elected members, or more broadly – how the activities you are carrying out contribute to the provision of an efficient and effective electoral registration service and, ultimately, will help to ensure that everyone who is eligible and wants to vote is able to do so. Last updated: 20 April 2020 Book

traversal links for What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Data protection considerations How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? When planning for and delivering your annual canvass you will need to consider the risks to the canvass and how you will mitigate these, ensuring that these are captured in a risk register. This risk register should be kept under regular review and you should use it to: record any risks identified, including the seriousness of any risk by indicating both the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact of the risk if it did occur monitor and document any changes to these risks record actions identified to mitigate the risks monitor and record how mitigating actions are being taken forward We have developed a template risk register that you might find helpful. The template provides some example risks and suggested actions for mitigating those risks. Template risk and issues register (XLS) In addition to the risks identified in the template you should also identify any other risks, including ones specific to your local circumstances, and how you would mitigate those. Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? What plans should I put in place to evaluate the success of canvass activities? Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties The identification of potential Route 3 properties should take place at an early stage in your planning. This section contains guidance on how to identify Route 3 properties and how and when to identify and make contact with a responsible person for each property. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties How can I manage risks to the annual canvass? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? Route 3 – the defined property route, involves collecting the information required for the canvass for specified types of properties from a responsible person, where one can be identified. Using Route 3 could be more effective and efficient in getting accurate and complete responses for properties with multiple residents than canvassing using an alternative route. The identification of potential Route 3 properties and the responsible person for those properties should take place early in your planning for the annual canvass as this will have an impact on the allocation of properties to different routes. If you are not able to identify and make contact with a responsible person for a property before finalising your allocation of properties to canvass routes, you will be unable to proceed with canvassing that property via Route 3. Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? Planning for canvassing Route 3 properties Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? The properties that can be canvassed via Route 3 (the defined property route) are defined in legislation as: 1 Registered residential care homes Houses of multiple occupation Student accommodation: for example, student halls of residence Hostels To be canvassed by Route 3, a property must also be either a property at which persons reside who together do not form a single household 2 or a property where you have attempted to deliver a document in the previous 18 months but have been unable to do so. 3 In addition, to be able to allocate a property to Route 3 you must believe you are more likely to get a response using Route 3 than via an alternative canvass route, 4 and you must have been able to identify a responsible person to provide the information required for the canvass. Accessing other local authority records or reviewing information from the previous canvass could help you to identify other properties in your database that may meet the criteria to be canvassed via Route 3. You will need to be satisfied that the criteria specified in

the legislation is met for any other property you choose to canvass under Route 3. Which properties cannot be canvassed using Route 3? The legislation specifically provides that Route 3 cannot be used for ordinary blocks of flats, 5 which should be able to be effectively canvassed via Route 1 or Route 2 as appropriate based on the results of data matching. In addition, where information you hold shows that the property is only occupied by persons under the age of 18 you cannot use Route 3 to canvass the property: in such cases, you must use Route 2 – the unmatched property route. 6 Also, properties where all registered individuals are a category of elector that must be excluded from the national data match step, such as anonymous electors, are not eligible to be canvassed via Route 3. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(2), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBF(2)(f), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBF(3), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBA(6), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 Last updated: 26 November 2020 Book traversal links for Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? What are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? A responsible person is defined as being any person who lawfully holds or has access to and may lawfully disclose information to the ERO in respect of each person who is residing at a property and is eligible to be registered. 1 Data provided by the responsible person will help you to establish who is and is not resident at a property, but cannot be used for any form of block registration: you will need to carry out the appropriate registration activity – such as starting the ITR or review process – based on the data provided to you. You will need to ensure that the information you hold on responsible persons for Route 3 properties is reviewed regularly. You should ensure that the information is up to date and that the details of anyone who is no longer associated with a property are removed. 1. Regulation 32ZBF(8) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Which properties can be canvassed using Route 3? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? You will need to establish contact with those individuals who you think may be suitable to act as the responsible person for a Route 3 property. You should make your initial contact as soon as possible in the planning stage of your canvass; only once you have identified and confirmed a responsible person for a property can you allocate it to Route 3. As there are no prescribed contact methods under Route 3, you will need to consider the most appropriate way to make initial contact with these individuals. The purpose of the contact at this point is: to establish whether the identified individual is able to act as the responsible person 1 to provide an explanation of the role and responsibilities of a responsible person to communicate your statutory right to request information from a responsible person about the residents in a property to communicate the responsible person's requirement to respond to your request to establish the communication methods that will be used

going forward to identify an alternative individual as a responsible person for the property if the person you have contacted is not able to comply with your request. You should ensure that you record the steps you have taken to make contact with these individuals and to confirm that they are able to provide you with the information required by the canvass. You will also need to consider the best method of communication for Route 3 properties, based on the property type and the contact information you hold for the responsible person. Whilst you will need to identify and make initial contact with the responsible person at Route 3 properties at an early stage in your planning, you may decide to canvass different Route 3 properties at different times. For example, you may decide to ask the responsible person for student accommodation for the information required for the canvass shortly before term-time begins, rather than at an earlier stage of your canvass.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(8), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 16 April 2020

Book traversal links for When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? Who is the responsible person for a Route 3 property and what information can they supply? Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? You will need to decide if data sharing agreements are necessary with any of the responsible persons for Route 3 properties you have identified in your area. The information you receive from the responsible person will contain personal data, which is being shared between two data controllers. Whilst data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is nevertheless good practice to have a data sharing agreement in place. Having a data sharing agreement in place with the responsible person will demonstrate that you are both acting in accordance with data protection legislation and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. Our guidance on data protection for EROs and ROs provides information in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements.

Last updated: 17 May 2023

Book traversal links for Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? When and how should I contact the responsible person for Route 3 properties? Planning for data matching

Planning for data matching

Data matching is an integral part of the new canvass and you will need to plan how and when you will carry this out. This section contains guidance on the things you will need to consider when planning for national and local data matching.

Last updated: 3 June 2020

Book traversal links for Planning for data matching

Is a data sharing agreement required for Route 3 properties? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? The national data match step involves the checking of information about existing electors on your register, against data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). By default all properties start allocated to Route 2 – the unmatched property route. The results of the national data match, along with any local data matching you have undertaken, will help you determine whether the property as a whole is matched or unmatched and you must use this information to help you to allocate that property to the appropriate canvass route.

1 Once allocated to the appropriate canvass route, you can determine which type of contact to make in relation to each property during the canvass.

1. Regulation 32ZBA(2), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

Last updated: 26 November 2020

Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? Planning for data matching

What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step?
What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step?
Whilst it is important to ensure you have processes in place to maintain your register throughout the year, carrying out additional register maintenance ahead of the national data match step should help to ensure that the information you provide is as accurate and complete as possible. This should then help to ensure more accurate results, which in turn can help you to maximise the efficiency of your canvass and make best use of your available resources. This preparatory work should include the following steps: Ensure that any outstanding activity is up to date You should, wherever possible, conclude reviews and determine any deletions needed as a result of these prior to the national data match step. You should ensure that any other required deletions are determined prior to the national data match step. You should follow up on any outstanding queries, exceptions and attestations to ensure as many electors can be added to your register as possible. You should check any individuals held in your system as potential electors in properties against other records, or identify any new potential electors that should be added to properties. Potential electors are not registered electors but are individuals who are recorded in your EMS, likely as a result of local data mining or a returned canvass form, who may be eligible but have not yet registered to vote at the address. This information is useful because it may indicate that there are changes required to the register for that property, with individuals potentially being resident who have not yet made a successful application to register. Potential electors at an address may also be indicative of the need to capture additional changes for those individuals who are currently registered at the property. Ensure that your property database is up-to-date You should ensure that each address has a unique property reference number (UPRN). If not, you should liaise with the Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG) team to ensure that UPRNs are attached to each property. You should review any records you hold that will help you to identify certain types of properties and if possible make sure these are reflected in your system – for example, identifying that a property is a care home, house in multiple occupation (HMO) or student accommodation may have an impact on the route you may choose to allocate the property to. You should check whether the information you hold for empty and void properties is up to date. You should identify which local data sources are available to you that will contain the information you need to do this and update your records accordingly. Last updated: 23 February 2021

Book traversal links for What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for the national data match step? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? The national data match will need to take place before you begin your canvass activity. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities intend that the service will be open from 1 June until end of August, and will provide a booking tool to allow you to choose your preferred date for your data match. If this date is not available, you will need to choose another. To help you decide when you want to conduct the national data match step you should consider guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the timeframes for booking and conducting the national data match step. In order to identify the most appropriate date for your national data match you will need to have considered timings for undertaking your additional preparatory work on the register as this should be carried out before you send your data. As the national data match will need to take place before you begin your canvass you will also need to think about when you want

to begin your canvass and ensure that your canvass activities are scheduled for after data match has taken place. Once your national data match date is confirmed and you know which date you are working towards, you will need to revisit your canvass plans to make sure they are still workable, making any adjustments that you identify as necessary. This may include revising the dates on which you plan to start sending canvass communications for each of the three canvass routes. Last updated: 16 March 2022

[Book traversal links for How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? As well as carrying out the mandatory national data match step, you have discretion to match all, or part, of your electoral register against locally held data sets \(such as council tax or housing benefit data\). 1 This can take place before or after the national data match step, or both before and after the national data match. The outcome of the national data match along with any local data matching you have undertaken will influence the allocation of properties to canvass routes and determine which type of contact you are required to make in relation to each property during the canvass as a result. Working with other council departments Working closely with other council departments may help you to work more effectively and efficiently with local data. If a consistent approach to data collection can be agreed with other departments, it will be easier to use multiple data sets for your own purposes. When receiving local data sets from other teams or departments, you should consult with your EMS supplier to check how the data should be formatted. You may find that significant time and resources are required to properly prepare the data before it is suitable to be imported into your EMS system. Other departments within your council may have more experience with manipulating data effectively. You should consider working with these departments, and potentially seconding skilled colleagues if possible, to assist you with ensuring your local data is ready to upload to your EMS in a timely manner. When setting up a new working relationship for the sharing of local data, you may want to have an initial telephone conversation or face to face meeting to discuss your aims and agree working arrangements. Some of the points it may be useful to cover in your initial contact include: outlining the legislative requirements of the canvass, and your rights to access data explaining the benefits that can be gained by the increased use of data matching discussing the level of support that can be offered to you and your team agreeing a shared approach to working with data, potentially through the use of a data sharing agreement establishing a clear timeline for your work together agreeing how you will communicate going forward agreeing an approach to evaluation of your work together at the end of the canvass consideration of whether any council or service privacy notices should be updated You are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. Further information on the collection and sharing of other contact details such as email addresses and telephone numbers can be found in our guidance on planning for canvass communications . Establishing partnerships and setting out plans for both the sharing and processing of local data may initially take some time and effort, but should become less intensive in subsequent years as working practices and relationships are embedded. As people become familiar with their roles in the process, what data they need to provide and what is expected of them, you should see improved results and a more efficient, streamlined process. 1. Regulation 32ZBA\(8\) The Representation of the People \(Scotland\) Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 May 2023](#)

[Book traversal links for How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? What action should I take to prepare my register for the national data match step? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? As well as carrying out the mandatory national data match step, you have discretion to match all, or part, of your electoral register against locally held data sets \(such as council tax or housing benefit data\). 1 This can take place before or after the national data match step, or both before and after the national data match. The outcome of the national data match along with any local data matching you have undertaken will influence the allocation of properties to canvass routes and determine which type of contact you are required to make in relation to each property during the canvass as a result. Working with other council departments Working closely with other council departments may help you to work more effectively and efficiently with local data. If a consistent approach to data collection can be agreed with other departments, it will be easier to use multiple data sets for your own purposes. When receiving local data sets from other teams or departments, you should consult with your EMS supplier to check how the data should be formatted. You may find that significant time and resources are required to properly prepare the data before it is suitable to be imported into your EMS system. Other departments within your council may have more experience with manipulating data effectively. You should consider working with these departments, and potentially seconding skilled colleagues if possible, to assist you with ensuring your local data is ready to upload to your EMS in a timely manner. When setting up a new working relationship for the sharing of local data, you may want to have an initial telephone conversation or face to face meeting to discuss your aims and agree working arrangements. Some of the points it may be useful to cover in your initial contact include: outlining the legislative requirements of the canvass, and your rights to access data explaining the benefits that can be gained by the increased use of data matching discussing the level of support that can be offered to you and your team agreeing a shared approach to working with data, potentially through the use of a data sharing agreement establishing a clear timeline for your work together agreeing how you will communicate going forward agreeing an approach to evaluation of your work together at the end of the canvass consideration of whether any council or service privacy notices should be updated You are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. Further information on the collection and sharing of other contact details such as email addresses and telephone numbers can be found in our guidance on planning for canvass communications . Establishing partnerships and setting out plans for both the sharing and processing of local data may initially take some time and effort, but should become less intensive in subsequent years as working practices and relationships are embedded. As people become familiar with their roles in the process, what data they need to provide and what is expected of them, you should see improved results and a more efficient, streamlined process. 1. Regulation 32ZBA\(8\) The Representation of the People \(Scotland\) Regulations ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 17 May 2023](#)

traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? How should I decide when to carry out the national data match step? What is local data? What is local data? Local data is any set of data which is collected by another body, or by any local authority, including your own. Examples of local data open to you include: council tax data adult social care data local authority billing and payments data parking permits data school, college and university admission data blue badge data customer service records payroll data registrars data housing benefits and rent data green/garden waste subscription data council-run facility membership data (for example, libraries or gyms) Other sources of information, such as personally knowing someone or word-of-mouth, are not considered to be sources of local data. Your powers to request local data As ERO, you are legally entitled to access local data sets and to inspect and make copies of records kept in whatever form by: 1 the council which appointed you any registrar of births, deaths and marriages any person, including a company or organisation, providing services to, or authorised to exercise any function of, the council; this includes those that are providing outsourced services under any finance agreement There are no statutory or other restrictions, including data protection legislation, that can be used to refuse disclosure of such information to the ERO. 2 You are also legally entitled to require any other person to give you information required for the purposes of maintaining the electoral register. 3 EROs are able to access such data in line with data protection provisions as there is a lawful basis for its processing; the performance of a public task in the public interest. In the event that any person does not co-operate with your request it may be appropriate to point out that there is the potential of a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum £1,000 for failing to provide the information required. You may also wish to discuss with your Data Protection Officer whether a Data Sharing Agreement could facilitate access to local data. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(8) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations Back to content at footnote 1 2. Schedule 2, paragraph 1(5) of the RPA 1983 Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 23, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 23 June 2023 Book traversal links for What is local data? What do I need to consider when planning for local data matching? How should I select my local data sources? How should I select my local data sources? As a minimum, each local data set should include: First name Surname Postal address Data sets which also include the following fields may help to improve the quality of the match results: Middle name(s) UPRN data Date of birth Previous names Age of data, for example when it was created or last updated Local data sets do not have to include data for all properties on your register and could be more focussed on specific property types or groups of individuals. For example, you may have data from social services or education departments which may only cover some of your electorate, but which may still be useful. How do I ensure a data source is of high quality? You should ensure that you only select data sources that are high quality. A high quality data set is one where the information within it is reliable, trusted, current and accurate. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have a resource available on how to assess the quality of local data which can be found below: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Testing local data guidance Part II and annexes (PDF) You should also consider what data standards and good practices exist in relation to the local data sources you wish to use and whether the data holder follows them. For

example, the Department for Work and Pensions has set out detailed guidance on good practice for the processing and use of council tax benefit and housing benefit data, which includes guidance on the checking of evidence provided to local authorities and how to deal with fraud. An ERO for an area that delivers its benefits service to these standards should be able to be confident in using benefits data for local data matching. When determining the quality of a local data source you should take into account when it was last updated and whether the source(s) of the data are reliant on information provided by individuals with no checks by the local authority on the accuracy of the information. For example, applications for library membership may be based entirely on information provided by the service users and so you may conclude that, as a result, library data is not suitable for local data matching. In addition to being able to trust that the local data source is of high quality. You also need to consider any cost implications associated with processing local data and, if there are any costs, whether they make the best use of the resources you have available to you. For example: Will work need to be carried out manually by you and your staff to ensure the data is useable or will you need support for the data matching from another team, such as from IT, to manipulate the files? Can the data file be managed by a partially automated process by loading it into your EMS system or similar? Will you need to purchase any new or additional software or licenses for any existing software? You should test new local data sets before you use them. You should talk to your EMS provider about how your EMS system may help you to do this in practice. You should evaluate the effectiveness of your local data sets each year using the data accuracy scores provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. These scores will provide an indication of how effective the different local data sources have been in matching electors. This will enable you to make more informed decisions about using local data sets in future canvasses. Last updated: 21 March 2022

[Book traversal links for How should I select my local data sources?](#)

What is local data? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take? If you have decided to undertake any type of local data matching you will need to decide when it will take place. Local data matching can be helpful when undertaken either before or after the national data match step, or indeed at both stages. Your decision around the timing of any local data matching may depend on: when the data can be provided to you and when you plan to use it, for example the most up to date student data is likely to be available at the beginning of the academic year how recent the data is; local data will be most accurate and useful for data matching if it has been recently updated the size of the data set and whether you are carrying out a partial or full register match; this may have an impact on the amount of time you have to analyse the results before allocation of properties to canvass routes the format in which the data is held and whether it will need to be processed before you can use it Carrying out local data matching before the national data match step may allow you more time to analyse your local data matching results. Alternatively, carrying out checks of data that is regularly updated locally, such as council tax data, after the national data match step and as close as practicable to making your decision on the allocation of properties to canvass routes may improve the quality of your data match results, enabling you to allocate more properties to the most appropriate route. Checking empty and void properties as part of local data matching Local data matching could include a check of the information you hold on empty or void properties. If you are going to compare empty and void properties against local data sources such as council tax records, your plan should reflect this and make provision for when and how you

will carry it out. Empty and void properties are not exempt from the annual canvass but they are automatically excluded from the national data match step. This is because there are no individual elector details to match against DWP records. If your local data matching can't confirm properties as empty or void, they will need to be canvassed via Route 2 – the unmatched property route. If you are able to confirm that properties remain empty or void, they can be allocated to Route 1 – the matched property route. It is important to remember that once a property has been assigned to a route, you must take all the necessary steps before closing the chase cycle. You cannot use local data to close a chase cycle. Last updated: 26 May 2021

[Book traversal links for When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take?](#) [How should I select my local data sources?](#) [Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [Where you request to inspect and/or take copies of data, the holder of the data cannot use a statutory or other restriction, including data protection legislation, to refuse the disclosure of data to you.](#) 1 Whether you carry out local data matching yourself, or outsource local data matching, the information you receive will contain personal data which is being shared between two data controllers. Whilst UK data protection legislation does not require a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, it is good practice to have a data sharing agreement in place. Such agreements demonstrate that all parties are acting in accordance with data protection legislation and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. Do I need a data sharing agreement when using data held by a local authority? Where you are receiving information from the council(s), that you are ERO for to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered, or identify those people who are registered but who are not entitled to be registered a written agreement between you and the council(s) regulating the processing of the information should be in place and this agreement should include details about data transfer, storage, destruction and security arrangements. Our resource on data protection legislation provides guidance in relation to your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. Data protection resource for EROs and ROs (DOC) 1. Regulation 23, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 23 February 2021

[Book traversal links for Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [When can I carry out local data matching and how long will it take?](#) [Planning for canvass communications](#) [Planning for canvass communications](#) You will need to carefully plan how you will deliver your canvass communications. This section contains guidance on the things you will need to consider when planning your canvass communications and on the response mechanisms you will make available for electors. Last updated: 3 June 2020

[Book traversal links for Planning for canvass communications](#) [Are data sharing agreements required when I access local data?](#) [What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#) [What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#) Before planning the canvass communication channels to use, you will need to have read the guidance for each of the canvass routes; Route 1, Route 2 and Route 3 so that you have an understanding of the communication types and contact requirements for each route. As part of your planning you will then need to decide which communication channels you will use for each contact stage in each of the routes. Some of the key considerations for each communication channel are outlined on the following pages. You should also take into account that legislation requires you to undertake follow-up activity within a

reasonable period of time. A reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation. In our view it should be no longer than 28 days and may, in some circumstances, be shorter, for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place. Last updated: 26 November 2020

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications?](#)

[Planning for canvass communications](#)

[How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#)

[How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#)

[How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers?](#)

You can collect email addresses and phone numbers directly from householders and electors, and you may be able to access them through inspecting local records. You should look for opportunities to collect email addresses and phone numbers from canvass communications and other electoral correspondence throughout the year, such as voter registration forms and absent vote applications. You should capture as many email addresses and phone numbers as possible during the canvass alongside your other actions when processing canvass responses . Whenever you collect email addresses and phone numbers from electors, you should ensure that it is clear to them that the provision of these is optional, and you should set out how you will process and use the information in your privacy statement .

[Can I collect email addresses and phone numbers from other local records?](#)

You are legally entitled to inspect and make copies of local records such as Council Tax and customer service records, for the purposes of your registration duties. 1

Relevant councils are expressly permitted to disclose information contained in local records to enable you to ascertain the names and addresses of people who are not registered but who are entitled to be registered. 2 2

We have produced further guidance on the records you can inspect to identify new electors, including what you can use the information for, and advice on whether data sharing agreements are needed between the council and the ERO. However, you are not automatically entitled to access and use any additional contact information contained in local records other than names and addresses. To access and use additional contact information, such as email addresses and phone numbers from local records you will require: a data sharing agreement to be in place between the council and the ERO, and the council to have informed individuals about the potential sharing of such information through their privacy notice

You will therefore need to engage with relevant council departments, holding constructive conversations with them and your data protection officer, to gain support for your approach to using e-communications. This could be tied in with your wider conversations about accessing local data for the purposes of your registration duties such as local data matching . You should work with council departments and the data protection officer to develop data sharing agreements and to identify privacy notices which will need to be updated, so that when contact details such as email addresses and phone numbers are collected, the necessary consent is given for these details to be disclosed to the ERO. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further information on data protection considerations. What if the council uses a customer records index? Some councils have adopted a customer records or citizen index, to keep customer records in one central database. Such records are collated from a range of customer contact information and are likely to be up to date and accurate. As the data in such databases is collated from sources across the council it is likely that data sharing agreements and privacy notices will already be in place for maintaining their customer records index which may only need minor changes to allow for the disclosure of additional contact details to the ERO. You should contact your DPO to understand what you may need to do locally. Checking the accuracy of the information you collect

In order to reduce the number of emails

or text messages that go undelivered due to errors in phone numbers or email addresses, you should carry out quality checks on the contact information you have collected. You could export the data into a spreadsheet to assist with this, or see if your EMS system can produce reports which could help to highlight inaccuracies in your data. You should check for obvious errors such as domain names in emails being misspelt, incorrect use of punctuation or spaces in email addresses, and phone numbers with missing digits. You could then cross reference scanned images or paper applications to check and correct any contact details that contain errors. Ensuring that the contact details you hold are up to date and accurate will increase the number of messages delivered correctly and will reduce the administrative burden of dealing with email bounce backs when processing. For more information on managing bounce backs, please see responses to Route 1 e-communications . 1. Regulation 35, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 35A, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 a b Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers? What do I need to consider when planning my canvass communications? Using electronic communications Using electronic communications Using electronic communications Where you decide to use e-communications, you will need to identify the steps needed to set these up and reflect these in your plans. You will need to decide whether to manage e-communications in house or via an external provider, and you may decide to take different approaches for different types of e-communication. For example, you may choose to send emails yourself and outsource SMS messaging to an external provider. Any person who will be processing personal data for use with any e-communication channels must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. You will need to create template communications in advance where you are using emails, SMS, or other written electronic communications. Our guidance for Route 1 and Route 2 contains detail of what information must be included and captured in e-communications and we have produced template emails that can act as a basis for your e-communications. You will also need to ensure that you have mechanisms in place to track and monitor the dispatch of e-communications to ensure that you have an audit trail of all contact attempts with properties and electors throughout the canvass. Monitoring the success of contact attempts using different contact methods will help you to evaluate their effectiveness and refine your approach as needed for future canvasses. The data set out in the performance standards for EROs will also help you to understand the impact of your activities and where improvements can be made. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Using electronic communications How can I collect email addresses and phone numbers? Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications It is important that recipients of your e-communications trust them and have confidence that they are legitimate, so that they pay attention to the information provided and respond and take necessary action as needed. Some residents may not be used to being contacted by the ERO or the council through e-communications, so you should think about how you can prepare them for being contacted this way, for example through press releases and social media messages. We have produced canvass resources to support you with public engagement, including social media templates which can be used in the run-up and throughout the canvass to raise awareness. You should also work with the communications team in your council to raise awareness about the canvass. As well as using e-communications during the canvass, you could consider the benefits of contacting electors through

these methods outside the canvass period, for example in the run up to an election. To help increase confidence that emails are official you should ensure that recipients can clearly identify that they are from you by including your council name in the subject line and your logo in the body of the text. If you are using a generic outbox to send emails, you could also personalise the message to include the householder's name in the greeting. You should proactively inform recipients that you are contacting them because you hold their information on your electoral register database so that they can be confident that their data has been used legitimately. Even if you are encouraging residents to reply using an automated response method, you should include dedicated contact details for queries, as well as a link to your website with details of your privacy notice and how recipients can opt out of further e-communications, in order to promote confidence in the legitimacy of the communication and meet all data protection requirements. We have produced an email canvass communication template to support you when contacting householders by email. The email template can be used for either Route 1 or Route 2 communications. The email template is not prescribed, however we recommend that you use it because it has been tested with the public. Further guidance on the content of your e-communications is given in what information should an e-communication contain? Last updated: 27 May 2021 Book traversal links for Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Using electronic communications Managing messages and responses Managing messages and responses Managing messages and responses As set out in using electronic communications you will need to ensure that you have resources and systems in place for sending e-communications and for tracking and monitoring responses. If you are managing this in-house, you will need to liaise with your IT department to discuss how they can support you, which could include: setting up a generic mailbox, with sufficient capacity to deal with your estimated volume of likely responses based on previous years and/or the number of emails you plan to send as part of your canvass the proposed timescales for sending your communications, so that any additional help desk support can be factored in any additional opportunities to check your data before sending your communications whether to send messages in batches advice on how to avoid e-communications being treated as 'spam' or 'junk' how to track and monitor responses, including the management of bounce backs (guidance on the processing of bounce backs can be found in responses to Route 1 e-communications .) Using external providers and messaging platforms You could decide to use an external provider or a messaging platform to send e-communications to residents, both during and outside the canvass period. This may involve providing the contact details you hold for residents to a provider who will send the messages on your behalf. You will need to be satisfied that the provider complies with data protection legislation when processing data. Some messaging platforms, such as the UK Government's 'Notify' service, can be integrated with your EMS system, which would enable you to monitor responses through your existing software. The following case study describes how this has been utilised in Tower Hamlets: DLUHC - Notify Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May edition (DOC) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Managing messages and responses Ensuring public confidence when using e-communications Contacting electors by telephone Contacting electors by telephone Contacting electors by telephone If you are contacting electors via telephone you will need to decide whether to manage these calls in house or via an external provider. You will also need to plan in advance the scripts your staff or external providers will use for their conversations. We have provided a template script for use by staff contacting electors by telephone. Telephone script for canvassers (DOC) It may also be useful to

provide a list of possible FAQs and suggested responses for your call handlers based on your approach to the canvass in your area. You will also need to ensure that you have mechanisms in place to track and monitor the placing of phone calls, to ensure that you have an audit trail of all contact attempts with properties and electors throughout the canvass. Monitoring the success of contact attempts using different contact methods will help you to evaluate their effectiveness and refine your approach as needed for future canvasses. Last updated: 3 June 2020

[Book traversal links for Contacting electors by telephone](#) [Managing messages and responses](#) [Using printed communications](#) [Using printed communications](#)

You will need to decide whether to use an in-house or an external printer to print your canvass communications. Whoever you use, you should be satisfied they will be able to cope with the complexity and volume of printed material to be produced. You should ensure that data protection principles are met in any contract tender exercise, and document your decision-making process. Whenever you use a processor, data protection legislation imposes a legal obligation to formalise the working relationship with them. Whether you are using an in-house or external printer, you must have a written agreement or contract in place. This will help to ensure that the requirements of data protection legislation will be met, including the requirements relating to appointing a processor. Following the national data matching step, and any local data matching, you will have allocated all of your properties to the appropriate canvass routes, made decisions about which communication channels you plan to use for canvass communications at each stage and how you will manage their distribution. You will then be in a position to confirm with your print supplier the number of printed canvass communications that you require. You will need to agree a detailed production schedule with your supplier for your printed canvass communications which should include:

- Timescales for proofing canvass communications
- The volume of printed canvass communications for each route
- Printer deadlines for sending data
- Dates the printer will deliver canvass communications to you (where canvass communications are being delivered back to you ready for onward delivery)
- Scheduling of delivery dates from the printer to Royal Mail, other delivery services or your offices for the purpose of hand-delivery
- Timing of the production and dispatch of any follow-up communications where required

We have designed templates for each of the different printed canvass communications, some of which you are required to use. You can find more information on the template communications and how to use these in our forms and letters guidance . Your printer will need to produce proofs of the templates for printed canvass communications, and you will need to check these. We have produced a proof checking factsheet which you can use to help quality assure your processes. Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) We have also produced a contract development checklist to support you in your work with contractors and suppliers. Contract development and management checklist (PDF) Once you have approved the template proofs you should send test data to ensure that data fields appear correctly. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs highlights the importance of having a robust proof checking process in place when working with a processor in order to detect any errors and avoid data breaches before they occur. If you are planning to use Royal Mail or other delivery services you should consider the delivery options they offer and any discounts based on the types and volumes of printed communications you expect to send out to determine which option will best meet your needs. Last updated: 26 June 2023

[Book traversal links for Using printed communications](#) [Contacting electors by telephone](#) [How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass?](#) [How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass?](#)

You will need to

decide which response mechanisms you will make available for electors. These may vary for the different canvass routes and the different contact stages within routes, and should be considered alongside the outward contact methods you intend to use. Potential response channels include: Website E-mail SMS Post Telephone In person You should ensure that your chosen response mechanisms are designed to meet elector expectations and enable them to respond as easily as possible where needed. For example, if you contact some electors via email, they may well expect to be able to respond online, such as by a return email, rather than a different channel. You could also consider the demographics of your local area to help inform your decisions. For example, if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or areas with high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet the needs of your electors. If you decide to use automated response services – which would typically involve using security codes to log onto a website or respond by an automated telephone or SMS response service – you will need to decide whether to manage this internally or to outsource the work to an external supplier. If you are using an external supplier, you will need ensure that they will be able to meet your requirements before agreeing the process for setting the service up, finalising contracts and reflecting your decisions in your canvass plans. Any person who will be processing personal data for use with response services must comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. Last updated: 17 April 2020 Book traversal links for How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? Using printed communications Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass As part of your planning you will need to think about what staff you require to carry out the canvass. This section contains guidance on how to identify what staff you will need and plan for the delivery of any necessary training. Last updated: 3 June 2020 Book traversal links for Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass How should I decide which response mechanisms to make available during the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? The council which has appointed you as ERO is under a legal obligation to provide you with the necessary staff to enable you to fulfil your statutory duties. 1 The decisions you have made on your approach to delivering the canvass will impact on the number of staff you may need. You will need to consider how you will resource the following: Managing the local data matching exercise If you are carrying out local data matching, the volume and the timing of this may have an impact on the amount of staff time you will need. You will also need to consider any additional work needed to get the data into useable format for data matching purposes. Analysis of the data match results If you are carrying out local data matching, you should consider the staff resource required to make decisions where national and local data match results conflict. You will also need to consider the staff-time required for the property allocation stage. Dealing with questions from the public about the canvass process Establish the staffing levels required by thinking about the timings for your canvass activity across the different routes and identifying the likely peak response periods. Your decision on whether these queries will be managed by a contact centre or by the electoral services team will also have an impact on the amount of staff required. Processing responses You will need to consider the staff required to manage multiple response channels, deal with any conflicting responses and undertake any additional registration activity necessary - for example sending ITRs, undertaking reviews and deletions. Hand-delivering communications (where undertaken)

If you are hand delivering canvass communications, you will need to consider the geography and size of the canvass areas. Canvass areas can vary in size to help maximise canvass response rates, allowing you to take into account the varying geography and demographics of different parts of your registration area. For example you may want to allocate fewer properties over larger geographical areas, such as rural locations. The size of canvass areas will also be affected by the staff resource available, the more staff you have, the smaller your canvass areas may be. You may wish to review your canvass areas following the allocation of properties to canvass routes in order to ensure that canvassers have sufficient time to contact all non-responding properties/individuals based on the number of Route 2 properties in that area. You will also need to consider the likely volumes of canvass communications that you intend to deliver by hand. For example, are you hand delivering some or all of the canvass communications and at what stage for each route? You will also need to consider the impact on staff resource requirements where you are combining hand delivery with a property visit. Undertaking personal contact via telephone or property visits The decisions you have made on how you will carry out the personal contact requirements for Route 2 properties will impact on the size of canvass areas and the staff resource you will need to ensure you maximise the effectiveness of personal canvassing. For example: the stage of the canvass that personal contact will take place will have an impact on the volume of properties requiring contact. The more properties that require personal contact, the smaller the canvass area may need to be the size of the canvass area will be impacted by the number of staff undertaking personal contact attempts by either visit or by telephone if by telephone whether it will be done by your electoral services team, or a contact centre the size of the canvass area may depend on how many personal contact attempts you will make, the more attempts you plan to make, the smaller the canvass area may need to be if you are combining any follow up of ITRs for individuals within a property with any personal contact attempts the smaller the canvass area may need to be You will also need to review your existing canvass staff database. You should review the performance of canvassers who have worked on your canvass before and any whose past performance has been unsatisfactory should not be used again. You should then make contact with those you wish to invite to work on the canvass again bearing in mind that existing or experienced canvassers may not be available and you may need to undertake recruitment to identify and select new canvassers. Where you need to undertake recruitment of staff to work on any part of delivering the canvass, you will need to take into account the length of time required for recruitment and plan accordingly. You should liaise with your HR contact to ensure they are aware of your requirements and can provide you with the necessary support. You will also need to ensure that your recruitment plans are fully reflected in your canvass plan. 1.

Section 52(4) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 2 June 2020 Book traversal links for How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? Planning for staffing to deliver the annual canvass What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? Your duty to maintain the registers of electors includes the provision of training to all the staff you have appointed to assist with delivery of the canvass. 1 You should review the training needs of both permanent and temporary staff, including canvassers. It is important that all staff understand their particular role and any statutory obligations associated with the work they are undertaking. As well as training on the legislative requirements and responsibilities relevant to their role, it is important that staff are trained on ensuring equal

access, data handling and good customer care. To embed data protection principles in your work and demonstrate compliance with the legislation, you will need to ensure that all staff, including canvassers, are trained in handling personal data. You should discuss any data protection training with your Data Protection Officer. Appropriate training will also need to be provided for all front-line staff to reflect the fact that 14 and 15 year olds can be included on the local government register as attainers. For example, staff will need to be given training and guidance relating to handling and storing the personal data of 14 and 15 year olds. Your systems should be set up in such a way as to ensure that the data of 14 and 15 year olds is only used for the limited purposes set out in law. 2 Where you identify that training is required, you will need to make arrangements for this to be provided and reflect this in your canvass plans. You may already have existing structures for training sessions and materials for their delivery which you can review and refine to ensure they are relevant and appropriate. If you have training personnel within your council, they may be able to assist you with this process. What training is required for staff dealing with enquiries about the canvass? You will need to identify how you will support staff dealing directly with the public by phone or face-to-face, whether in the office, undertaking personal visits or working at any contact centres or call management centres. Staff will need to understand the differences between the different canvass communications and be able to: offer advice about whether or not a response is required encourage a successful response to the canvass communication as required when speaking to someone on the telephone give advice on registering to vote, the options available to make an application to register and, where appropriate, assist with the registration process apply knowledge to deal with a person's individual circumstances be able to identify non-standard questions and refer these to staff with more detailed knowledge of registration as necessary To support front-line staff we have produced a frequently-asked questions (FAQs) document covering a range of queries that may arise about electoral registration. FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) You can adapt this document to reflect your local approach to the canvass. Planning training for canvassers You need to ensure that your canvassers are trained to carry out the job they have been appointed to undertake. You may need to deliver different types of training sessions depending on how you intend to deploy them. For example, those making house to house visits may require different training to canvassers who are making telephone contact. All canvassers must receive appropriate data protection training and be trained as to how to keep any personal information they collect from electors safe. Further information on the recruitment and training of canvassers can be found in our Canvasser recruitment and training checklist. Canvasser recruitment and training checklist (DOC) Resources to support the management and briefing of canvassers can also be found on our website . 1. Section 9A of the RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 14 Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Act 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? How do I plan my staffing requirements for the canvass? What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? When planning your canvass timetable you will need to take into account the requirement to publish your revised register by 1 December, unless there has been an election during the canvass in which case you can delay publication up until 1 February. 1 Publication of the register on

1 December maximises the length of time available for applications to register to be received and determined in time to be included on the revised register. If 1 December falls on a weekend rather than a working day, there may be specific practicalities you will need to address to ensure you're still able to publish. For example, you would need to factor into your planning the possible resource requirements related to working on a weekend, such as the opening of office buildings, staffing arrangements and the availability of IT support if required. You should bear in mind that not all of your canvass activity needs to be completed by 1 December, regardless of when you publish your revised register; any outstanding steps can be picked up as part of your year-round electoral registration activity. If, for whatever reason, you decide to publish on a date in November instead of on 1 December, you will need to consider the impact on your canvass plans of the earlier deadlines for receipt of applications in time for them to be determined and included on the revised register. Publication of the revised register in November means that some individuals who make a successful registration application from late October onwards, would not be added to the register until the January notice of alteration, unless they are added by any election notice of alteration.

1. Section 13(1) and (1A) of RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 April 2020 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What training do I need to provide for staff working on the canvass? Data matching for the annual canvass Data matching for the annual canvass This section of the guidance covers what you need to know about the national data match step including what it is, what data you need to include and exclude, how and when to send your data and how to process the results and allocate properties to canvass routes. DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - SCO (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Data matching for the annual canvass What do I need to consider when planning the publication of the revised register following the canvass? What is the national data match step? What is the national data match step What is the national data match step? Each year, before conducting the annual canvass, you must disclose data to the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities as part of a national data matching exercise known as the national data match step.

1 The national data match step involves the checking of information about existing electors on your register - their name, address including the UPRN where held and, where known, date of birth, against data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The purpose of the exercise is to help you identify properties where residents may have changed. This information should then be used to determine the route you will use to canvass each property.

1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is the national data match step? Data matching for the annual canvass What data do I need to send? What data do I need to send? What data do I need to send? The data you send for the national data match step in relation to all persons aged 16 or over who appear on the parliamentary and local government registers must include: 1 the full name, including any middle name(s) or initials you may hold the date of birth (where held) the full address, including postcode Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) (where held) any other information that you hold relating to a person's entry on the register, if the Cabinet Office specifies such information in writing (for example, a previous surname). This additional information may improve the likelihood of a data match as the information you hold may show a link exists between the data held nationally and your data. 14 and 15 year olds are excluded from the national data match as their

details are not held by DWP. 1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What data do I need to send? What is the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? Certain types of electors must be excluded from the national data match step. 1 These are: 14 and 15 year olds all special category electors You should also exclude the following electors and properties from the national data match:

Determined electors – individuals who have had their application determined and will be added to the register by the next notice of alteration. These electors will have only just been added to the register so will be considered matched by default.

Determined deletions – individuals who you have determined are no longer entitled to be registered and will be deleted from the register by the next notice of alteration.

Empty or void properties – as no electors are registered at these properties, there are no individuals to be matched against DWP data as part of the national data match step.

Special category electors The following special category electors must be excluded from the national data match step, as they are not included within the annual canvass process: 2 overseas electors, i.e. British citizens living outside the UK HM Forces service voters (and their spouses or civil partners and those under 18 years old, living with their parent or guardian and their parent or guardian is a member of the armed forces) Crown servants and British Council employees (and their spouses or civil partners and those under 18 years old, living with their parent or guardian and their parent or guardian is a Crown servant or British Council employee and they would be living in Scotland if their parent or guardian were not living overseas) electors who have made a declaration of local connection, including people living in the UK who have no permanent or fixed address anonymously registered electors, i.e. those who have registered anonymously because their safety would be at risk if they appeared on the register using their name patients in mental health hospitals whose stay at the hospital is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there remand prisoners whose stay at a penal institution is sufficient for them to be regarded as resident there

DLUHC Worksheet 2 - Data matching empty properties and exclusions - SCO (PDF) 1. Regulation 32ZBB, The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBB(8), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Who will be excluded from the national data match step? What data do I need to send? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? You have the discretion to decide whether to exclude some or all of your recent additions from the national data match step. 1 Recent additions are electors who have made a successful application to be registered and have been added to the register of electors within the last 90 days. Deciding what your recent additions threshold should be Prior to the start of the national data match step, you should decide where to set the cut-off point for recent additions to the register to be included in the national data match. 2 This period must be between 0 and 90 days. When the data is uploaded for the national data match, any recent additions to the register prior to the threshold date you have set will be excluded from the data match and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. If you set a threshold of 0 days, all recent additions will be included within the national data match step. If you set a threshold of 90 days, recent additions made

within the last 90 days will be excluded from the national data step and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. If you set a threshold of between 0 and 90 days, recent additions to the register within your chosen time frame will be excluded from the national data match step. For example, if you choose to set the threshold at 45 days, recent additions to the register in the last 45 days will be excluded from the national data step and automatically marked as matched within your EMS. Your decision to include or exclude recent additions from the national data match step could have an impact on the outcome of the data match results. In turn, this may influence the canvass route you allocate for each property. The questions below may help to inform your decision about whether to exclude all or some of your recent additions from the national data match step.

Questions Impact on your decision

How stable is your electorate? Do you have a high level of churn within your electoral area? If you have a high level of churn in your area, there is a increased risk that someone may successfully register to vote at an address but then move again in a short space of time. Where this is the case you could consider setting a lower threshold which may help to better capture changes in areas where electors move more frequently. Have you checked against locally held data sets that the information you hold for properties identified as having recent additions have no other changes? If you have carried out checks as part of your activity to maintain the register throughout the year, you could consider setting a higher threshold. You may be more likely to have already captured and managed recent changes and so your local data may be more up to date than DWP records. Do you have processes in place to regularly identify and subsequently take steps to remove existing registered electors from a property if they have moved out? In this case, you could consider setting a higher threshold, as you are more likely to have actioned recent changes and so your local data may be more up to date than DWP records. Have you had to process a high proportion of changes during previous canvasses? If this is the case, you could consider setting a lower threshold as your recent experience suggests that you are less likely to have captured all required changes outside of the canvass period.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities help sheet below provides further information and guidance to help you set your threshold. DLUHC helpsheet - Recent additions and determined electors You should review the impact of the threshold you set after each canvass to determine its effectiveness, and ensure any lessons learnt are fed into your planning for subsequent canvasses.

1. Regulation 32ZBB(7)(a), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 32ZBB(7)(a), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 21 March 2022

Book traversal links for Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Who will be excluded from the national data match step? When do I need to send my data? When do I need to send my data? When do I need to send my data?

As part of your planning for the canvass you should already have considered when you want to conduct the national data match step. The data matching process will be managed in practice by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and will be phased due to the volume of records to be processed. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have advised there will be a tool available that you will need to use to schedule the date for your data upload. Please note that there is a limit on the volume of records that can be processed per day and so if a certain date has reached its capacity, it will no longer be available for you to book on the tool. Once you have booked through the tool, you will receive an email from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities confirming that you have

successfully booked your date. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will provide you with instructions on when to electronically upload your register to DWP via your electoral management software (EMS) system. Your EMS supplier will provide you with instructions on how to upload your data. Once you have confirmed the date for your data upload, you will be able to confirm the rest of your plans for the delivery of the canvass, including liaising with and updating your print suppliers as needed. Last updated: 16 March 2022

[Book traversal links for When do I need to send my data?](#) Should recent additions be excluded from the national data match step? Using the results of national and local data matching Using the results of national and local data matching Using the results of national and local data matching You have the option to use local data matching before the national data match step, after you have received the results from the national data match step, or both. Planning for data matching includes guidance on how to identify and use local data. Last updated: 16 March 2021

[Book traversal links for Using the results of national and local data matching](#) When do I need to send my data? What will be included in the national data match results? What will be included in the national data match results? What will be included in the national data match results? You should receive your results within 5 working days of the data being submitted. You will receive your results through your EMS. Your EMS supplier will provide you with instructions on how this will work in practice. Each elector whose data is sent for the national data match will return with either a match or no match result. The results will not include any details of why an elector's details failed to match. Your EMS will then aggregate these into a result for each property. Last updated: 16 March 2021

[Book traversal links for What will be included in the national data match results?](#) Using the results of national and local data matching What do I do with the results of data matching? What do I do with the results of data matching? What do I do with the results of data matching? The data matching results will help you determine whether the property as a whole is matched or unmatched and you must use this information to help you to allocate that property to the appropriate canvass route.

1 Matched properties - A property is determined to be a matched property where there is a match result for every elector within a property, through national and/or local data. A property can also be determined to be a matched property where you have carried out local data matching and have confirmed the status of the property as empty.

Unmatched properties - A property is determined to be an unmatched property where you are unable to match some or all of the electors within a household through national and/or local data matching. Both national and local data matching results may be relevant in determining the appropriate canvass route. For example, you may:

- Accept a match from either local or national data matching
- Override a match result from national data matching where you are satisfied that local data matching information is more accurate - this may be because you believe your local data source to contain more up-to-date information
- Override a result from local data matching if you believe the national data match has provided a more accurate result

What action can I take where an individual is unmatched? You cannot disregard the results where both national and local data shows at least one elector in the property as not matched. However, you could consider using other local data sources that you trust to be accurate to try to match the unmatched elector before allocating that property. If you are able to match an unmatched individual using other local data sources, you may then be satisfied that the whole property is a match and could be canvassed via Route 1 - the matched property route. Where you do not have additional local data to use, or are unsuccessful in matching the unmatched elector using additional local data,

canvass the property via Route 2 – the unmatched property route - as you cannot be satisfied that there are no changes to be captured for that property. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(2) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What do I do with the results of data matching? What will be included in the national data match results? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? You should consider whether there is any other information you hold, either in written or electronic data format, 1 that you could check after the data matching results have been received to inform your decision on which route to use for each property. Potential electors held on your EMS: What is this information and why is it useful? Potential electors are not registered electors but are individuals who are recorded in your EMS, likely as a result of local data mining or a returned canvass form, who may be eligible but have not yet registered to vote at the address. This information is useful because it may indicate that there are changes required to the register for that property, with individuals potentially being resident who have not yet made a successful application to register. Potential electors at an address may also be indicative of the need to capture additional changes for those individuals who are currently registered at the property. What action could I take? Check local data to try to confirm if these individuals appear to be still resident. What impact could this information have on my decision making? Where local data matching shows an individual does still potentially reside at the address but has not yet registered, it may be most appropriate to canvass the property via Route 2 – the unmatched property route. Where local data matching confirms an individual no longer resides at an address, their name can be removed as a potential elector from EMS and the property could be canvassed via Route 1 – the matched property route if all other individuals at a property have been matched. Information provided from another ERO: What is this information and why is it useful? Other EROs may have information about individuals who have moved into or out of your area. What action could I take? Check any information sent to you by another ERO for any additional potential changes at a property. If you are notified that an elector is no longer resident at an address, you should initiate the deletions process. What impact could this information have on my decision making? If after checking information sent to you by another ERO, you are now aware that there may be changes at a property, you should consider canvassing the property using Route 2 – the unmatched property route. Other sources of council data: What is this information and why is it useful? Data from other departments in the authority could help you to identify additional potential electors or other changes at a property. What action could I take? Check all council data you have access to for information on any additional potential electors or other changes at a property. What impact could this information have on my decision making? If after checking data from other council departments, you are aware of additional potential electors or other changes at a property, you should consider canvassing the property using Route 2 – the unmatched property route. You will need to consider how you will evidence and document your decision-making if information from a source other than the results of data matching leads to a decision to change a property from one route to another. 1. Regulation 32ZBA(8), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 2 August 2021 Book traversal links for What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to

canvass routes? What do I do with the results of data matching? Processing information in connection with data matching Processing information in connection with data matching This section of the guidance covers data protection considerations in regard to data matching. Information supplied to the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for the purpose of the national data match and the access to the results from the national data match step are subject to certain restrictions. You must not disclose any information from the national data match step about an individual 1 to any person other than where they are responsible for deciding the most appropriate canvass route or for the purposes of any civil or criminal proceedings. However, data protection legislation allows individuals to make requests about the information you hold about them. For more information on subject access requests (SARs), including how they relate to the national data match, see our guidance - What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? If you, or anyone authorised to act on your behalf, discloses data from the national data match step for any other reason you (and they) could be subject to imprisonment, a fine or both. 1. Regulation 32ZBC, Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2022 Book traversal links for Processing information in connection with data matching What else can I take into account to help me decide how to allocate properties to canvass routes? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? If you receive a request for the data from the national data match for the purpose of any civil or criminal proceedings, you may be able to supply the data in specific circumstances, but you should take your own legal advice before doing so. As part of your ongoing data protection compliance, you should maintain records of every person and organisation supplied with any data to demonstrate that you are complying with the relevant legislation and the principles of processing personal data, and are ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Subject access requests Data protection legislation provides that a person may make a subject access request to see personal information that is held about them and this could include a person asking whether or not they were a match during the annual canvass. If you receive such a request, you must be satisfied of the requester's identity before fulfilling the request. Information requested by data subjects must be provided without delay and in any event within one month (although this can be extended to two months in certain conditions). Further information can be found in our guidance - subject access requests . Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? Processing information in connection with data matching Are there any other data protection considerations? Are there any other data protection considerations? Are there any other data protection considerations? When processing information in connection with the national data match step you must adhere to any requirements that have been imposed by the Minister for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. 1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities may provide further guidance on any such requirements. 2 Additionally, any data used or processed in connection with the national data match step must be stored securely and processed in accordance with data protection legislation. You should also ensure that your privacy notices and data retention schedules reflect the processing of data for the national and local data match step. Our data protection

guidance for EROs and ROs provides guidance in relation to privacy notices, along with advice about your role as data controller and a checklist to help inform the content of data sharing agreements. 1. Regulation 32ZBC(3) and (4), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBC(3) and (5), The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for Are there any other data protection considerations? What should I do if I am asked to disclose information from the national data match? Allocating properties to canvass routes Allocating properties to canvass routes Allocating properties to canvass routes Once you have received and analysed the results of both your national and local data matching (if undertaken) and taken into account any other relevant information you have access to, you need to allocate properties to specific canvass routes. The following resource provides a description of the three canvass routes and the criteria that determines when a route must be used and when an ERO has the discretion to decide whether to use a particular route or not. Canvass route descriptions and criteria (PDF) Where you decide to allocate a property to a route based on the results provided by one set of data rather than another, you should be able to explain your decision-making process clearly and maintain an audit trail of your decisions. It is important to note that whilst you will have the option to consider individual property level data match results when allocating properties to routes, you won't necessarily need to do this in practice. You should be able to apply the allocation criteria more broadly so that properties with the same data match results can be managed in the same way and allocated to the appropriate routes in bulk. DLUHC Worksheet 9 - Switching Routes (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Allocating properties to canvass routes Are there any other data protection considerations? Route 1 – the matched property route Route 1 – the matched property route Route 1 – the matched property route When you have completed your data matching and allocated properties to canvass routes, you can begin to deliver your canvass plan. This section covers Route 1 and includes guidance on when you can use Route 1, what canvass communications you can use for this route and how to process responses. DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for Route 1 – the matched property route Allocating properties to canvass routes What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? Route 1 is the matched property route. It can be used to send canvass communications to properties where you are satisfied that no changes are needed based on the results of national and any local data matching. A link to a visual overview of Route 1 is below: DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) Properties can be canvassed using Route 1 where: 1 You are satisfied that there are no changes needed at that property and you have no reason to believe that there are any additional electors to be added. You have carried out local data matching to confirm the status of the property as empty or void. 1. Regulations 32ZBA(4) and 32ZBE(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 21 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is Route 1 and when can I use it? Route 1 – the matched property route What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? Route 1 communications provide the occupants of each property with an opportunity to inform you of any changes or incorrect information you hold on the electoral register for that address. You must issue a communication to each Route 1 property. There are two communication options open to you for the

initial communication: 1 An e-communication: 2 Can be sent via any electronic channel
If used, must be sent to every registered elector aged 16 or over that you hold the
relevant electronic contact details for in the household 3 Requires a response, even
if no changes are required for the property 4 Requires follow up action if no
response is received within a reasonable timeframe 5 (i.e. if no response is received
to the initial e-communication or any reminder from at least one person within the
household, Canvass Communication A must then be sent) Canvass Communication A (CCA):
6 Is a prescribed paper communication Can be hand delivered or sent by post Must be
sent if you have been unable, or choose not, to use an e-communication Must be sent
if you do not receive a response to an e-communication from an individual within the
property within a reasonable timeframe 7 Does not require a response, unless there
are changes for the property Does not require any follow up unless you are made aware
of or have reason to believe there are changes for that property that require further
action It is an offence for an individual to fail to notify you of a change, or to
provide false information in response to a Route 1 communication. 8 1. Regulations
32ZBA(4) and 32ZBE(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■
Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the
People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation
32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to
content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People
(Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b)
The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at
footnote 5 6. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(a) The Representation of the People (Scotland)
Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The
Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at
footnote 7 8. Regulations 32ZBG(4) and 32ZBG(4)(e)(i) The Representation of the
People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 Last updated: 23
February 2021 Book traversal links for What communications should be used for Route 1
properties? What is Route 1 and when can I use it? What is an e-communication and
when can I use it? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is an
e-communication and when can I use it? An e-communication could be an email, SMS text
message or another type of electronic or digital communication, such as a
communication through internal accounts used to communicate with electors about other
local authority services. A response is required to an e-communication, even if there
are no changes to report. Whilst the e-communication you send must inform the
recipient of the requirement to respond, you need only receive a response from one
recipient of an e-communication within a household to meet the response requirement
for that property. An e-communication provides you with an opportunity to encourage a
response from a property to update the information you hold on the register via an
alternative channel than by post. This could potentially lead to resource savings. To
use an e-communication you must have the relevant contact details for at least one of
the electors aged 16 or over registered in the household. 1 You can still use an
e-communication if you only hold contact details for some but not all registered
electors at a property, although you must send an e-communication to all electors
aged 16 or over whose contact details you do have. 2 Using a mixture of
e-communication methods You can, if you wish, use different types of e-communications
for different properties: for example, you could choose to send a mixture of emails
and text messages or any other type of e-communication to different properties
depending on the contact data you hold. You can also send a mixture of
e-communications within a household. However, there is no requirement to use more

than one type of e-communication to contact a property so, for example, if you hold email addresses for some individuals and mobile numbers for others, you could decide only to use e-mail contact, in which case you would only need to send the e-communication to those individuals with email addresses. Choosing which types of e-communication method(s) to use When deciding which, if any, e-communication method to use, you should consider: whether you hold the information necessary to use the contact method you are considering, or if you are able to obtain and use contact information from any other sources in line with data protection considerations the number of individuals you hold the necessary information for how confident you are that the contact data you hold is accurate and up to date the capacity that your local authority has for sending out bulk emails/SMS messages whether to send out e-communications in batches in order to help manage the workload created by a high number of responses how you will process responses received through different communication channels, including queries from electors what steps you will take to be sure that any communication channels you use and any actions taken comply with data protection legislation how you will ensure that electors will know that e-communications you send are genuine, so they can be confident in responding accordingly You cannot use e-communications for any empty and void properties as these properties do not contain any registered electors for you to contact electronically. 1. Regulations 32ZBA(4) and 32ZBE(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(3)(b) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What communications should be used for Route 1 properties? What information should an e-communication contain? What information should an e-communication contain? What information should an e-communication contain? The design of an e-communication is not prescribed. However, we provide a template e-communication, and other information in our forms and letters guidance . Any e-communication must require the recipient to: 1 confirm whether the information for all electors is complete and accurate provide details for any other eligible electors who are not listed on the communication. These details include their name, nationality and the date of birth of any person aged 14 or 15. 2 Your e-communication must inform the recipient that they are required to respond and should also: provide the recipient with a deadline for response include information on the response channels available to them and instructions on how to use them include a link to the UK Government's registration website (gov.uk/register-to-vote) inform the recipient how you obtained their contact details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of further e-communications 1. Regulations 32ZBA(4) and 32ZBE(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE (4A)(b)(c) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What information should an e-communication contain? What is an e-communication and when can I use it? What is a successful response to an e-communication? What is a successful response to an e-communication? What is a successful response to an e-communication? You must receive a response to an e-communication from at least one elector in a household within a reasonable period of time, even where there are no changes to the information for that property. 1 A successful response to an e-communication can be defined as one which either: 2 confirms that all of the information is complete and accurate provides new information regarding who is resident at the property provides new information regarding changes required to an

elector's details provides new information indicating an existing elector is no longer resident at the property or provides any combination of the above. You only need to have received a successful response from one elector contacted via an e-communication to be satisfied that you have received a response for that property.

3 Making additional enquiries You can make additional enquiries if you receive a response that indicates a change may have occurred at the property but does not include enough information to provide a successful response as above. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get information needed to provide a successful response, you can close the route and undertake any additional actions required, for example, beginning the ITR process for new residents at the property. If you are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response, you must transfer the property to Route 2 – the unmatched property route, as you can no longer be satisfied that there are no changes to the property. For example, a response may suggest that there are potential new electors at the property but may not give their names. If you are unable to obtain the names of the potential new electors having made additional enquiries, this would require you to move the property to Route 2. What action to take if no response is received Where no response is received within a reasonable time period, you must send a CCA to the property.

4 However, you may choose to send a reminder e-communication before sending the CCA. While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days and may in some circumstances be shorter (for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place).

1. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 32ZBE(4) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

3. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

4. Regulation 32ZBE(5)(b) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4

Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for What is a successful response to an e-communication? What information should an e-communication contain? Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Route 1 e-communications If you decide to use an e-communication then it is up to you to determine the most suitable response mechanism(s) for your area. For example, you could decide to signpost within your e-communication to an automated online, SMS or telephone response service which collects the required information. You could also allow responses to be provided in person, by email or by telephone, either to a call centre or directly to your team. Managing changes to a property If you receive information in response to a Route 1 e-communication telling you about changes, you should take action to process the information in the response as necessary. What if more than one response is received? You will need to ensure that you can identify where more than one individual within a property has responded to an e-communication and are clear on what actions you will take if there is any conflicting information in the responses. For example, if you receive a response from one elector confirming that all the information is correct and accurate and you receive a response from another indicating that someone needs to be removed from the register at the property, you will need to make further enquiries to confirm the details of the property. If you believe that there may be changes needed to the property but are unable to confirm enough information to enable you to carry out review or ITR processes, then you must transfer that property to Route 2. What should I do with email bounce backs? An email bounce back is where an email is undelivered and returns

a notification back to the sender. There are two types of bounce backs: soft bounce – this is where delivery is delayed while the email server re-attempts delivery a number of times over a period of hours or days and is only considered undeliverable if the retry period expires without success hard bounce – this is where the email address is deemed permanently undeliverable Where a hard bounce occurs you should remove the email address from your database and then send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for individuals at the property. In the case of a soft bounce you will usually need to wait to see if a hard bounce occurs as a result of still being unable to deliver the message after further attempts. You should have a process in place to enable you to identify bounce backs and take appropriate action. We have created the table below which identifies some of the common reasons for bounce backs and action you may wish to take where this occurs.

Reason for bounce back	Action to take
Email blocked by the recipient (hard bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. You should remove the email address from your database and send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for any individuals at the property.
Email address is invalid – for example, wrong address provided or transposed incorrectly (hard bounce)	Check your email data source for accuracy. If the address has been transposed incorrectly, correct the error and re-send the e- communication. If the address has not been transposed incorrectly – you should remove the email address from your database and send a CCA to the property if you have no other e-communication options for any individuals at the property.
The email is blocked by the server – for example, the email is in wrong format, too big or recognised as spam (hard bounce)	In advance of sending, review your ecommunication carefully, including with your IT team, and identify any potential reasons the email may be blocked - such as large graphics, photos or other corporate branding. Corporate branding that needs to be included as a way to signpost that the e-communication is genuine should be of a size that will be accepted by the receiving mailbox/server.
Receiving server is unavailable (soft bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. This will become a hard bounce if no action is taken by the receiving server.
Receiving mailbox is full (soft bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. This will become a hard bounce if no action is taken by the owner of the mailbox.
Respondent has an autoreply service set up (soft bounce)	There is nothing you can do as sender to prevent this. The email may still be delivered but you should check the content of the auto reply and make a decision as to whether further action is required. For example, the individual may have left a place of work. In this case, you could treat the auto response in the same way as a hard bounce. If you receive bounce backs and have no other electronic method for contacting individuals at a property, you should continue with the Route 1 process by sending a CCA to the property.

1 There is no requirement to re-allocate the properties to Route 2 unless you believe that there may be changes required at the property. You will need to take steps to ensure that any email addresses which resulted in a hard bounce back are removed from your database to ensure the accuracy of the contact information you hold for future canvasses.

1. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Responses to Route 1 e-communications What is a successful response to an e-communication? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Canvass Communication A is a paper communication used

for contacting matched properties as part of the Route 1 canvass. It provides residents with details of the individuals currently registered at the address and encourages a response if there are changes required. The format of the CCA is prescribed 1 and you must also include certain information about each person currently registered at the address. You must pre-print: 2 full name and nationality for all registered electors, including attainers and those individuals who have had their application recently determined and will be added to the register by the next notice of alteration prior to the CCA being sent The CCA must also include: Any information about how residents can respond if any of the information is inaccurate or incomplete 3 A statement setting out that, where a response is provided because any of the information is incomplete or inaccurate, the responder will be required to declare that the information they provide is true 4 A statement on how the data will be used and processed 5 The CCA must not include: 6 the details of any Special Category electors details of any individual you are aware of but who has not yet successfully registered to vote, even if you think they may be resident and eligible to register We provide more guidance to help you with the production of the CCA in our forms and letters guidance . A CCA must be sent where: 7 you have previously sent an e-communication for a Route 1 property and have not received a successful response from at least one person at the property to whom a e-communication was sent within a reasonable timeframe you have been unable to send an e-communication to at least one individual at a property you have decided not to use e-communications for a Route 1 property There is no requirement to receive a response to a CCA. 1. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBE(6) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 32ZBG(3)(e) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Regulation 32ZBG (3)(e)(i) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Regulation 32ZBG(3)(c) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulations 32ZBE(6)(a) and (b) The Representation of the People (Scotland).Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 32ZBE(5) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Responses to Route 1 e-communications Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) While households are obliged by law to let you know if any of the information contained on the CCA is inaccurate or incomplete, 1 there is no requirement for you to follow up non-responses to a CCA. You should, however, follow up on any CCAs that are returned by Royal Mail as undeliverable or return to sender. What response mechanisms are available for a CCA? It is up to you to determine which response mechanisms you will make available for individuals to use where they need to notify you of changes in a property after receiving a CCA. You must pre-print details of your chosen response mechanisms on the CCA. 2 The types of response mechanisms you may wish to provide are: Telephone, either to a call centre or directly to your team Web Text Email In person Post (note - there is no legal requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a CCA, reflecting that the form itself is not intended to be returned) When making a decision as to what response mechanisms to offer you will need to consider: If a response is returned by post that indicates changes to a property, how will you ensure that you are satisfied that the information provided is accurate to

enable you to process the changes? The demographics of your canvass area – for example if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet the needs of your electors. Whether the response mechanisms you offer ensure that there is an accessible way for individuals to provide details of any changes to you. Whether the response mechanisms you offer will also signpost to potential new electors to register via the register to vote website How you will manage the processing of responses through different channels – for example, if you are considering using a channel you have not used previously, you will need to ensure you have the right processes in place to manage responses through this channel, including considering how it will interact with your EMS system. You should also consider any additional resource implications from utilising different response mechanisms. How should I process a response to a CCA? Where someone responds to a CCA, whether to correct inaccurate information or to add missing information, you will need to check that their response includes all the information you require to fully process the response . For example, has the response provided enough information to start the ITR or review process? You can make additional enquiries if the response does not include enough information to close Route 1. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get the information needed to provide a successful response, you can close Route 1 and continue with the ITR or review process as appropriate for the property. If you are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response, you must transfer the property to Route 2 – the unmatched property route, as you can no longer be satisfied that there are no changes to the property. For example, a response may suggest that there are potential new electors at the property but may not give their names. If you are unable to obtain the names of the potential new electors having made additional enquiries, this would require you to move the property to Route 2. Further information about Route 2 can be found in our guidance for Route 2 - the unmatched property route .

1. Regulation 32ZBE(3) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 32ZBG(4)(e) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) What information is included in Canvass Communication A (CCA) and when can I use it? Route 2 – the unmatched property route

Route 2 – the unmatched property route

Route 2 – the unmatched property route

When you have completed your data matching and allocated properties to canvass routes, you can begin to deliver your canvass plan. This section covers Route 2 and includes guidance on when you can use Route 2, the contact rules for Route 2, what canvass communications you can use and how to process responses. DLUHC Worksheet 4 - Route 2 canvass rules (PDF) DLUHC- Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions pages 1 & 2 - SCO (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 6 - Route 2 process (PDF) Last updated: 21 March 2022

Book traversal links for Route 2 – the unmatched property route

Responses to Canvass Communication A (CCA) What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? Route 2 is the unmatched property route. All properties by default start by being allocated to Route 2, and you can use Route 2 for any property at any time. To be able to canvass a property using Route 1 or Route 3 instead, specific criteria need to be met. What are the definitions of the different contact types for Route 2? The different contact types for Route 2 are defined as follows: Property contact – this is where either the prescribed Canvass Form or Canvass Communication B

(CCB) is sent to the property, or a visit to the address is carried out. Your first contact attempt must be a property contact. Individual contact – this is where contact is made using contact details you hold for an individual who has been returned as a match 1 through national and/or any local data matching. You could use telephone, email, SMS or another electronic communication method (such as through internal customer accounts). Personal contact – this is where an attempt is made to make contact with either the household or individuals registered at the address who have been returned as a match, either by a visit to the property or a telephone call.

What are the contact rules for Route 2? To meet the requirements of a Route 2 canvass there are a number of contact rules that you will need to follow: You must make a minimum of three contact attempts with the property and/or individuals at that property unless a response has been received 2 At least two contact attempts must be with the property, not with an individual One of the contact attempts must be via the use of the prescribed Canvass Form The first of the contact attempts must be a communication with the property (i.e. a Canvass Form, Canvass Communication B (CCB) or visit to the property), rather than with an individual At least one of the contact attempts must be a type of personal contact (i.e. a visit or a phone call) If any of the criteria above are not met in your first three contact attempts, you must make a further contact attempt to meet any outstanding requirements from the rules and complete the Route 2 process. Using your local knowledge and experience, you may decide to use different communication methods with different properties at the different contact stages of Route 2. You should speak to your EMS provider to confirm how this could be managed in practice. You may also decide to send specific communications at different times, depending on how you wish to manage your resources. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has produced a table which sets out the possible options for how different contact types could be used to ensure the Route 2 requirements are met. DLUHC Route 2 Permutations Table (PDF) 1. Regulations 32ZBD (4)(b) and (c) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 32ZBD (1), (2) and (3) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 22 March 2022 Book traversal links for What is Route 2 and when can I use it? Route 2 – the unmatched property route What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? The first contact attempt must be to a property, not an individual. 1 The communication options open to you for a property contact are: 2 Canvass Communication B (CCB) Canvass Form Visit to the property (i.e. a door knock) What is Canvass Communication B? While legislation does not provide detail about what the CCB 3 must include in the way that it does for the prescribed CCA (used for Route 1 properties) and Canvass Form, it does require you to use the version designed by the Electoral Commission. Canvass Communication B: Is a paper form Can be used as an alternative to the Canvass Form (notwithstanding that one of the three contact attempts required to complete Route 2 where no response is received must be by way of a Canvass Form) Does not require a pre-paid return envelope to be included Encourages a response to be made via alternative response channels to post – either online or through a telephone response service Requires a response even if no changes are required at the property Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe What is a Canvass Form? The legislation requires you to use the Canvass Form designed by the Electoral Commission. 4 The Canvass Form: Is a paper form Must be accompanied by a pre-paid return envelope 5 Must be delivered to a property at some point in the

Route 2 contact process, unless a response has already been received from the property Encourages electors to respond with updated details of the residents at the property Requires a response even if no changes are required at the property Requires follow up action if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe We provide more guidance to help you with production of the CCB and Canvass Form in our forms and letters guidance .

1. Regulation 32ZBD(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1
2. Regulation 32ZBE(3) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2
3. Regulations 32ZBD(1)(a) and (10) and 32ZBG(1)(a)(iii) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3
4. Regulation 32ZBG(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 4
5. Regulation 32ZBD(9)(b) The Representation of the People (Scotland) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 5

Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? What is Route 2 and when can I use it? What constitutes a visit to a property? What constitutes a visit to a property? What constitutes a visit to a property? A visit to a property: Involves a canvasser attempting to gather the information required by the Canvass Form or CCB in person from a resident of the property Does not require a response to be received on the doorstep, or the door to be answered Can involve hand delivering either a CCB or Canvass Form when no response is received on the doorstep, which would meet both the personal contact and the property contact requirements of a Route 2 canvass at the same time Last updated: 16 April 2020

Book traversal links for What constitutes a visit to a property? What are the communications options for the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? You will need to make a decision about how you will carry out the first contact attempt. Some questions for you to consider include: Will you send a paper communication and, if so, which one? A CCB may encourage individuals to use the alternative response channels you have in place. An increase in the use of these channels may result in cost savings and reduce the resources you need to provide for processing responses. The demographic of your electors and how likely they are to have access to the different response channels should also be taken into account. A prescribed Canvass Form may be familiar to electors, which may encourage individuals to respond at the first contact stage. Remember that even if you do not receive a response at the first contact stage, if a Canvass Form has been sent as part of the first contact attempt, you are not required to send a further Canvass Form at any subsequent contact attempt. How will you deliver the paper communication – by hand or by post? You will need to consider the costs and resource requirements associated with production and delivery for each option. If delivering by hand, will you combine it with a personal visit? Where you are delivering canvass communications by hand, you could attempt a personal visit to the property (door knock) first. This attempt to make personal contact with an individual at the property will meet the Route 2 requirement of making at least one personal contact. If there is no answer at the property, you could then deliver the canvass communication. You will need to ensure you identify, recruit and train sufficient canvassers for the geographical spread and number of properties requiring Route 2 canvass communications. Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for How should I carry out the first contact attempt? What constitutes a visit to a property? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? Beyond the requirement

to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a Canvass Form, it is up to you to determine which response channels you will make available for responding to canvass communications, whether a Canvass Form or CCB. You will need to reflect the available response options in your canvass communications at each stage of the Route 2 process. The type of response mechanisms you may wish to provide include: Telephone (either to a call centre or directly to your team) Online via an automated online response management system SMS Text message Email (either to a managed response service or directly to your team) In person Post (note - there is no legal requirement to include a pre-paid reply envelope with a CCB, reflecting that the letter itself is not intended to be returned by post) When making a decision as to what response channels to offer you will need to consider: If a response is returned by post that indicates changes to a property, how will you ensure that you are satisfied that the information provided is accurate to enable you to process the changes? The demographics of your canvass area – for example if you know you have a high population of older people, areas with limited access to internet, or high levels of socio-economic deprivation, you will need to consider which response mechanisms would be most appropriate to meet these needs. Whether the response mechanisms you offer ensure that there is an accessible way for individuals to provide details of any changes to you Whether the response mechanisms you offer will also signpost potential new electors to register via the register to vote website How you will manage the processing of responses through different channels – for example, if you are considering using a channel you have not used previously, you will need to ensure you have the right processes in place to manage responses through this channel, including considering how each channel will interact with your EMS. You should also consider any additional resource implications from utilising different response mechanisms. If you do not receive a response to a Route 2 communication, even where there are no changes to report, you must make further contact attempts until the minimum contact criteria has been met.

1. Regulation 32ZBD(2) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021

Book traversal links for Which response channels can be used for Route 2? How should I carry out the first contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? If you do not get a successful response within a reasonable period of time following the first contact, a second contact attempt must be made. 1 While a reasonable period of time is not defined in legislation, in our view this should be no longer than 28 days and may, in some circumstances, be shorter (for example, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or where there is an election due to take place). You can choose to make either: a property contact (i.e. Canvass Form, CCB, visit to the property), or an individual contact (i.e. email, SMS, telephone or any other electronic communication method), if you hold contact details for any matched individual(s) (aged 16 or over) at the property Electronic communications (e-communications) are designed to encourage a response to be made by channels other than by post. Your e-communication must inform the recipient that they are required to respond and should also: Provide the recipient with a deadline for response Include information on the response channels available to them and instructions on how to use them Include a link to the UK Government's registration website (gov.uk/register-to-vote) Inform the recipient how you obtained their contact details and give them the opportunity to opt-out of further e-communications Whilst the e-communication you send must inform the recipient of the requirement to respond, you

need only receive a response from one recipient of an e-communication within a household to meet the response requirement for that property and prevent the need for follow up. You can find out more information on e-communications in the forms and letters guidance . 1. Regulation 32ZBD(2)The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? Which response channels can be used for Route 2? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? You will need to make a decision about how to carry out the second contact attempt for all properties that have not supplied the information needed to provide a successful response to the first contact attempt. Some questions for you to consider include: Will you try another property contact with a paper canvass communication? If so, which one? If you used a CCB for the first contact attempt, you could decide to use a Canvass Form for the second attempt in order to meet the requirement for the Route 2 process that a Canvass Form be sent as one of the three minimum contact attempts where no response is received. You could also consider combining the delivery of a paper communication with a personal contact to the property. Will you use individual contact methods? Things you should consider when deciding whether to use e-communications . Further advice on using e-communications, including what to do where more than one response is received and what to do with email bounce backs. How you will process responses received from different communication methods, including queries from electors? You will need to take steps to ensure that any communication channels you use are secure and that any actions taken comply with data protection legislation so that electors will know that individual canvass communications you send are genuine, and can be confident in responding accordingly. When using an individual contact method as part of Route 2, you must attempt to make contact with each matched individual at the property that you hold contact information for. 1 Using a mixture of e-communications You can choose to send a mixture of e-communications within a household. However, there is no requirement to use more than one type of e-communication to contact a property so, for example, if you hold email addresses for some individuals and mobile numbers for others, you could decide only to use e-mail contact, in which case you would only need to send the e-communication to those individuals with email addresses. However, if the contact information for one matched elector is the same as that for another individual in the same property and you have already tried to make contact using that information, for example, if more than one occupier has provided the same telephone number or email address, you do not need to make multiple contact attempts using the same details. If you decide to attempt to contact individuals by telephone it is important to ensure that a clear audit trail is kept to record that contact attempt - for example, the date and time the call was made, details of who was spoken to, and what (if any) details they confirm or provide. The response can be provided by anyone at the property: any individual, including those who were unmatched, may answer the call and provide a response. 1. Regulations 32ZBD(4)(b) and (c) and 32ZBD(8)(b) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the second contact attempt? What are the communication options for the second contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the third contact attempt? You must make a minimum of three contact attempts where you have not obtained a response. 1 In order to be able to close the Route 2 process in three contacts, you will need

to ensure that the contact method you select for this stage will enable you to comply with the contact rules for Route 2 . In determining your contact options for the third contact attempt, you should therefore ask the following two questions: Have you already made an attempt to carry out the personal contact requirement of Route 2 – either by telephone call or household visit? Have you already sent the prescribed Canvass Form as part of a previous contact stage? It is important to remember that the sending of a CCB does not meet this requirement. If the answer to both the questions is yes, you can choose from any of the property or individual contact methods available to you (and outlined as part of the first and second contact stages). If the answer to either of these questions is no, and you wish to complete the Route 2 cycle with the minimum required contacts, you should undertake whichever of the outstanding requirements remain as part of this contact attempt. If you choose to use a contact method for your third attempt that would not enable you to meet the minimum contact requirements, you will need to make further attempts until the minimum contact requirements have been met or you have obtained a response. 1.

Regulation 32ZBD (3) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■

Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for How should I carry out the third contact attempt? How should I carry out the second contact attempt? Route 2 responses Route 2 responses Route 2 responses If you do not receive a response to a Route 2 communication, even where there are no changes to report, you must make further contact attempts until the minimum contact criteria has been met. 1 You will need to check that any response you receive includes all the information you require to fully process the response. For example, do you have enough information to start the ITR or review process? You only need to have received a response from one individual to be satisfied that you have received a response for that property. Where you receive a response which confirms that all the information you hold for a property is complete and accurate, once you have processed the response, you can close Route 2 for that property. Managing incomplete or conflicting responses Where you receive a response that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it. You can make additional enquiries if the response does not include enough information to close Route 2. For example, if you have been provided with the full name of a potential new elector, but not their nationality, you could make additional enquiries before sending them an ITR. If as a result of making additional enquiries you are able to get the information needed to provide a successful response, you can close Route 2 and continue with the ITR or review process as appropriate for the property. If you receive conflicting information from a property you will need to decide what action to take. For example, if you receive a response from one elector confirming that all the information is correct and accurate and you receive a response from another indicating that someone needs to be removed from the register at the property, you will need to make further enquiries to confirm the details of the property. However, if you have received information to suggest a change may have occurred at a property, but are unable to obtain the information that is needed to provide a successful response through the minimum Route 2 contact attempts, you should continue to make further contact attempts to obtain the missing information required to provide a successful response. Managing changes to a property Where you receive a response to a Route 2 communication that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it and you should then take action to process the information in

the response as necessary. 1. Regulation 32ZBD(2) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Route 2 responses How should I carry out the third contact attempt? Route 3 - the defined property route Route 3 - the defined property route Route 3 - the defined property route As part of your planning for the canvass you should already have undertaken an exercise to identify Route 3 properties for your area and made initial contact with the responsible person for those properties. This section provides guidance on what communications you can use for this route and how to process responses for those properties you have allocated to Route 3. DLUHC Worksheet 7 - Preparations for Route 3 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 8 - Route 3 process - SCO (PDF) Last updated: 22 March 2022 Book traversal links for Route 3 - the defined property route Route 2 responses What is Route 3 and when can I use it? What is Route 3 and when can I use it? What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Route 3, the defined property route, allows you to obtain the information required by the canvass for certain types of properties from a responsible person, where one can be identified. Route 3 properties must meet certain criteria set out in law. More information on the types of properties that can be considered for canvassing via Route 3, along with an explanation of who can be considered to be a responsible person, can be found in what are Route 3 properties and how can I identify them? You may decide to use Route 3 for certain property types where you believe you are more likely to get a response via a responsible person 1 than an individual resident within the property. However, if in advance of starting the Route 3 process, the data match result for any property shows all individuals resident at that property as matched and you are satisfied that there are no changes at that property to capture, you could decide that it is more appropriate to canvass the property via Route 1 – the matched property route. Route 3 cannot be used where data match results or other information you hold shows that only individuals under the age of 18 are registered at the property. 2 1. Regulations 32ZBA(3) and (5) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 and Regulation 32ZBF(2) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulations 32ZBA(6) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 6 August 2021 Book traversal links for What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Route 3 - the defined property route Developing positive relationships with responsible persons Developing positive relationships with responsible persons Developing positive relationships with responsible persons It is important that you develop and maintain positive relationships with responsible persons to ensure that your Route 3 canvass activity is successful. You should consider how best to contact responsible persons in your area to ensure that the information is received, understood and acted upon in a timely way. For example, you may wish to make an informal phone call to your contact at the beginning of your Route 3 canvass to highlight that a formal request for information is forthcoming. You should be prepared to offer personal visits to Route 3 properties early in the canvass process if you consider that face to face communication is most appropriate for dealing with concerns or questions. In some instances, this may be the best way of engaging with responsible persons and gathering the information required. Setting timescales You should ask for the information to be provided within a reasonable period of time. 1 When setting deadlines for the provision of the required information, you should ensure that they are realistic and achievable, and you should understand the different conditions in which your responsible persons are operating. For example, universities may not be able to provide information about students until the beginning of term. Once you have

agreed your deadline for responses, you should communicate how you will issue reminders or follow up with visits as necessary, to help manage expectations. Issues with the supply of information Some responsible persons, for example care home staff, may have concerns about supplying information about residents who may not have the mental capacity to vote. Ensuring that your communications with them are clear and comprehensive will help provide them with the confidence they need to work with you effectively. You should point out that the purpose of the annual canvass is simply to capture information on who lives at the property to establish who should be invited to register, and identifying people who are no longer resident. We have produced guidance on supporting care home residents to register which you can refer to.

Guidance for care home staff in Scotland Occasionally, responsible persons may have concerns about supplying the required information because they have doubts about sharing personal data. In these cases you should remind them of your right to request information and reassure them that providing the required information does not breach data protection legislation.

1. Regulations 32ZBA(3) and (5) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 and Regulation 32ZBF(2) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 26 May 2021

Book traversal links for Developing positive relationships with responsible persons What is Route 3 and when can I use it? Right to request information Right to request information Right to request information As Electoral Registration Officer, you have a duty to maintain an accurate and complete register . UK law enables you to require anyone to provide information required for the purposes of your registration duties. In particular, Regulation 23 of the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 1 states that: A registration officer may require any person to give information required for the purposes of that officer's duties in maintaining registers of electors. The required information for the Route 3 canvass is set out in what should a Route 3 communication include. Under data protection principles the ERO is entitled to collect the required information as there is a lawful basis for its processing; the performance of a public task in the public interest, as provided for in electoral law. If any additional optional information, for example email addresses and phone numbers, is requested, this may be shared if a data sharing agreement is in place between you and the responsible person or organisation, and they have informed individuals about the potential sharing of such information through their privacy notice. Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs provides further guidance on complying with data protection legislation. There is a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum £1,000 for failing to provide the information required.

2 1. Regulation 23 (1) Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23 (3) Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 26 June 2023

Book traversal links for Right to request information Developing positive relationships with responsible persons What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Communication with any properties being canvassed via Route 3 must be with the responsible person that you have identified as part of your planning. There is no single prescribed communication method for Route 3 so you have the flexibility to decide how best to communicate with the responsible person for each of the Route 3 properties in your area. You can contact the responsible person for a Route 3 property by any method you think is appropriate including, but not limited to, the following: 1 Sending a paper communication - there is no prescribed form to be used for Route 3, but the

prescribed canvass communications could be useful as templates for the information you need to collect Electronic communications – this could be by sending an email where you hold a contact email address for the responsible person Visiting the Route 3 property or the office of the responsible person By phone – you could decide to contact the responsible person by phone where you hold a contact number for them Whichever method you choose for communicating with the responsible person at each Route 3 property, you should ensure that you maintain a clear audit trail of contacts you have made. As a minimum you should record the steps that you have taken to gather the information required by the canvass from the responsible person, for example, by recording the date, time and name of person contacted and the details of any response obtained from the responsible person.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(6) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Right to request information What should a Route 3 communication include? What should a Route 3 communication include? What should a Route 3 communication include? As part of your planning for canvassing Route 3 properties you should have already considered when and how to make initial contact with a responsible person for Route 3 properties . After this initial contact, you will need to contact them again when you are requesting the information required by the canvass and potentially to follow up with reminder requests. You should ensure that any follow up activity allows time to switch properties to a Route 2 canvass if necessary. As a minimum, any communication must ask the responsible person to provide the following for each person who is aged 14 or over, eligible to register to vote and resident at the property:

1 Full name Nationality Date of birth You should also request the contact details (telephone number and/or email address) for each eligible resident for future contact purposes, but you should make it clear in any communication that the provision of these is optional. You should also consider how to communicate any relevant data protection information, such as a privacy statement setting out how you will process the information and what it will be used for. You can find more information on this in our guidance on Planning for canvass communications. What else should I consider when making contact with a responsible person? Whether you contact the responsible person by email, phone, letter or personal visit , you should ensure that your communications are clear and complete. There is no prescribed form to be used for Route 3, but the prescribed Canvass Form could be useful as a template for the information you need to collect. Information received this way could be scanned and input into your EMS in a similar way to processing other forms. We have produced a resource to support you with key messaging for Route 3 communications. Key messaging for Route 3 communications You could also consider whether collecting the information in another format, for example a spreadsheet, would allow for the data to be imported directly into your EMS system. This could be particularly useful when asking for information from universities, for example, where there is a high volume of information to collect. As with your initial contact, you should ensure that you record the steps you have taken to make contact and request the information. Further guidance on how to communicate with Route 3 properties is given in what communications should be used for Route 3 properties.

1. Regulation 32ZBF(6) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 27 May 2021 Book traversal links for What should a Route 3 communication include? What communications should be used for Route 3 properties? Route 3 responses Route 3 responses Route 3 responses You will need to check that any response you receive provides the required information for each person aged 16 or

over who is residing at the property and is eligible to register. 1 If you are satisfied that a response has been received from the responsible person for a property providing the information you need, the Route 3 process should be closed. Where you receive a response that indicates that a change may have occurred at the property, you will need to check that the response includes all the information you require to fully process it and then you should take action to process the information in the response as necessary. Should I issue reminders for Route 3 properties? Where you have requested the required information from a responsible person for a Route 3 property and have not received a response you can, if you wish, remind them to respond. The reminder could be via a different communication method, or you could use the same communication method as your initial contact. Whatever action you take, you should record the steps that you have taken to remind the responsible person to respond, for example, by recording the date, time and communication method used. You will need to decide on the timing of any reminders. If you choose not to use a reminder or if a reminder has not led to the provision of the information from the responsible person within a reasonable time period, the property must be transferred to Route 2 and a full Route 2 canvass of that property must be conducted. 2 1. Regulation 32ZBF(5) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 32ZBF(7) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 16 March 2021 Book traversal links for Route 3 responses What should a Route 3 communication include? Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons You should make regular contact with responsible persons both during and outside of the canvass as part of your work to maintain the register. Monitoring the progress of the Route 3 canvass You should remain in regular contact with responsible persons during the canvass to check their progress in providing the required information, assist with any queries they may have, and to avoid delaying you from taking the necessary subsequent actions. You should consider how you will monitor the progress of the Route 3 process as part of your planning for the annual canvass. When making contact with responsible persons, you should set timescales for receiving the required information. You should put a process in place to check that the information has been provided by your deadline. Your EMS system should be able to assist with this, and diaries, electronic calendars or project planning tools may also be useful. You should monitor responses from Route 3 properties during the canvass to identify which properties you: have received the required information from, so the Route 3 process can be closed have received some of the required information from, and need to ask for further information have received no information from within a reasonable period of time, and need to follow up with a reminder or personal visit may need to transfer to a Route 2 canvass Further guidance on dealing with canvass returns is found in Route 3 responses . Maintaining contact with responsible persons outside the canvass It is important to maintain contact with responsible persons throughout the year as part of your activity to maintain the register outside of the canvass period. As well as ensuring that your contact details for the responsible person at each Route 3 property remain correct in advance of the next canvass you should also ask them to provide updates on residents who have moved in or out during the year. This could be requested on a monthly basis, for example, or in the run up to an electoral event. This would be particularly useful for properties where there are likely to have been a number of changes outside of the canvass period due to the nature of the property, such as care homes or student

accommodation. Keeping in touch will also help to build a long-term relationship with responsible persons, and help ensure that the provision of the information you need as part of the canvass takes place as smoothly as possible. Our guidance on public engagement and registration planning includes further advice on planning for registration outside the canvass, including what records you can inspect throughout the year to identify potential new electors. The section on maintaining the register throughout the year contains additional guidance on registration activity outside the canvass, for example through sending household notification letters or discretionary communications . Last updated: 27 May 2021

[Book traversal links for Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons](#)

[Route 3 responses](#)

[Processing canvass responses](#)

[Processing canvass responses](#)

This section of the guidance covers how to process canvass responses. Your registration plans should address how you will deal with each type of canvass response and any follow-up activity that you will need to take. Responses to canvass communications will fall into the following broad categories:

- all of the information is complete and accurate provides new information regarding who is resident at the property provides new information regarding changes required to an elector's details provides new information indicating an existing elector is no longer resident at the property a combination of the above information that the property has no residents who are eligible to be registered

Last updated: 11 June 2020

[Book traversal links for Processing canvass responses](#)

[Maintaining regular contact with responsible persons](#)

What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Canvass response indicates all of the information is complete and accurate You should record that a response has been received to stop reminders from being sent and close the canvass route for the property. Canvass response indicates an existing elector is no longer resident at the property You must not automatically delete the elector from the register. You must instead either obtain a second source of evidence or conduct a registration review before you can remove the elector. You can find more information on both in our guidance - deleting an elector from the register Canvass response indicates an existing elector is now deceased You may automatically delete the elector from the register if a response indicates that an elector is deceased, and you are satisfied that the information is correct. Canvass response indicates there are new resident(s) at the property You must invite potential eligible electors to register within 28 calendar days of receipt unless, in the meantime, they have made an application to register. You do not need to know the full or exact name of a potential elector in order to give them an invitation to register. You do, however, need to have enough information about their name to be able to identify them as an individual. You can find more information in our guidance - inviting individuals to register to vote Canvass response indicates an elector's name has changed You should send a change of name form to the elector. If an elector has changed their name they must complete a change of name form and provide supporting evidence of the change for the electoral register to be updated. You can find more information in our guidance - processing a change to an elector's name Canvass response indicates an elector's nationality has changed You should send an invitation to register to an elector whose nationality has changed. An elector who was previously registered only in the register of local government electors must make a new application if they become a British citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of another Commonwealth country, so that they can be added to the register of UK Parliamentary electors. The new application will

need to go through the application, verification and determination process again. You can find more information in our guidance - processing a change to an elector's nationality

Canvass response indicates a change to an elector's open (edited) register preference Where the canvass response clearly indicates that a person wishes to opt out of the open register (for example, if only one elector resides at the address and they have indicated they wish to be removed from the open register), you should treat the canvass response as a notice under Article 21 of the GDPR and amend their open register preference in line with their request. If you are in any doubt as to whether the request comes from an individual elector (for example, if there are multiple electors at the address) or as to their intentions, you should contact the elector(s) to explain what the process is for changing their open register preference, and ask for confirmation before processing the request. This includes if you receive a response from one person that seems to make a request on behalf of everyone listed on the form. You can find more information in our guidance – processing a change to an elector's open register preference

Last updated: 22 March 2022

Book traversal links for What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Processing canvass responses What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? With the exception of a Canvass Communication A, a person who has received a canvass communication must provide the information that it requires to the ERO, but there is no requirement for the form itself to be returned.

1 There is a criminal penalty of a fine up to a maximum of £1,000 for failing to provide the information required to the ERO. 2 The penalty for providing false information to an ERO is up to six months imprisonment or a fine of up to £5,000. 3 1. Regulation 23(1) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 23(3) The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Sections 13D(6) The Representation of the people act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3

Last updated: 23 February 2021

Book traversal links for What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What action should you take when you receive a successful canvass response? Elections during the annual canvass Elections during the annual canvass Elections during the annual canvass This section of the guidance covers the areas you will need to consider and decisions you will need to take in relation to both the delivery of the canvass and the management of electoral registration for the poll, if an election is held during the canvass period. Last updated: 15 June 2020

Book traversal links for Elections during the annual canvass What are the penalties for failing to respond to a canvass communication or providing false information? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? An election during the canvass period may reduce the amount of time you have for follow-up activities for both canvass communications and ITRs. Your canvass plan and risk register should include details of how you will redeploy resources to target registration in any areas in which an election takes place. If any of the elections listed below, including general or by elections, are held between 1 July and 1 December, you will need to make a decision whether to delay publication of the revised register and, if so, by how much. In these circumstances publication of the revised register can be

postponed up to 1 February the following year. UK Parliamentary elections Scottish Parliamentary elections Local government elections The impact of any election may depend on which stage of the canvass you are at and how many polling districts are affected by the election. You will need to be satisfied that you will have sufficient time to take all necessary steps to ensure your registers are as accurate and complete as possible by the time of publication. In reaching your decision you should consider the impact that postponing the publication of the revised register may have on canvass processes. For example, where publication of the revised register is postponed, personal canvassing may take place later in the year where reduced daylight hours may impact on the willingness of canvassers to knock on, and non-responders to open, their doors. Inclement weather may also impact a later canvass, and response rates may reduce over the festive period. Where you decide to postpone publication due to an election, you should take steps to make local political parties and elected representatives aware of the changed register publication date at an early stage. As detailed in the guidance for monthly notices of alteration during the canvass period, there is no requirement to publish a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but you may do so if you wish. Therefore if publication of the revised register has been postponed to, for example, 1 February, you will publish a monthly notice of alteration in October and November; you are not required to publish one in December or January, but you may do so if you wish. Last updated: 2 November 2022

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass?](#) [Elections during the annual canvass](#) [How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass?](#) [How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass?](#) [How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass?](#) [If an election is to be held during the canvass, your focus will need to be on any new potential electors identified who have not yet registered. You should consider how best to use your resources to target these individuals and to chase up responses to any Route 2 or 3 canvass communications, so that as many eligible electors as possible are registered in time for the election. Your plan should address such things as: what canvassers will have to do differently how canvass staff will be informed of an election and given their revised instructions what you will do to maximise returns in the affected area\(s\) to reduce potential disenfranchisement how you will identify and prioritise the processing of canvass communications and ITRs for the affected area\(s\) how the canvass will resume after the election when you will publish the revised register and what factors will be considered in making the decision how you will communicate decisions to local political parties, elected representatives and other interested individuals and groups Printing polling districts on canvass communications and ITRs will enable you to quickly identify and prioritise these forms where an election is in only part of the registration area. You can include other registration-related information in the same envelope as an ITR, such as information about the registration deadline for a forthcoming poll. If the election affects the whole of the registration area, it will be particularly important that your resources are targeted to maximise the number of eligible electors registered in time to participate in the election. Every effort should be made to conclude all visits well in advance of the registration deadline, but, given the time constraints and depending on the timing of the election, this might not always be feasible. You should use local data records and your knowledge about your local area to identify any new electors, and any properties where there are likely to have been changes. These could then be prioritised for personal visits.](#)

You could also consider amending your approach to follow up activities for any non-responding Route 2 or Route 3 properties in the area affected by the election. For example, you might choose to send additional e-comms reminders or make personal contact by phone instead of face to face visit where possible. The local authority that appointed you as ERO must, by law, provide you with the resources you need to discharge your statutory functions. Use local media and public awareness exercises to set out to residents how they can register to vote in time to be included on the register for use at the election. In the event of any UK-wide poll during the canvass, it will be important to link your local messaging with any communication activity by the Commission in order to maximise its impact. Where the election crosses local council boundaries, you should liaise with the ERO in the other local council(s) to ensure a consistent approach and messaging across the electoral area. How can I use my canvassers to target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? Your plans should be flexible enough to allow you to re-allocate staff resources to ensure as many responses as possible are collected and returned to the electoral registration office from the relevant area(s) in time to be processed and determined for the final election notice of alteration. As a minimum, canvassers working in the area(s) affected by an election should return any voter registration forms that they have collected as soon as possible, and by the registration application deadline for that election. You should provide details in instructions to canvassers on how often forms should be returned to the registration office if an election occurs. Registration application forms collected by canvassers by the registration deadline, are deemed to have met the registration deadline even if not brought to the office of the Electoral Registration Officer until after the registration deadline. Canvassing only needs to pause in the area(s) affected by the election. Canvassers in the electoral area(s) affected by the election should, if they are not already, encourage occupiers who are not registered to do so online (or by telephone if you offer this service), and highlight the registration application deadline. They could have blank registration forms available for potential electors to complete where they do not have access to the internet. To ensure that only forms received before the registration deadline will be processed canvassers should be instructed to suspend personal visits by the end of the twelfth day before the poll. Last updated: 2 December 2020 Book traversal links for How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? What do I need to consider if an election is held during the annual canvass? Publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register Publication of the revised register This section of the guidance covers the practical management of the publication of the revised register following the canvass, including timing, content and layout of the register, and guidance on access and supply to the register post publication. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Publication of the revised register How can I target new electors if an election is held during the canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? Unless there has been an election during the canvass you must publish the revised register by 1 December. 1 Dies non do not apply to the requirement to publish by 1 December which means you can publish the register on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday if you choose to do so. You also have discretion to publish before this date, however doing so will have an impact on the cut off dates for registration applications. Publishing on 1 December will help to ensure that the revised register is as accurate and complete as it can be and will maximise opportunities for

potential electors to be included. Publishing in November means the revised register would not reflect any new electors who had applied to register after 23 October, nor would it reflect any amendments or deletions determined after 31 October. While the registration process continues throughout the year, the publication of the revised register is a key milestone. Whenever you decide to publish, you should be able to explain the reasons for your decision. See the table below.

Application and determination deadlines that apply to the publication of the revised register	Event Dates if the revised register is published on 1 December	Event Dates if the register is published in November
Last day for receipt of new applications to register	22 November 2023	23 October 2023 (6 working days before the determination deadline)
Determination deadline	30 November 2023*	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Anonymous registration application and determination deadline	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Deadline for amendments to and removal of register entries	30 November 2023	31 October 2023 (last working day of the month prior to the month when the revised register is published)
Publication By	1 December 2023	Any date during November

*as 30 November is a bank holiday and may be a non-working day, you could use the 29 November as the determination deadline for publication of the revised register on 1 December.

Monthly notices of alteration Updates to the register must be published on the first working day of each month, however you are not required to issue a monthly notice of alteration in the month you are publishing the revised register or in the two months before that day, but may do so if you wish. If the register is published in November this means you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in September, October and November. If it is published in December, you are not required to publish a monthly notice of alteration in October, November and December.

1. Section 13(1) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 1 June 2023

Book traversal links for When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass?

Publication of the revised register

What does the revised register contain when published? What does the revised register contain when published? What does the revised register contain when published? The full register You must publish a full register of electors combined as far as possible into one register for all election types, and containing the appropriate franchise markers. The format of the register is not prescribed but must contain, with the exception of certain special category electors, and the details of any person under 16 years old, 1 the name, address and elector number of every eligible elector whose application to register has been determined by the relevant deadline, including attainers. 2 An attainer is someone who is not yet old enough to vote but will achieve the required voting age for certain types of polls by the end of the twelve months following the 1 December after the relevant date. The local government register will include 16 and 17 year olds as full electors. 3 Additionally, 14 and 15 year olds are entitled to be included on the local government register as attainers. The combined register will need to make clear the date on which those included on it will become old enough to vote in different elections to clearly show when they will become eligible to vote. 4 Your revised register must include all additions and amendments to the register which you have determined by the relevant deadline. 5 Only when an application has been made and successfully determined can an individual be added to the register. Information provided in response to a canvass communication and any names identified through checking local records cannot be treated as an application to register or be added to

the register. You should also ensure you action any deletions that you have determined since the publication of the last notice of alteration in the revised register. The edited register An elector's name and address will be included in the edited register unless they ask for them to be removed. You must publish a revised edited register which is an exact copy of the full register, but excludes those who have opted out of their details appearing, at the same time as you publish the revised full register. 6 Any person under 16 years old is automatically opted out of the edited register. In addition you must continue to publish the edited register on the first working day of every month. This duty applies all year, including during the canvass period and any requests from existing electors to change their opt-out status will need to be reflected. However, if you choose not to publish notices of alteration in the 2 months preceding the publication of the full register following the annual canvass, any monthly revised edited register must not include or remove any details of any electors that are not already existing electors previously included on the full register or any alteration notice. 7 You are required to publish a fully integrated updated version of the edited register rather than a notice setting out the changes. 8 However, you do not have to print a full edited register every month, only if you are producing one for somebody who has requested it. For more information see our guidance on processing a change to an elector's edited (open) register preference . No information on those aged under 16 must be included on any version of the register published or otherwise made available, including the edited register, except in very limited circumstances . Describing the full and edited registers The terms 'full register' and 'edited register' are the technical terms used in the legislation. The terms 'electoral register' and 'open register' have to be used to describe the full and edited register to members of the public, to make it easier to understand the purpose of each register and how it is used. In specific instances where we mention the edited register in the guidance in this context, we refer to the edited register as the 'open register'. Otherwise we use the term 'edited register'. List of overseas electors You must keep a separate list or lists of overseas electors. 9 You must publish this and make it available for inspection and supply when you publish the revised register. 10 The list must be compiled in alphabetical order by surname within each constituency or part of a constituency within your area. 11 It must specify both the qualifying address and the full address outside the UK of each overseas elector. 1. Section 13(1) Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Act 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 9(2) Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Section 4(5)(a) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 4. Section 9(5A) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 4 5. Section 13(2) RPA 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 5 6. Regulation 93(1) Representation of the People Regulations (Scotland) (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 6 7. Regulation 93(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 7 8. Regulation 93 RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 8 9. Regulation 45(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 9 10. Regulation 45(3) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 10 11. Regulation 45(2) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 11 Last updated: 2 November 2022 Book traversal links for What does the revised register contain when published? When should I publish the revised register following the annual canvass? Format of the revised register Format of the revised register Format of the revised register When creating the layout of the register you must: divide the register into polling districts give each polling district a unique set of letters, or numbers, or combination of letters and numbers 1 give a number to each elector 2 The elector numbers should be allocated sequentially

in each part of the register. The polling district letters and the number together are known as the elector number. We have produced separate guidance on undertaking reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. Entries in the register for each ordinary elector must be arranged in street order and may only be arranged in alphabetical order by name or a mix of the two where it is not reasonably practicable to list them in street order.

3 Franchise markers Some electors may only vote in certain types of elections and their names must be prefixed in the register with certain letters:

4 Letter Elector F is an overseas elector who is only entitled to vote at UK Parliamentary elections. M is a qualifying foreign national (except a citizen of a Commonwealth country or the Republic of Ireland) or a prisoner serving a sentence of 12 months or less, who is entitled to vote at local government and Scottish Parliamentary elections. L is a peer who can sit in the House of Lords, who is entitled to vote at local government and Scottish Parliamentary elections

Attainers Some electors added to the register will be known as attainers. These electors are individuals who have not yet reached voting age but will do so before the next expected publication of the full register for some polls. 14 and 15 year olds are entitled to be included on the local government register as attainers. A date will be given after these electors' names to indicate when they will have attained the age where they can vote.

Other electors There must be a section after the ordinary electors in any polling district marked 'other electors', containing any special category electors who are not listed in the main body of the register listed by surname in alphabetical order without an address, followed by any anonymously registered electors.

5 Our guidance on special category electors sets out in detail how special category electors should be included on the register. We have produced a resource showing an example of how the register should be formatted. Example of the formatting for a sample electoral register in Scotland

1. Regulations 38 and 39 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

2. Section 9(3) Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 2](#)

3. Regulations 41(1) and (2) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 3](#)

4. Regulation 42 RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 4](#)

5. Regulation 41(3) RPR 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 5](#)

Last updated: 13 July 2023

[Book traversal links for Format of the revised register](#)

[What does the revised register contain when published?](#)

[Communication activity following the publication of the revised register](#)

[Communication activity following the publication of the revised register](#)

[Communication activity following the publication of the revised register](#)

Publication of the revised register could prompt enquiries to you, which you should be prepared to respond to. You should consult with your local authority press or communications teams if you haven't already done so to ensure that you are able to react quickly to any local stories that may emerge, particularly if there has already been local coverage on any electoral registration issues in your area. You should consider issuing a press release announcing the total number of people registered in your area, highlighting the work you have done and any additional work you have planned to get people registered. You should point out that there is still an opportunity to register in time for the next scheduled elections, using it as a call to action for anyone in your area who is not yet registered to do so. Given the continued media focus on the registration rates of students and attainers, you might find it helpful to highlight the work you are doing with schools, colleges, universities or any relevant voluntary groups to encourage registration. Your press team can get further advice by contacting the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, or by emailing press@electoralcommission.org.uk .

Last updated: 15 June 2020

[Book traversal](#)

links for Communication activity following the publication of the revised register

Format of the revised register

What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass?

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities may request management information each year following the annual canvass; the required information may also change from year to year, however your EMS should be able to produce reports to support these requests.

Electoral Commission Canvass Data Collection

Each year the Electoral Commission will request data following the publication of the annual register. The data to be provided will be contained in reports which will be generated fully populated in your EMS system. The Research Team at the Commission will work with your EMS provider to specify the reports ahead of the data collection and your EMS supplier should let you know how to generate the correct report from the system. Once you have generated the report in your EMS system and reviewed the data, please submit it to CanvassData@electoralcommission.org.uk as soon as possible after the publication of the annual revised register. Deadlines for submission and further information will be communicated via an EA bulletin.

Performance standards

While we will still want to collect data from all EROs to help us understand the state of the electoral registers across Great Britain, we are not proposing that EROs would routinely collate and provide us with all the information listed within the standards . You should however use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities to identify what works and what doesn't and where improvements can be made. The framework and supporting tools and templates are designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and what is not working so well.

RPF 29

Each year the National Records of Scotland will issue an RPF29 form to EROs which you are required to supply to the Secretary of State, Scottish Ministers and the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages for Scotland, 1 setting out certain prescribed information relating to the revised register. You are required to submit this information as soon as possible after publication of the revised register.

2 1. Regulation 44 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations (RPR) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1

2. Regulation 44(1) RPR 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2

Last updated: 16 March 2022

Book traversal links for

What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? Communication activity following the publication of the revised register

Who can be supplied with the register? Who can be supplied with the register? Who can be supplied with the register? Access to and supply of the full electoral register is limited to those prescribed in legislation. You have a duty to supply free copies of the register of electors to various organisations and individuals, and legislation imposes restrictions on how this is done. In some cases, registers have to be supplied on publication and in others the register is only supplied on request. The timing of receipt of the register is particularly important to some recipients. For example, political parties need the electoral register to fulfil their statutory obligations in relation to the checking of donations, in addition to using it for campaigning purposes. It is important that the register is supplied promptly and you should, therefore, supply the register to anyone who is entitled to receive it on publication as soon as possible and in any case, within 5 working days. You should ensure that every person/organisation that receives the register, whether on publication, by sale, or on request, is aware that: they must only use the register for the permitted purpose(s) specified in the Regulations once the purpose for which

the register has been supplied has expired, they must securely destroy the register they understand the penalty for misuse of the register You should not provide any advice in response to questions about whether a recipient's proposed usage of register data is in accordance with the law. It is for the recipient of the register to be satisfied that their use of the register is in accordance with what the law sets out. If they are not certain they should speak to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or seek their own legal advice. We have made cover sheets available, which set out how the register may be used and the penalty for misuse, for the sale and supply on request and inspection of the electoral register. Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection (DOC) We have also produced a list of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register. List of people entitled to be supplied with the electoral register (PDF) There are different provisions that apply in respect of the edited register and the marked register. To demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner you should maintain records of every person and organisation you supply with the register. We have produced further detailed guidance on access and supply of the electoral register throughout the year. Last updated: 3 December 2020 Book traversal links for Who can be supplied with the register? What data will I need to collect and share following the annual canvass? Data relating to those under 16 years of age Data relating to those under 16 years of age Data relating to those under 16 years of age Data relating to those under 16 years of age can only be accessed by, or made use of by, EROs and their staff. No version of the register or any absent voting lists published or otherwise made available should contain that data. However, the data may be disclosed: 1 to the individual themselves (including disclosure of the data to demonstrate that they are a permissible donor) or to a person they have appointed as proxy to vote for them for the purposes of a criminal investigation or criminal proceedings relating to the registration of electors or the conduct of elections in a communication sent to an individual or household for the annual canvass, although the date of birth must not be pre-printed. to EROs and Returning Officers in connection with the registration of electors or the conduct of elections The only other exception is that before a Scottish Parliamentary or local government election, the information on those under 16 years of age who will be eligible to vote at the election (i.e. will attain the age of 16 on or before polling day), can, for the purposes of or in connection with the election, be disclosed in the electoral register, postal voters list, list of proxies and list of postal proxies, that is supplied to: 2 candidates at Scottish Parliamentary and local government elections for electoral purposes or to comply with the rules on political donations the Returning Officer for the purposes of Scottish Parliamentary or local government elections the Electoral Commission. In this case, the Commission is only allowed to use the information in connection with its functions relating to donation controls and publication of information for certain functions including those relating to donors, but the latter does not enable publication of the names and addresses of those under 16 years old a local authority Returning Officer only for the purposes of a National Park authority election The information supplied before an election must not contain anything that would identify a voter as under 16 years old. No other individuals or bodies may be supplied with any information relating to those aged under 16 years old. 1. Section 14 Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Act 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Sections 14(3) and (4) Scottish Elections

(Reduction of Voting Age) Act 2015 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for Data relating to those under 16 years of age Who can be supplied with the register? Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents The elector number of an anonymous elector may change when you republish the electoral register following the conclusion of the annual canvass. If an anonymous elector's electoral number has changed and they have an Anonymous Elector's Document, you must notify them that their electoral number has changed, that their Anonymous Elector's Document is no longer valid and that you will issue them with a new Anonymous Elector's Document. For more information see our guidance on Replacement of an Anonymous Elector's Document where the elector number has changed . Last updated: 8 February 2023 Book traversal links for Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents Data relating to those under 16 years of age Elections immediately following the canvass Elections immediately following the canvass Elections immediately following the canvass This section of the guidance covers considerations for an election held in December following the conclusion of the canvass and the publication of the revised register. It includes guidance on which register you should use for a December election and how this will impact on candidates and political parties and on the production of poll cards. Last updated: 15 June 2020 Book traversal links for Elections immediately following the canvass Notifying anonymous electors about replacement Anonymous Elector's Documents What do I need to consider for a December election? What do I need to consider for a December election? What do I need to consider for a December election? For any election held in December, the notice of election will be published before the deadline for publishing the revised register. Impact on candidates and political parties The nomination of candidates for a UK parliamentary election is based on the register in force on the last date for publication of the notice of election. If you have published your revised register by the last date for publication of the notice of election, this will be the register candidates and agents need to use for collecting subscribers. If not, it will be your last published notice of alteration. In the event of a UK parliamentary election you should ensure that candidates and their agents are aware of which register to use when collecting subscribers for the purpose of completing their nomination papers. For any election, it is particularly important that candidates and parties who have requested a copy of the revised register and election notices of alteration are provided with copies as soon as possible after publication. This will assist candidates and political parties to engage with electors and campaign effectively where the publication of the revised register takes place during an election period. Poll cards Returning Officers (ROs) must send poll cards to electors entitled to vote at the election as soon as practicable after publication of the notice of election. You may wish to take this into consideration when deciding whether or not to publish the monthly notices of alteration during the annual canvass period. If you are the ERO for a constituency that crosses local authority boundaries, you should liaise with the other ERO(s) and the (A)RO in reaching your decision. Choosing to publish these additional notices may help to mitigate any renumbering issues caused by the publication of revised registers after poll cards and postal votes have been issued. If you choose not to publish the monthly notices of alteration during the canvass period, poll cards sent before the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration will be based on data which would not reflect any additions or deletions determined after the deadline for the September monthly update. In these circumstances there is an

argument that the earliest point it would be practicable to issue poll cards would be immediately following the publication of the first interim election notice of alteration so that the data used reflects additions and deletions determined during the canvass period. If you are not also the RO, you should work with them to put mechanisms in place to ensure that poll cards can be sent to electors as soon as possible after the first interim notice has been published. See our guidance on election notices of alteration and the deadlines for applications to be made for inclusion on those notices. ROs need to make clear in polling station staff training that the elector numbers on poll cards may be different to the numbers allocated to electors when the register is revised. They should explain that this does not affect a person's entitlement to vote and that they should not refer to the elector number printed on the poll card when marking the register and completing the corresponding number list. Instead, when the elector provides confirmation of their name and address, use the number as it appears against the elector's details in the polling station register for completing the corresponding number list. Polling station staff should be briefed so they are able to respond to any queries from electors who may question why the number being read out and written on the corresponding number list is different to the one which is printed on their poll card. Last updated: 2 November 2022

[Book traversal links for What do I need to consider for a December election?](#)

Elections immediately following the canvass

What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register?

What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register?

What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register?

In some cases an election in early December will require the final election notice of alteration to be published before the revised register. Where this is the case the registration application deadline will be the deadline for applications for inclusion on the revised register. This is because the revised register has immediate effect and will apply to any poll on or after publication. While the registration application deadline for inclusion on the final election notice of alteration will be twelve working days before the poll, where the revised register is published after the final election notice of alteration potential new electors will be able to submit a registration application until the deadline for inclusion on the revised register (six working days before the determination deadline). Provided their application is determined by the determination deadline for the revised register (which is the working day before publication) they will be entitled to vote in the poll. However, potential new electors wishing to vote by post will need to have applied to be registered by the postal vote application deadline which is 5pm eleven working days before the poll as they must state an address at which they are or have applied to be registered in their postal vote application. Potential new electors who wish to vote by proxy will have the same registration application deadline as those voting in person. This is because the deadline for registration applications to be made in time to be included on the 1 December register will be before the ordinary proxy application deadline (5pm six working days before the poll). These circumstances will present a number of administrative challenges for EROs and ROs. If you are not also the RO, you will need to liaise with them to: discuss any practical implications, including the timely transfer of data supply candidates and agents with copies of relevant electoral registers for nomination and campaigning purposes in a timely way make arrangements to supply the first interim notice of alteration and any subsequent updates to candidates and agents as soon as possible once published produce polling

station registers after publication of the revised register make arrangements for registers to be printed and collated in a limited time - ROs will need to consider how to manage the preparation of ballot boxes to facilitate this. The specific challenges and solutions will vary depending on local circumstances. If you would like any further guidance or would like to discuss your particular situation, please contact your local Commission team . Last updated: 15 June 2020 [Book traversal links for What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register? What do I need to consider for a December election? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register?](#) There is no provision to postpone publication of the revised register as a result of an election that will take place after the 1 December. The revised register has immediate effect on publication for all elections, this is unlike a notice of alteration which only has effect at an election if published on or before the fifth working day before the poll. Once you have published the revised register it will be used for polling purposes for any election with a polling day on or after the date of publication, although you are also required to publish two interim election notices of alteration and a final notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll. 1 The nomination of candidates for a UK parliamentary election will be based on the register in force on the last date for publication of the notice of election. 1. Sections 13AB and 13B Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 21 November 2022 [Book traversal links for Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? What is the impact on a December election if the final election notice of alteration is published before the revised register? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? As part of your planning for delivery of the canvass , you will have established how you will evaluate the overall success of the canvass to inform your plans for future canvasses. Over time, your evaluation and refinement of your plans should ensure that your canvass processes make the best use of resources, are successful in encouraging households and individuals to take the necessary action, provide the best service for electors and reduce the administrative burden on your service. Your evaluation should utilise the metrics available to you via your EMS system. The performance standards for EROs , and the tools and templates available to support them, will assist you in understanding the impact of your activities, help identify where improvements can be made and support you to report on your own performance locally. You should use the data and qualitative information set out in the standards to help understand the impact of your activities, both throughout and at the end of the canvass, to identify what works and what doesn't and where you can make improvements. The framework is designed to support this analysis and focuses on the key data and information that will indicate what is working well and where improvements could be made. Last updated: 3 December 2020 \[Book traversal links for How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass? Which register should I use for an election in December following the publication of the revised register? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer? Electoral Registration Officers\]\(#\)](#)

must consider data protection issues in many aspects of their work. Our guidance covers your role as a data controller, how you should protect the personal data you hold, how long you should retain it for, and where you can find more information and guidance on data protection legislation. Last updated: 16 April 2020

[Book traversal links for What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer?](#) [How should I evaluate the success of the annual canvass?](#) [Who is a data controller?](#) [Who is a data controller?](#) [Who is a data controller?](#) As ERO, you are a data controller with a statutory duty to process certain personal data to maintain the electoral register. Under data protection legislation you need to be able to demonstrate that you comply with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and transparently. Advice from the ICO is that all data controllers need to ensure that they are registered with the ICO. This means that EROs and ROs must be registered separately to their council. Under the data protection legislation, a public authority must appoint a data protection officer (DPO) to advise on data protection issues. As ERO or RO, you are not included in the definition of a public authority contained in Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and are not required to appoint a DPO for the conduct of your duties. However, your appointing council must have a DPO in place and you should liaise with them over good practice in relation to data protection. A key element of data protection legislation is the increased focus on accountability and transparency when processing personal data. You must be able to demonstrate that you comply with your obligations under data protection legislation. The key to achieving this is to have and maintain written plans and records to provide an audit trail. Our resource on data protection legislation details how you can put measures in place to meet the requirement to demonstrate compliance and to ensure that data protection is integral to all you do. You need to ensure that you are complying with your responsibilities under data protection legislation. In particular, you should ensure that you:

- are registered with the ICO as a data controller
- have appropriate privacy notices in place
- are retaining documents in accordance with your document retention policy
- ensure that data protection is integral to any contracts where personal data is processed
- have a policy document in place to process special categories of personal data
- maintain records and plans to demonstrate that you are processing personal data lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in your plans and risk register,
- highlight the safeguards you have in place to avoid a personal data breach

Guidance on demonstrating compliance with data protection legislation is contained throughout our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs . Last updated: 26 June 2023

[Book traversal links for Who is a data controller?](#) [What are the data protection considerations for an Electoral Registration Officer?](#) [How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for?](#) [How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for?](#) [How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for?](#) You will need to check that appropriate security measures are in place to protect personal data. You should review your processes with your data protection officer and information management/IT departments to help identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper or stored electronically. You need to maintain a document retention policy, which will help demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Your document retention policy should set out the following for all documents you receive and hold: whether the document contains personal data the lawful basis on which any personal data was collected your retention period your rationale for the

retention period (which might relate to a requirement in electoral law) Our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs contains further guidance on the retention and storage of documents, including what information your document retention policy should contain. You will be collecting personal data from residents such as date of birth, nationality and their National Insurance Number. Your council will have corporate standards and processes for handling data and security. You should seek advice from your Data Protection Officer and IT about maintaining effective data handling. They will be able to help you identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper forms or stored electronically on your systems. You will need to ensure that your procedures and storage arrangements are compliant with data protection legislation. Good data handling practices need to be part of your day-to-day business processes. For example, you will need to keep under review how you are managing the security of personal data. Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? Who is a data controller? What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers? What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers Where a response to a canvass communication contains individuals' email addresses and/or telephone numbers you should ensure that these are recorded, in accordance with data protection legislation requirements, and that this information is only used for the purpose for which it was collected. If you have existing records of email addresses or phone numbers, at the time that you next use that information, you should ensure the data subject is aware of how you will continue to process this data such by: explaining the data subjects right to object to further processing providing a link to your privacy notice including an unsubscribe option More information on the provision of an unsubscribe option can be found in our data protection guidance for EROs and ROs . Last updated: 26 June 2023 Book traversal links for What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers? How should I protect the personal data I hold and how long should I retain it for? Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? You can find guidance on data protection on the Information Commissioner's website , or if you have any specific questions you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office directly. Information Commissioner's Office – Scotland 45 Melville Street Edinburgh EH3 7HL Tel: 0303 123 1115 Email: scotland@ico.org.uk The Local Government Association/ SOCITM have also produced guidance for local authorities on data handling (although it should be noted that the ERO is a separate data controller from the local authority). It recommends that you consider the following factors when developing your approach to data handling: Policy: comprehensive policies (including business continuity, and home and mobile working) should form the information governance regime. The policies should be monitored and audited to ensure they are being effectively enacted People: including staff awareness and training, users' access, and mechanisms for managing information risks Places: including risk assessments, security of buildings and premises, the disposal of information, and use of removable media Processes: including who can access data, system security, transfer of data, and supplier and contractor data processes Procedures: including risk reporting, auditing procedures, and documented policies and procedures Last updated: 23 February 2021 Book traversal links for Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? What do I need to consider when storing email addresses and phone numbers? Resources for

Electoral Registration Officers Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Forms and letters guidance Anonymous registration - guide for professionals working with domestic abuse survivors (Scotland) (PDF) Canvass route descriptions and criteria (PDF) Canvasser recruitment and training checklist (DOC) Canvasser training template (PPT) Canvasser Quiz (DOC) Considerations for the 2020 canvass - SCO (DOC) Doorstep script for canvassers (DOC) FAQs and lines to take with the public in response to queries on electoral registration (DOCX) Guidance for care home staff in Scotland Proof checking fact sheet (DOC) Telephone script for canvassers (DOC) Template registration plan (XLS) Template risk and issues register (XLS) Last updated: 24 April 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers Where can I find more information and guidance on data protection legislation? Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Access to New British Citizen Data Case Study - Canvass Chronicle 25 June DLUHC - National Data Matching Instructions - May 2020 (PDF) DLUHC- Data test guidance Part I and annexes (PDF) DLUHC Testing local data guidance Part II and annexes (PDF) DLUHC - Testing national data guidance Part III (PDF) DLUHC Canvass reform worksheets contents page (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - SCO (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - SCO Print version page 1 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 1 - The data matching process - SCO Print version page 2 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 2 - Data matching empty properties and exclusions - SCO (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 3 - Route 1 process (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 4 - Route 2 canvass rules (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions pages 1 & 2 - SCO (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions - SCO Print version page 1 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 5 - Route 2 Permutation decisions - SCO Print version page 2 of 2 (PDF) DLUHC Route 2 Permutations Table (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 6 - Route 2 process (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 7 - Preparations for Route 3 (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 8 - Route 3 process - SCO (PDF) DLUHC Worksheet 9 - Switching Routes (PDF) DLUHC helpsheet - Recent additions and determined electors DLUHC - Key Changes to EMS - Brief Guide (DOC) DLUHC- Notify Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May Edition (DOC) DLUHC - Telephone Canvassing Case Study - Canvass Chronicle May Edition (DOC) Information sheet for elected members and senior leaders: The Annual Canvass and Canvass Reform (DOC) Last updated: 8 April 2022 Book traversal links for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities resources for Electoral Registration Officers Resources for Electoral Registration Officers

donations and loans in Great Britain Introduction Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), there are controls on which donations and loans a political party can accept. Certain donations and loans must be recorded and reported to us. We publish these reports in a register on our website. There are separate rules that apply to parties registered in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This guidance sets out the guidance for parties registered in Great Britain. For guidance for Northern Ireland parties, please see [donations and loans in Northern Ireland](#) . Who receives donations and loans? Donations and loans are made to registered political parties and accounting units (sections of a party whose finances aren't managed directly by a party's headquarters). Parties must appoint someone to be registered with us as their treasurer. The registered treasurer is responsible for making sure that the party follows the rules on donations and loans. This includes maintaining suitable systems within the party to ensure donations and loans are dealt with correctly. Central party and accounting unit treasurers Central party treasurers are responsible for: making sure the party keeps sufficient accounting records to show and explain the transactions it has entered into, including those relating to donations and loans taking all reasonable steps to make sure that these donations and loans can be accepted reporting certain donations and loans to us, the Electoral Commission Accounting unit treasurers are not responsible under PERA for reporting donations and loans, and do not report to us separately. However, accounting unit treasurers should always follow their party's procedures. They must also provide all relevant information to the central party treasurer when requested. Who is this guidance for? This guidance is for registered treasurers. In this guidance we use 'you' when we refer to a party's registered treasurer and their responsibilities. We use 'must' when we refer to a specific legal or regulatory requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be minimum good practice, but which are not legal requirements. You do not have to follow this guidance, but if you do, you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. [Book traversal links for donations and loans in Great Britain](#) Terms we use in this guidance Terms we use in this guidance Accounting unit A section of a party registered with the Electoral Commission that is responsible for its own finances. Each accounting unit has its own registered treasurer and an additional officer. Benefit Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), 'benefit' is used to refer to donations and loans over £500 collectively. Bequest Money or property given to someone through a will. Central party The central organisation, or headquarters, of a party. The central party treasurer is responsible for the party's compliance with the financial controls under PERA. Donation Under PERA, a donation is money, goods or services given to a party without charge or on non-commercial terms, with a value of over £500. Some examples of donations include: a gift of money or property sponsorship of an event or publication subscription or affiliation payments free or specially discounted use of an office See [Which donations are covered by the rules?](#) for more information. Impermissible We use the term impermissible to refer to donations and loans that parties cannot accept/enter into under PERA. In our guidance and forms we sometimes use the term 'unauthorised transactions' to refer to impermissible loans, which is what they are called in PERA. Loan Under PERA, the following types of transactions are regulated, if they have a value over £500: loans of money credit facilities, such as credit cards and overdrafts securities or guarantees for a party's obligations to someone else Under PERA, these are called regulated transactions. In this guidance, we use the term 'loans' to refer to all of these types of transactions. See [Which loans are covered by the rules?](#) for more

information. Market value The price that might reasonably be expected to be paid for an item, goods or service if the item was on sale in the open market.

Minor party A party registered with the Electoral Commission on the Great Britain register that can only contest parish and/or community council elections in England and Wales respectively. Under PPERA, minor parties are not subject to the financial controls that registered political parties must comply with and do not report donations or loans.

Overseas elector A British citizen living abroad that is registered to vote in the UK.

Permissible We use the term permissible to refer to donations and loans that parties are allowed to accept/enter into under PPERA. In our guidance and forms we sometimes use the term 'authorised transactions' to refer to permissible loans, which is what they are called in PPERA.

Public funds These are payments from: the Consolidated Funds of the United Kingdom, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, respectively; money provided by Parliament or appropriated by Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly; any Minister of the Crown, the Scottish Ministers, the Welsh Ministers or any Minister within the meaning of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, any government department (including a Northern Ireland department), the Welsh Assembly Government or any part of the Scottish Administration, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, the Senedd Commission or the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission; and the Electoral Commission.

Registered political party A party registered with the Electoral Commission under the PPERA. Parties may be registered under the Great Britain or Northern Ireland register and they must comply with the controls and responsibilities set out under PPERA.

Unincorporated association An association of two or more individuals who have come together to carry out a shared purpose. See Unincorporated associations for more information.

Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for Terms we use in this guidance

donations and loans in Great Britain Which donations are covered by the rules? Which donations are covered by the rules? Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), a donation is money, goods or services given to a party without charge or on non-commercial terms, with a value of over £500. Some examples of donations include: a gift of money or property sponsorship of an event or publication subscription or affiliation payments free or specially discounted use of an office

Donations of £500 or less Donations of £500 or less are outside the scope of PPERA and you do not need to record or report them. However, you must be alert to situations where it appears that a donor is attempting to evade PPERA. It is an offence to attempt to evade the controls on donations. For example, if a number of donations of £400 are made from the same source in similar circumstances in an attempt to evade the permissibility rules. If you think this may be happening, you should contact us for advice.

Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for Which donations are covered by the rules?

Terms we use in this guidance

What do you need to do when you receive a donation? What do you need to do when you receive a donation? Checks on donations

Donations can only be accepted from certain sources, which are mainly UK-based. Please see **Who can you accept donations and loans from?** for details on which sources are permissible. Before your party accepts any donation of more than £500, you must take all reasonable steps to: make sure you know the true identity of the donor check that the donation is from a permissible source

How long do you have to check permissibility? When you receive a donation, you have 30 days to decide if you can accept it. Even if you have made a permissibility check in connection with an earlier donation or loan from the same source, you should consider whether to make a fresh check for each subsequent donation. You should keep a record of all your permissibility checks to show that you have followed the rules. If the donation isn't

from a permissible donor, or for any reason you can't be sure of the true identity of the source, please read [What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source?](#) for further guidance on the actions you must take. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for What do you need to do when you receive a donation?](#) Which donations are covered by the rules? Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources Donations on behalf of others If you are given a donation on behalf of someone else, the person giving you the donation (the agent) must tell you: that the donation is on behalf of someone else; and the actual donor's details An example of someone acting as an agent is where an event organiser is handing over the proceeds from a dinner held specifically to raise funds for your party. If you think that someone might be acting as an agent, you must find out the facts so that you can make the right checks. If you are not sure who you should treat as the donor, please contact us for advice. Local party fighting funds During elections, your party may run local fighting funds for candidates. If the fund is managed and controlled by the party and not the candidate, donations to the fund are usually treated as donations to the party, unless a donation is specifically made towards the candidate's election campaign. For example, a party branch collects donations to raise funds for election campaigning in the local area. If the local party makes it clear that these donations are made for the purpose of meeting the candidate's election expenses, or a donor specifies their donation is being made for this purpose, then this is a candidate donation. If instead a donation is not specifically made to meet candidate expenses in this scenario, it should be treated as a donation to the party. Donations from unidentified sources If you are unable to confirm who a donation is from, or that it is from a permissible source, you should record it and return it. If any interest has been gained on the donation your party can keep it, as it is not treated as a donation. Please see [What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source?](#) for guidance on how to return a donation. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources](#) What do you need to do when you receive a donation? When do you receive and accept a donation? When do you receive and accept a donation? When do you receive a donation? You usually 'receive' a donation on the day you take ownership of it. For example: if you are given free leaflets, you receive the donation when the leaflets are handed over to you if you are given a cheque, you receive the donation on the date that the cheque clears if a donation is transferred directly into your bank account, you receive the donation on the date that it is received into your account When do you accept a donation? You accept a donation on the day you agree to keep the donation. For non-money donations, if you use the donation, you have thereby accepted it. If your party keeps a donation after the 30-day period, you are also deemed to have accepted it. Last updated: 31 March 2022 [Book traversal links for When do you receive and accept a donation?](#) Donations on behalf of others and from unidentified sources How do you work out the value of a donation? How do you work out the value of a donation? If your party receives or sells an item, goods or service, you must work out its market value. The market value means the price that would reasonably be expected to be paid for the item, goods or service, if it was on sale in the open market. Working out the market value is needed to determine whether a donation has been made and what the value is. Any commercial income you gain from these transactions is not a donation. The following section provides guidance on how to assess the market value of goods and services, determine whether a donation has been made to the party, and calculate the value of the donation. Goods and services

received by the party As well as receiving donations of money, you may also receive donations of goods and services. If you receive goods or services free of charge, or at a non-commercial discount, you must ensure these are valued at a comparable market rate. Non-commercial discounts are special discounts that your party, specifically, is given by suppliers. These are different to commercial discounts available to all customers, such as discounts for bulk orders or seasonal reductions. The donation rules only apply to non-commercial discounts. If you are given goods or services this will count as a donation if: the market value of the goods or services, if given free of charge, exceeds £500, or the amount of the non-commercial discount exceeds £500. The value of a donation is the difference between the value of what you receive and the amount (if any) you pay for it. You will need to know the market value of the items or services to calculate the value of the donation. As with all types of donations, you must also ensure any donation you accept over £500 is from a permissible donor. Good and services sold by the party If your party sells goods or services you must ensure these are also valued at a comparable market rate. It is important you are aware of the market value of the goods and services you sell because if someone pays more than the market value, the difference between what they pay you and the market value will be a donation if this amount exceeds £500. This is because any additional payment will be received on non-commercial terms, and the donation rules will apply. The market value, or commercial income, is not a donation. The guiding principle The guiding principle is that, in all cases, you should make an honest and reasonable assessment of the value of the goods or services you are receiving or selling. If the exact or similar options of the item or services are available on the market, you should use the rates charged by other providers to guide you in making a valuation. For example, if the donor is a commercial provider, you should use the rates they charge other similar customers. If there are no exact or similar options of the goods or services available on the market, you should base your assessment on the market rates of a reasonable equivalent. If you are still not sure how to value a particular donation, please contact us for advice. Your party is required to keep records that show and explain the transactions it has entered into. In order to meet this requirement, you should ensure you keep a record of assessments and valuations so that you can explain whether or not a donation has been made. Selling exclusive services When trying to ascertain the market value, you may also wish to consider the appropriate level in the market of what you are selling. For example, in some instances it may be reasonable to use a higher end market valuation. This is especially the case where the services are exclusive and/or where you have a degree of monopoly in the market. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for How do you work out the value of a donation? When do you receive and accept a donation? Valuing goods and services: examples Valuing goods and services: examples Example 1: how to approach valuing services a party is given A party is approached by an individual who offers the party free use of their property as the venue for a dinner and auction event. The party confirms that the individual is a permissible donor before accepting the offer. The party should identify similar venues that are available to hire for comparable events. The party may wish to limit its comparison to other venues in the same area. The party identifies three similar venues that are available to hire and uses the advertised rates to determine the approximate commercial value of the property's use. Example 2: how to approach valuing services a party sells A party is approached by another organisation for advice on how to run effective political campaigns. The registered party decides to charge the organisation for this service. In the first instance, the party should identify exact

or similar suppliers of such services in the market. If the party is unable to identify a comparable supplier or service of this kind, it should identify an appropriate alternative available in the market. The party identifies some suppliers who provide consultancy services on running successful political campaigns. The party identifies three companies who offer these types of services to determine the estimated commercial value for the purposes of PPERA. As the service the party is providing is exclusive, because their experience of election campaigning is not widely available on the market, it may be appropriate for the party to use a higher end market valuation in this instance. The next three sections provides guidance on how to value and report donations received through crowdfunding, auction prizes and sponsorship. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Valuing goods and services: examples](#)

[How do you work out the value of a donation?](#)

[Crowdfunding](#)

[Crowdfunding What is crowdfunding?](#)

Crowdfunding is the use of a web based platform to collect donations. The platform is generally managed by a third party provider and each individual fundraising campaign has a page on the site. Campaigns usually run for a set period of time. At the end of that time, the funds raised, minus a fee paid to the provider, are passed to the donee. Transparency You should ensure that it is clear on the crowdfunding web page who the money is being donated to and what the money is being donated for. For example, whether the fund is going towards to your political party or to meet your candidate's election campaign expenditure. This is because there are different recording and reporting thresholds for candidate donations. This guidance explains the rules for crowdfunding donations to the party. You should ensure that the webpage contains information that explains that permissibility checks will be undertaken in compliance with the rules and that information about donations, including donor details may be published. We also recommend that you include an imprint on your crowdfunding page. There is separate imprints guidance for parties standing in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and for parties standing in Scotland. [imprints factsheet: UK Parliamentary elections, and elections in England Wales and Northern Ireland](#) [Party Imprints at Scottish Parliamentary Elections and council elections in Scotland](#) Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Crowdfunding](#)

[Valuing goods and services: examples](#)

[Permissibility](#)

[Permissibility](#) You must only accept donations over £500 from a permissible source. As with all types of donations, you have 30 days to carry out permissibility checks and decide if you can accept the donation. The date of receipt is the date you receive the funds from the crowdfunding site. Money donated via a crowdfunding webpage to a party that is £500 or less is not a donation under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) and is not reportable. However, when accepting donations you must be aware of situations where it appears a donor is attempting to evade the donation rules, for example if someone makes multiple donations of £500 or less in an attempt to evade the permissibility rules. It is an offence to attempt to evade the controls on donations. If you are concerned this may be happening, please contact us for advice. You should ensure that you have sufficient information from the crowdfunding provider and maintain your records in a way that enables you to ascertain if multiple donations have come from the same source. You must collect sufficient information from every donor to ensure that you can properly check that each donation is from a permissible source. You should be clear on the webpage that this is the reason you are collecting any information. If you are uncertain who the actual donor is you must not accept the donation. You cannot accept anonymous donations of over £500. You must also collect sufficient information to comply with reporting requirements. Cryptocurrencies Cryptocurrencies

are digital currencies that operate independently of any central bank or authority. The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Sufficient information must be collected to check permissibility. There must be a means of valuing the donation given in any cryptocurrency. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Permissibility Crowdfunding Case study Case study

A political party decides to raise money to spend on regulated campaign activity via a crowdfunding website. The party enters into an agreement with the crowdfunding website that sets a time limit of 5 January and a target of £20,000. The party then produces a webpage including: a proper imprint advice that permissibility checks will be undertaken for donations made over £500 advice that anonymous donations over £500 cannot be accepted advice that it is an offence to attempt to evade the donation rules information that details of donations over the reporting threshold, including the identity of the donor, will be published on the Electoral Commission website (see Which donations and loans do you need to report?) The party has selected a crowdfunding website that collects enough information from donors to ensure they can complete their recording and reporting obligations. Upon achieving the target amount, the party receives the funds on 5 January as well as details of the individual donations given from the crowdfunding provider. The donations include: a donation of £550 received by the crowdfunding webpage on 17 December a donation of £8,000 received by the crowdfunding webpage on 10 December three donations of £3,000 from the same source received by the crowdfunding webpage on 10 December, 17 December and 3 January several other donations from identifiable sources between £500 and £1,000 received by the crowdfunding webpage over the target period The party should commence permissibility checks on 5 January because this is the date of receipt. The donation of £550 is from an anonymous source. The party returns the donation to the financial institution it was received from originally before the end of the 30 day period for checking permissibility. The party accepts the donation of £8,000 after a permissibility check is undertaken. The donor is made aware from the information provided on the webpage that their name will be published on the Electoral Commission website . The party aggregates and accepts the three donations of £3,000 from the same source after they undertake the permissibility checks. The donor is made aware from the information provided on the webpage that their name will be published on the Electoral Commission website. The party accepts the donations of between £500 and £1,000 after they undertake the permissibility checks. The party records these donations but is not required to report these as they do not meet the reporting threshold. The party reports the single donation of £8,000, and the three aggregated donations of £3,000 from the same source, as these meet the over £7,500 reporting threshold. Details of these donations are later published on the Electoral Commission website. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Case study

Permissibility Auction prizes Auction prizes What is an auction prize? An auction prize is anything given for sale or sold to raise money. For example, auction prizes can be cars, the use of holiday homes, artwork, or services such as the provision of a chef for an evening. You must put a value on the prize so that you can decide if it counts as a donation. If it is a donation, you must check that you can accept it, record it and in certain cases, report it to us, the Electoral Commission, as a donation. Auction prizes can be either: tangible items, or intangible benefits or services The value of both tangible and intangible auction prizes may be easy to find out. For example, a prize may be an item such as a car which has a stated recommended retail price. The value of a prize such as a picture signed by a prominent political figure may be harder to determine. Raffle prizes Similar principles apply to the

receipt of items or services that are later used as prizes at raffles. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Auction prizes Case study The guiding principle The guiding principle This will help you to decide whether you need to treat an auction prize as a donation. The guiding principle is that, in all cases, you should make an honest assessment, based on the facts, of the value of the item or service that is being auctioned or raffled. This will be straightforward for most items. However, for some it will be more complicated. The examples in the next section will help you understand how you should approach your assessment. When is an auction prize a donation? There are two possible donation “components” to auction prizes: when you receive an item or service for auction when you auction the item or service Receiving the prize You need to report an auction prize when you receive a prize for auction either without charge or at a non-commercial discount. This counts as a donation to you if: the value of the prize, if the item is given free of charge exceeds £500, or, the amount of the discount exceeds £500 If the item is given free of charge, the amount of the donation will be the value of the item. If the item is given at a discount, the amount of the donation will be the value of the discount. At the auction A further donation is made to you if the buyer pays more than the prize is worth, and if the difference between the item’s worth and what the buyer pays is more than £500. If you pay the full value of the item when acquiring an auction prize, no donation has been received at that point. If the successful bid for the auction prize is at or below the value of the prize, no donation has been made. If the successful bid for the auction prize is more than £500 above the value of the prize, then a donation has been made. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for The guiding principle Auction prizes Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment Calculating value Where you are given an auction prize before it is auctioned, you must calculate its value so that you know whether or not to treat it as a donation. A common way to determine the value of an auction prize is to check its price (or the price of a reasonable equivalent). Where there is doubt as to the exact value of an item or service, you should obtain three commercial quotes and use the average of the three. At auction Any subsequent donation is made if the successful bidder pays more than the market price of the item or service; the donation element is the difference between the price paid by the buyer and the value of the prize. Winning bids that are donations are always categorised as money donations. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment The guiding principle Valuing prizes: examples Valuing prizes: examples The examples below illustrate how to apply the guiding principle in some common circumstances. They are intended to help you to consider how you can assess the value of an auction prize. They are not exhaustive. In each case, you must consider the particular facts in order to reach an honest assessment of how to value the auction prize(s). If you’re not sure how to value a particular prize, you can contact us for advice. We are happy to talk through how you propose to assess the value of a particular prize. As your party is required to keep records that show and explain the transactions it has entered into, you should ensure you keep a record of assessments and valuations so that you can explain whether or not a donation has been made. Example 1: a new car A permissible donor donates a new car to a political party as an auction prize. The donor requests a nominal fee of £1,000 for the car. Upon checking the manufacturer’s website you determine that the car has a recommended retail price – a value – of £12,000. In this scenario, the donor has made a non-money donation to the party of the value of the car minus the fee they have charged. This is £12,000 (value of the car) – £1,000

(fee) = a non-money donation of £11,000. There is a non-money donation to the party of £11,000 which must be reported in a quarterly donation report covering the date when the car was accepted. At auction the car sells for £18,000. To determine whether a donation has been made, subtract the value of the car from the winning bid: £18,000 (winning bid) – £12,000 (value of the car) = a money donation of £6,000. A money donation of £6,000 has been made to the party at the auction. The party must check the permissibility of the donor before accepting the donation.

Example 2: artwork An artist donates, free of charge, one of their works to an accounting unit of a political party for auction. The threshold for declaring donations accepted by an accounting unit to the Commission is £1,500. The artist values their work at approximately £1,500 based on the sale of earlier works. You should check that this valuation is accurate based on the sale prices of the artist's other works in order to make a reasonable and honest assessment of the value of the work. If the artist has not sold similar works before, you should obtain a second and third opinion in order to determine whether the donation needs to be reported to the Commission or not. Two appraisers independently value the artwork at £1,400 and £1,350. To arrive at a market value of the piece, obtain an average of the three figures: $(£1,500 + £1,400 + £1,350) \div 3 = £1,420$ As the item was donated free of charge, you should conclude that a non-money donation of £1,420 has been made to the party.

Occasionally, you may be unable to determine the value of an item or service before an auction. For example if the artwork has been done by a prominent public figure who is not an artist or has not sold artwork before. In such a case you may have to wait until the item or service is bought at auction before assigning value to it, and then reporting it as a donation, if necessary. We are happy to offer advice in such cases, so do contact us.

Example 3: use of a holiday home A donor, Mr Smith, has offered to your party, at no charge, the use of his Spanish holiday home for a week during the summer for the next five years. If Mr Smith rents out his holiday home, you should use the price he usually charges and report this as a non-money donation to the party. Alternatively, if the holiday home is not usually available to rent, you should identify similar rentals in the area and use the advertised rates to work out the market value of the use of Mr Smith's home. In this case, you have calculated that the value of this service is £10,000 based on an internet search for prices of holiday rentals in that area of Spain at that time of year (£2,000 a year x 5 years). You must check that Mr Smith is a permissible donor and report to the Commission in the next quarterly report a non-money donation of £10,000 from Mr Smith. At auction this prize attracts a winning bid of £20,000 from Ms Brown. To calculate the donation element of this transaction, subtract the market value of the prize from the winning bid: £20,000 (winning bid) - £10,000 (value) = a money donation of £10,000 You must check the permissibility of, and also report, the money donation of £10,000 from Ms Brown.

Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for Valuing prizes: examples

Valuing prizes: how to make an honest assessment

Reporting auction prize donations

Reporting auction prize donations

Among the details of the donation you need to report, you must report the date the donation is received. You usually receive a donation on the day you take physical ownership of it. But you may receive it earlier if a person makes a firm commitment to provide the donation to you. For example, if someone donates a crate of vintage champagne to you for auction, you might receive it on the date that the person gives the crate to you. But if the person donating the crate of vintage champagne offers to store the champagne for you until there has been a successful bid for it at auction, you will receive the donation when the commitment to donate the crate is made. Sometimes it may be difficult to decide when you have

received a donation. You should make an honest assessment based on all the circumstances. If you are not sure, please contact us for advice. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Reporting auction prize donations](#)

[Valuing prizes: examples](#)

[Sponsorship](#)

[Sponsorship](#)

What is sponsorship? Sponsorship is support given to a political party, or other regulated organisation or individual, that helps them meet the costs of: any conference, meeting or other event (including digital conferences or events) the preparation, production, or distribution of a publication (print or digital), or any study or research. Sponsorship payments are a type of donation under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). Where a payment does not amount to sponsorship, it may still be a donation if it meets the definition of a donation under PPERA. What are the sponsorship rules? As with all donations to parties, sponsorship payments over £500 can only be accepted from a permissible donor. You must report donations you receive over certain thresholds. Please see [Who can you accept donations and loans from?](#) and [Which donations and loans do you need to report?](#) for further details. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Sponsorship](#)

[Reporting auction prize donations](#)

Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules? Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules? Yes: Admission charges for conferences, meetings or other events - for example party conference entry passes or an admission fee to attend an event organised by or on behalf of a party, regulated organisation or individual The purchase price of any publications Commercial rate payments for adverts in publications – any amounts above the commercial rate will not be exempt and will be considered a donation if the value exceeds £500 Some payments for conference stands Are all types of advertising exempt? No. The exemption only applies up to the commercial value of adverts which appear in publications. For example, adverts that appear in any publication, including a publication which sets out a party's policies, such as a manifesto ahead of an election. Payments for any other type of advertising, such as banners at an event or digital advertising at a virtual event, should be treated as sponsorship if they help meet the cost of the event. Advertising payments that do not help to meet the costs of an event or publication in any way do not count as sponsorship. For example, if you sell advertising space for your online event and do not incur any direct costs for the event. However, if someone pays more than the commercial value of an advert, the difference between what they pay and the commercial value will be a donation. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules?](#)

[Sponsorship](#)

How much of what you receive is a donation? How much of what you receive is a donation? When calculating the value of sponsorship, the full amount of the payment received should be taken into account and reported if over the thresholds above. No deduction for any commercial value, or any benefit to the sponsor etc, should be made. Fundraising events and dinners If an event is hosted by or on behalf of a party (or party accounting unit), or another regulated organisation or individual, support to help meet the costs of the event must be treated as sponsorship. For payments for a place or table at a dinner organised by a party or other regulated organisation or individual, the difference between the value of the dinner and the amount paid is a donation. Treatment of VAT Where a sponsorship payment includes VAT, the question of whether the VAT element should be reported as part of the sponsorship will depend on the facts. For instance, if the party would have been liable for the VAT if it had not been paid, then its payment is a benefit to the party and should be reported as sponsorship. Sponsorship by companies Where a company makes a payment that is treated as sponsorship, the entire amount is considered a donation under electoral law.

Companies will therefore need to ensure that they have complied with any applicable controls on making a political donation under company law. Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for How much of what you receive is a donation? Are there any exemptions to the sponsorship rules?

Party conferences and conference stands

Many political parties hold conferences through the year. There are certain rules that parties should be aware of which apply to payments parties receive towards their conferences. Some political parties offer space for exhibitors for conference stands. The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) provides that the Commission sets a “maximum rate” up to which the hire of these stands will not be considered sponsorship. The Commission has set maximum rates for physical conference stands and digital conference stands respectively. Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for Party conferences and conference stands

How much of what you receive is a donation? Physical conference stands

Physical conference stands

Payments of up to £15,000 (excluding VAT) for a 3m x 3m physical stand do not need to be treated as sponsorship or any other type of donation. Anything you receive above £15,000 (excluding VAT) for a 3m x 3m stand should be treated as sponsorship, and therefore as a donation to the party. You must report this donation if the amount you accept from one source exceeds the relevant reporting threshold. A higher pro rata amount can apply for stands larger than 3m x 3m but it is not necessary to pro rata a lower amount for smaller stands. If you charge a higher price than £15,000 (excluding VAT) for a stand larger than 3m x 3m, we expect you to keep sufficient records to show this transaction. This includes details of the size of the stand, what price you applied to it and how you calculated the price. We may ask to see your record keeping for our assurance purposes. If you use a higher pro-rata price for a physical conference stand larger than 3m x 3m, anything you receive above the relevant price must be treated as a donation to the party. Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for Physical conference stands

Party conferences and conference stands

Digital conference stands

Digital conference stands

If a political party hosts a digital conference and makes available live promotional space on the online platform it is using, it may be considered a digital conference stand. The typical features of a digital conference stand include: The digital stand must be available for hire for the duration of the conference There must be some level of real-time interaction between attendees and exhibitor It must be live An advert or banner (or something similar) on the conference website or hosting platform (note: an advert on a website without the other elements would not, in itself, be a digital conference stand)

Payments of up to £7,000 (excluding VAT) for a digital stand do not need to be treated as sponsorship or any other type of donation. Anything you receive over and above £7,000 (excluding VAT) should be treated as sponsorship, and therefore as a donation to the party. You must report this donation if the amount you accept from one source exceeds the relevant reporting threshold. If you charge a higher price than £7,000 (excluding VAT) for a digital stand, we expect you to keep sufficient records to show this transaction. This includes details of the price you applied to it and how you calculated the price. We may ask to see your record keeping for our assurance purposes. Last updated: 31 March 2022

Book traversal links for Digital conference stands

Physical conference stands

Fringe events, receptions and meetings

Fringe events, receptions and meetings

Some political parties hold fringe events and other meetings at their party conferences. If you receive payments to hold these events, these payments will count as sponsorship. In this case any payments received with a value of over £500 can only be accepted from a permissible donor. The full value of the payment received should be

taken into account and treated as sponsorship, and therefore as a donation to the party. This must be reported by the party if the amount you accept from one source exceeds the donation reporting thresholds. Please see 'Which donations and loans do you need to report' for details of the reporting thresholds. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Fringe events, receptions and meetings](#)

Digital conference stands

Conference or event packages

Conference or event packages

Some parties may offer overall discounts when a combined package of items relating to an event are purchased together, for example a conference stand, a number of admission passes, and a number of seats at a dinner. If you offer a conference package, you will need to consider each part of the package to assess whether it is reportable. Some elements may be exempt, such as an admission charge, whilst others elements of the package, such as non-exempt types of advertising, will be treated as sponsorship if they help to meet the costs of the event. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Conference or event packages](#)

[Fringe events, receptions and meetings](#)

What must you record when you accept a donation? What must you record when you accept a donation? If you accept a donation over £500, you must record these details: the required details of the source (please see [Who can you accept donations and loans from?](#) for guidance on the details you must record for each type of source) the section of the party that has accepted the donation (central party or an accounting unit) the amount of the donation, if money, or the nature and the value of the donation if non-money the date on which the donation was received the date on which the donation was accepted Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for What must you record when you accept a donation?](#)

[Conference or event packages](#)

What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? If you receive a donation and it isn't permissible, you must return it within 30 days. If your party keeps the impermissible donation after the 30 days, you are deemed to have accepted it. If your party accepts an impermissible donation, your party may be subject to civil sanctions. The party and the treasurer may also have committed criminal offences. Any potential breach will be dealt with in accordance with our Enforcement Policy. Enforcement Policy 4 April 2016 to 31 August 2023

If you've accepted an impermissible donation, you should tell us as soon as possible. You must record: the name of the source, if known the amount of the donation, if money, or the nature and value of the donation if non-money the manner in which the donation was made the date you received the donation the date you returned the donation the action you took to return the donation (for example, the person or institution you returned it to) You must include all impermissible donations in your quarterly report. How do you return an impermissible donation? If you know who the donor is, you must return it to them within 30 days of receiving the donation. If the donation is from an unidentified source (for example, an anonymous £600 money donation), you must return it within 30 days of receiving the donation to: the person who transferred the donation to you; or the financial institution used to transfer the donation If you cannot identify either, you must send the donation to the Electoral Commission. We will pay it into the Consolidated Fund, which is managed by HM Treasury. If any interest has been gained on the donation before you return it, you can keep it. This is not treated as a donation and it does not need to be reported. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source?](#)

[What must you record when you accept a donation?](#)

[Which loans are covered by the rules?](#)

[Which loans are covered by the rules?](#)

Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act

2000 (PPERA), the following types of transactions are regulated: loans of money credit facilities, such as credit cards and overdrafts securities or guarantees for a party's obligations to someone else Only transactions with a value of more than £500 are covered by the controls. In this guidance, we use the term 'loans' to refer to all of these transactions. Loans of £500 or less Loans with a value of £500 or less are outside the scope of PPERA and you do not need to record or report them. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Which loans are covered by the rules? What do you do if you receive a donation from an impermissible or unidentifiable source? What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? You can only enter into a loan with certain permissible sources. Please see Who can you accept donations and loans from? for the full list of permissible sources. You must complete permissibility checks before you enter into a loan as entering into a loan with an impermissible source is a criminal offence. You must satisfy yourselves that the source is permissible each time a loan is made, even if you have made permissibility checks for past loans from the same source. You should also carry out regular checks throughout the term of the loan to make sure that the source is still permissible. This is because the source must remain permissible for the whole period of the loan. You should keep a record of all your permissibility checks to show that you have followed the rules. If a source isn't permissible or they become impermissible at any point during the loan period, the transaction is void under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). You must still repay a loan that is void and the Commission may apply to the courts to recover the money if it is not repaid. If you have entered into an impermissible loan, or a loan becomes impermissible during the loan period, please read What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? for further guidance on the actions you must take. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? Which loans are covered by the rules? How do you work out the value of a loan? How do you work out the value of a loan? Type of loan Value A loan of money The total amount you will borrow A credit facility The maximum amount you can borrow A security (connected transaction) The amount which the lender would be liable for if your party defaults If the loan allows any interest to be added to the total amount you borrow, you don't need to include this in the value of the loan. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for How do you work out the value of a loan? What do you need to do before you enter into a loan? What must you record when you enter into a loan? What must you record when you enter into a loan? If you enter into a loan over £500, you must record these details: the required details of the source (please see Who can you accept donation and loans from? for guidance on the details you must record for each type of source) the section of the party that has entered into the loan (central party or an accounting unit) the nature of the transaction – whether it is a loan, credit facility or security arrangement the value of the loan the date the loan was entered into the date the loan is due to be repaid or a statement that it is indefinite, or otherwise how the date will be determined under the agreement if the loan ended, the date it ended the rate of interest – or how the rate will be determined under the agreement, or a statement that no interest is payable whether the agreement contains a provision that enables outstanding interest to be added to the sum owed whether or not any security has been given for the loan Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What must you record when you enter into a loan? How do you work out the value of a loan? What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source?

If a source isn't permissible or they become impermissible at any point during the loan period, the transaction is void. It has no legal effect and you must pay back anything you owe. You must therefore continue to check the permissibility of the source throughout the term of the loan. If you have entered into a loan with an impermissible source, you should let us know as soon as you become aware the source is impermissible. You must record these details: the same details for a permissible loan (see What must you record when you enter into a loan?) details of how you dealt with the transaction, for example, how you repaid the loan You must include all impermissible loans in your quarterly report. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? What must you record when you enter into a loan? Who can you accept donations and loans from? Who can you accept donations and loans from? A permissible source is: an individual registered on a UK electoral register, including overseas electors and those leaving bequests a UK-registered company which is incorporated in the UK and carries on business in the UK a Great Britain registered political party a UK-registered trade union a UK-registered building society a UK-registered limited liability partnership (LLP) that carries on business in the UK a UK-registered friendly or industrial and provident society a UK-based unincorporated association that is based in and carries on business or other activities in the UK You can also accept donations, but not loans, from certain types of trusts, certain public funds and from anyone who is paying for the reasonable costs of a visit outside the UK. Charities are not allowed to make political donations under charity law, even if they fall into one of the categories of permissible donor. If you know that a donor is a charity, you should make sure that they get advice from the Charity Commission before giving a donation. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Who can you accept donations and loans from? What do you do if you have a loan from an impermissible source? Individuals Individuals What makes an individual permissible? Individuals must be on a UK electoral register at the time of the donation or loan. This includes overseas electors. If you are left a bequest, and the individual was on the electoral register at any time five years before their death, you can accept the donation. How do you check permissibility? You can use the electoral register to check if an individual is permissible. Registered political parties (other than minor parties) are entitled to a free copy of the full electoral register. A new version of the electoral register is usually published on 1 December every year, and it is updated regularly. You should contact the Electoral Registration Officer at the relevant local council in writing for your copy, explaining that you are asking for it as a registered political party. You should also ask them to send you all the updates. You will receive the register in electronic form unless you request a printed version of the register. You can find contact details for local councils through our postcode search . You must check the register and updates carefully to make sure that the person is on the register on the date you enter into the loan, or on which you received the donation. In special circumstances, people have an anonymous registration. If the individual is anonymously registered, you must provide a statement that you have seen evidence that they have an anonymous entry on the register. Evidence will be in the form of a certificate of anonymous registration. You must submit a copy of the certificate with your quarterly report. You must only use the register for checking if an individual is permissible, or for electoral purposes. You must not pass it on to anyone else. What do you need to record? You must record: the individual's full name the address as it is shown on the electoral register, or if the person is an overseas elector, their home address You may find it

helpful to note the person's electoral number, as a record of your check. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Individuals Who can you accept donations and loans from? Companies Companies What makes a company permissible? A company is permissible if it is: registered as a company at Companies House incorporated in the UK, and carrying on business in the UK You must be sure that the company meets all three criteria. How do you check company registration? You should check the register at Companies House, using the free Webcheck service at companieshouse.gov.uk . You should look at the full register entry for the company. How do you check if the a company is carrying on business in the UK? You must be satisfied that the company is carrying on business in the UK. The business can be non-profit-making. Even if you have direct personal knowledge of the company, you should check the Companies House register to see if: the company is in liquidation, dormant, or about to be struck off the company's accounts and annual return are overdue A company may still be carrying on business if it is in liquidation, dormant or late in filing documents, but you should make extra checks to satisfy yourself that this is the case. For any company, you should consider looking at: the company's website relevant trade, telephone directories or reputable websites the latest accounts filed at Companies House If you are still not sure if the company is carrying on business in the UK, you should ask for written confirmation of its business activities from the company's directors. What do you need to record? You must record: the name as it is shown on the register the company's registered office address the registered company number Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Companies Individuals Limited liability partnerships Limited liability partnerships What makes a limited liability partnership permissible? A limited liability partnership (LLP) is a permissible donor if it is: registered as an LLP at Companies House carrying on business in the UK How do you check permissibility? You should check the register at Companies House, using the free Webcheck service at companieshouse.gov.uk . How do you check if a limited liability partnership is carrying on business in the UK? You must be satisfied that the LLP is carrying on business in the UK. The business can be non-profit-making. Even if you have direct personal knowledge of the LLP, you should check the Companies House register to see if: the LLP is in liquidation, dormant, or about to be struck off the LLP's accounts and annual return are overdue An LLP may still be carrying on business if it is in liquidation, dormant or late in filing documents, but you should make extra checks to satisfy yourself that this is the case. For any LLP, you should consider looking at: the LLP's website relevant trade, telephone directories or reputable websites the latest accounts filed at Companies House If you are still not sure if the LLP is carrying on business in the UK, you should ask for written confirmation of its business activities from the LLP's directors. What do you need to record? You must record: the name as it is shown on the register the LLP's registered office address Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Limited liability partnerships Companies Unincorporated associations Unincorporated associations What makes an unincorporated association permissible? An unincorporated association is a permissible donor or lender if: it has more than one member the main office is in the UK it is carrying on business or other activities in the UK How do you check permissibility? There is no register of unincorporated associations. Permissibility is a matter of fact in each case. In general, an unincorporated association is an association of two or more individuals who have come together to carry out a shared purpose. An unincorporated association has an identifiable membership which is bound together by identifiable rules or an agreement between the members. These rules set

out how the unincorporated association is to be run and managed. Sometimes the rules might be formalised, for example in a written constitution. However they do not need to be formalised. For example, members' clubs are sometimes unincorporated associations. If you are not sure that an association meets the criteria, you should consider whether the donation is actually from individuals within it (rather than the association) or if someone within the association is acting as an agent for others. If you think this is the case, you must check the permissibility of all individuals who have contributed more than £500 and treat them as the source. You can find more information on carrying on business in the previous section How do you check if a company is carrying on business in the UK? If an unincorporated association makes political donations amounting to more than £25,000 in a calendar year, you should make them aware that they have to report this to us. Please see our website for more information on unincorporated associations . What do you need to record? You will need to record: the name of the unincorporated association the association's main office address Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Unincorporated associations Limited liability partnerships Trusts Trusts What makes a trust permissible? Trusts created before 27 July 1999 A trust created before 27 July 1999 is permissible if no property has been transferred to the trust since this date, and the terms of the trust have not varied since this date If the trust is a pre-1999 trust, then you must report: that the donation was from a trustee; the date on which the trust was created; the full name of the creator of the trust; and every individual or organisation by whom, or under whose will, property was transferred to the trust before 27 July 1999 Permissible donor trusts Permissible donor trusts may have been created before or after 27 July 1999. A permissible donor trust is permissible if the trust was created by an individual or organisation that was a permissible source at the time; and only transfers of property from permissible sources have been made to the trust If a trust was created by an individual's will, that individual must have been on a UK electoral register at any time within five years prior to the date of their death. A trust cannot be a permissible donor trust if it has ever received property from an impermissible or unidentifiable source. If the trust is a permissible donor trust, then you must report: that the donation was from a trustee; the required permissibility details of the individual or organisation that created the trust; and every other individual or organisation by whom, or under whose will, property has been transferred to the trust Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Trusts Unincorporated associations Public funds and visits outside the UK Public funds and visits outside the UK Public funds Public funds received by registered parties are permissible donations, except for grants paid towards security costs at party conferences. What do you need to record? You will need to record: the full name and address of the organisation making the payment to the party, e.g., House of Commons Fees Office the provision under which the payment to the party has been made, e.g., Resolution of the House of Commons (give date and number, if applicable) Visits outside the UK Payments received by registered parties to meet reasonable qualifying costs incurred in connection with a visit outside the UK by a member or officer of the party are treated as permissible donations. Qualifying costs in relation to a visit include travelling to and from the UK, or travelling, accommodation or subsistence costs while on the visit. What do you need to record? You will need to record: the full name and address of the person or organisation that funded the visit the date(s) on which the visit took place the country or countries in which the visit took place Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Public funds and visits outside the UK Trusts Other sources Other

sources Registered political parties A party must be on the Great Britain register to be permissible. You can find the full list of Great Britain registered political parties on our register of political parties . Trade unions A trade union must be listed as a trade union by the Certification Officer to be permissible. You should check the official list of active trade unions on the Certification Officer's website . Building societies A building society must be a building society within the meaning of the Building Societies Act 1986 to be permissible. You should check the list of building societies registered by the Financial Conduct Authority on the Mutuals Public Register . Friendly societies, and industrial and provident societies Friendly societies, and industrial and provident societies must be registered under the Friendly Societies Act 1974, the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, or the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 to be permissible. You should check the Mutuals Public Register maintained by the Financial Conduct Authority. What do you need to record? You will need to record: the name of the donor the address, as shown on the relevant register Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Other sources Public funds and visits outside the UK Which donations and loans do you need to report? Which donations and loans do you need to report? Certain donations and loans must be reported to us and made public. We use 'benefits' to refer to both donations and loans over £500. Benefits under £500 are not covered by the rules and do not need to be recorded, aggregated or reported. We publish details of the amounts and the donors and lenders on our website . We don't publish the addresses of individuals who donate or lend. You must submit quarterly reports showing donations and loans accepted in that quarter. There are separate reports for donations and for loans. All parties must report: all impermissible donations all impermissible loans all permissible donations over £7,500 all permissible loans over £7,500 all permissible benefits that add up to over £7,500 from the same source in the same calendar year (aggregated benefits) all permissible benefits that: are (or add up to) over £1,500 ; and come from a source the central party has already accepted an over £7,500 benefit from in that calendar year changes to the details of loans you have already reported to us, such as partial or full repayments or changes to the terms If your party has accounting units, the central party treasurer is responsible for reporting donations from accounting units too. Different reporting thresholds apply to accounting units. You can find more information in the next section, Parties with accounting units . Aggregating benefits You must add together any permissible benefits that fall under the reporting threshold that you receive from the same source in the same calendar year. This means you must add together donations and loans from a source and report these when the total value of the benefits meets the relevant reporting threshold. You should report these aggregated benefits to us in the quarter that they exceed the reporting threshold. Each aggregated benefit should be recorded and reported individually in your quarterly report. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Which donations and loans do you need to report? Other sources Parties with accounting units Parties with accounting units Parties with accounting units must report donations and loans received by the central party and accounting units. There are different thresholds for reporting benefits received by each branch of the party. a central party's reporting threshold is over £7,500 an accounting unit's reporting threshold is over £1,500 Accounting unit treasurers do not report to us separately. They must give all the relevant information on benefits to the central party treasurer when requested to do so. The central party treasurer is legally responsible for reporting benefits received by the central party and accounting units to us.

Benefits to the central party you must report: all impermissible donations all impermissible loans all permissible donations over £7,500 all permissible loans over £7,500 all permissible benefits that add up to over £7,500 from the same source in the same calendar year (including benefits received by different sections of the party) all permissible benefits that: are (or add up to) over £1,500 ; and come from a source the central party has already accepted an over £7,500 benefit from in that calendar year changes to the details of loans you have already reported to us, such as partial or full repayments, or changes to the terms Benefits to an accounting unit you must report: all impermissible donations all impermissible loans all permissible donations over £1,500 all permissible loans over £1,500 all permissible benefits that add up to over £1,500 from the same source in the same calendar year changes to the details of loans you have already reported to us, such as partial or full repayments, or changes to the terms Aggregating benefits Aggregating benefits You must add together any permissible benefits that fall under the reporting threshold that you receive from the same source in the same calendar year. This means you must add together donations and loans from a source and report these when the total value of the benefits meets the relevant reporting threshold. If these benefits are made to the same section of the party, you should report these aggregated benefits to us in the quarter that they exceed the central party or accounting unit reporting thresholds, respectively. Benefits from the same source to different sections of a party Permissible benefits that are accepted by an accounting unit but don't meet the reporting threshold should be treated as benefits that have been accepted by the central party. This means the central party reporting threshold will apply to these benefits. For example, an individual might make a number of donations to different sections of a party that are all below the reporting threshold. As the donations made to the accounting units are treated as donations to the central party, these donations are reportable if they exceed the £7,500 reporting threshold when aggregated. You should add together benefits from the same source made to different sections of the party at the end of the calendar year and report these aggregated benefits to us in Quarter Four. Please see the next section Reporting donations and loans: examples for further guidance on reporting benefits. Last updated: 31 March 2022 Book traversal links for Parties with accounting units Which donations and loans do you need to report? Reporting donations and loans: examples Reporting donations and loans: examples Example 1: A limited liability partnership makes a £10,000 donation to a party in March and a £2,000 donation in July. In this example, the £10,000 donation is reportable because it exceeds the over £7,500 reporting threshold. After accepting this donation, the reporting threshold for further benefits from the same source drops to over £1,500 for the remainder of the year. This means the £2,000 donation is also reportable as it meets the lower threshold of over £1,500. Example 2: An unincorporated association makes three donations of £600 to a single accounting unit over a year. When added together the donation amount totals £1,800, which is over the £1,500 threshold for an accounting unit. These aggregated donations are reportable when the reporting threshold is met. In this example the donations become reportable in the quarter in which the third donation is accepted. Example 3: An individual gives a £5,000 donation and a £5,000 loan to the central party in the same calendar year. The party must report any permissible benefits that are or add up to over £7,500 from the same source in a calendar year. When added together the total value of these benefits is £10,000, which exceeds the £7,500 threshold. These aggregated benefits should be reported in the quarter that they exceed the reporting threshold. Example 4: A company gives £5,000 to the central

party in January and £1,000 each to three accounting units in May. Individually, these donations are below the reporting thresholds for the central party and accounting units. The party must add together any benefits received from the same source over the calendar year which do not meet the reporting threshold alone. In this case, the three £1,000 donations to the accounting units should be treated as donations to the central party. When added together the total donation amount is £8,000, which is over the £7,500 reporting threshold for donations to the central party. These aggregated donations are reportable and must be reported at the end of the calendar year, in Quarter Four. Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for Reporting donations and loans: examples](#) [Parties with accounting units](#) [How to report donations and loans](#) [How to report donations and loans](#) [You must submit donation and loan reports to us every quarter showing the donations and loans your party has accepted during each reporting period. We must receive your reports within 30 days of the end of each reporting quarter. We will investigate any failure to submit a report within the deadline in line with our Enforcement Policy.](#) [Enforcement Policy](#) [4 April 2016 to 31 August 2023](#) These are the deadlines for submitting quarterly reports: Quarter One (1 January – 31 March) 30 April Two (1 April – 30 June) 30 July Three (1 July – 30 September) 30 October Four (1 October – 31 December) 30 January

[Submitting your reports](#) [You can submit your quarterly reports on PEF Online](#) . Alternatively, you can download the reporting forms below and submit the completed forms to us by email at pef@electoralcommission.org.uk or you can post these to us. [Exemptions from quarterly reports](#) If you haven't received any donations, entered into any new loans or made any changes to your existing loans, you still need to submit quarterly reports. This is called a 'nil report'. You can submit nil reports through PEF Online or if you are using the paper forms, the form you'll need for this is called an RP10QN for donations and an RP10QNb for loans. If you submit four consecutive nil reports, you are exempt from submitting further reports until you receive another reportable donation, enter into a new loan or make changes to an existing loan. If you are unsure whether your party is exempt from submitting a quarterly donations or loans report, please contact us . Even if you are exempt from quarterly reporting, you must still submit annual accounts for your party. [Forms](#) [Form RP10: Quarterly report of donations made to a political party](#) [Explanatory notes on completing Form RP10: Quarterly report of donations made to a political party](#) [Form RP10QN: Quarterly report of donations made to a political party: statement of nil report](#) [Explanatory notes on completing Form RP10QN: Quarterly report of donations made to a political party: Statement of nil report](#) [Form RP10b: Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party](#) [Explanatory notes on completing Form RP10b: Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party](#) [Form RP10QNb: Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party: Statement of nil report](#) [Explanatory notes on completing Form RP10QNb: Quarterly report of regulated transactions \(loans\) made to a political party: Statement of nil report](#) Last updated: 31 March 2022

[Book traversal links for How to report donations and loans](#) [Reporting donations and loans: examples](#) [UK Parliamentary general elections](#) [UK Parliamentary general elections](#) [When a UK Parliamentary general election \(UKPGE\) is called you must report to us every week, unless you have made a declaration to us that you will not be standing any candidates at the election. You can make this declaration by submitting a completed Form RP6 to us at any time up until seven days after the election is called. You can withdraw the declaration if your party decides to stand candidates. When a UKPGE is called, we will write to you to let you know how to report to us and we will put details on our](#)

website. Form RP6: Declaration of exemption of a registered political party -
integrated notes Last updated: 10 October 2022 Book traversal links for UK
Parliamentary general elections How to report donations and loans

Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers
Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers
The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 apply to the processing of all personal data. Data protection legislation does not override requirements to gather and process information as set out in existing electoral law but there is impact on how this information is processed and the responsibilities of EROs and ROs to keep data subjects informed. You are personally responsible as an Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and/or Returning Officer (RO) for ensuring that you comply with the requirements of current data protection legislation. This guidance, which includes practical examples where possible, is designed to support you in meeting: your duty to comply with the requirements of current data protection legislation your obligations, as they relate to your electoral administration responsibilities. It was developed in close consultation with colleagues across the electoral community including the Association of s (AEA), Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC), the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the Scottish Assessors Association (SAA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) to identify the impact of the legislation on EROs and ROs.

[Book traversal links for Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers](#)
[Registering as a data controller](#)

1. In this resource we use 'RO' as a generic term to refer to all types of Returning Officer.

■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

Registering as a data controller

You have a statutory duty to process certain personal data to maintain the electoral register and/or for the purpose of administering an election. As such, in line with current data protection legislation, you are acting as a data controller. Data controllers are required to register with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

1 Advice from the ICO is that all data controllers will need to ensure that they are registered. This means that you must be registered separately to your council in your capacity as ERO and/or RO. The ICO have advised that if you are both an RO and an ERO one registration can cover both roles, and that where you have an additional role as a Regional RO, Police Area RO, Combined Authority RO etc, one registration can be used for all titles but this needs to be included in the name of the organisation when registering. In Scotland, where the ERO and the Assessor are the same person, the ICO have advised that one registration can also cover both roles, but both titles need to be included in the name of the organisation when registering.

Registration fee

The ICO have provided further guidance relating to the fee to register as a data controller on their website , including examples of how the fee should be calculated. When calculating the number of staff you employ, this should be determined pro rata, i.e. evened out throughout the year. For example, if you are an RO and you only employ staff in April and May to administer an election, the total staff employed in April and May would need to be apportioned throughout the year to determine the number of staff you employ. As such, it is likely that the fee would always fall into the lower category. If you are using a joint registration as ERO and RO, you will need to be careful when calculating the number of staff since you will need to consider the total staff across both functions. You should direct any questions in relation to registering as a data controller towards the ICO.

1. Digital Economy Act 2017

■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#)

Last updated: 22 February 2023

[Book traversal links for Registering as a data controller](#)

Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers

Accountability and transparency of data controllers

Accountability and transparency of data controllers

You must be able to demonstrate that you comply with your obligations as

a data controller, ensuring that personal data is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. To achieve this, you should have and maintain written plans and records to provide an audit trail. You will have developed registration and election plans, and associated risk registers, that outline your processes and the safeguards that you have in place. You should keep these documents under review to ensure data protection remains integral and that they are compliant with current data protection legislation. Your plans and risk registers provide a sound basis for you to meet your obligations as a data processor. However, to show that you are processing personal data lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner, you are also likely to need to implement further demonstrable processes. Data protection legislation impacts on your council as a whole, so you should not need to address the requirements in isolation. If you have not already done so, you should speak to your council's data protection or information officer. You should also utilise the ICO's website which has detailed guidance to support you in meeting your obligations, including specific guidance on accountability and transparency. Appointing a data protection officer A public authority must appoint a data protection officer (DPO) to advise on data protection issues. As ERO or RO, you are not currently included in the definition of a public authority contained in Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and are therefore not required to appoint a DPO for the conduct of your duties. However, you can choose to appoint a DPO if you wish. Your appointing council must have a DPO in place and you should liaise with them over good practice in relation to data protection. Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Accountability and transparency of data controllers Registering as a data controller Lawful basis for processing personal data Lawful basis for processing personal data For the processing of personal data to be lawful, it must be processed on a 'lawful basis'. 1 This includes: Legal obligation: the processing is necessary to comply with the law (not including contractual obligations); or Public task: the processing is necessary to perform a task in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in you as the data controller; or Legitimate interests: the processing is necessary for your legitimate interests or the legitimate interests of a third party unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests. (This cannot apply if you are a public authority processing data to perform your official tasks); or Consent: the individual has given clear consent for you to process their personal data for a specific purpose. For further information see the ICO's guidance on consent . Processing personal data without a lawful basis runs the risk of enforcement activity, including substantial fines, issued by the ICO, for further information see our guidance on data protection breaches and sanctions. The ICO have advised that in the main, the processing of personal data by EROs and ROs is likely to fall under the lawful basis that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of the official authority vested in the controller. It is for you to determine what the lawful basis for processing the data is, and to document your approach. You must clearly set out in your privacy notice which lawful basis you are relying on for processing and cite the relevant UK law where applicable. You may rely on more than one legal basis if you consider it appropriate. We have provided examples of lawful processing based on processing to perform a public task vested in you by UK law. You should undertake an audit of all the personal data that you collect to determine the lawful basis on which you are collecting/processing it. 1. Article 6 General Data Protection Regulation 2018 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Lawful basis for processing

personal data Accountability and transparency of data controllers Processing personal data for the performance of a public task Processing personal data for the performance of a public task This lawful basis for processing personal data covers: public functions and powers that are set out in UK law the performance of specific tasks in the public interest set out in UK law In the following situations, the lawful basis for the processing is the performance of a public task (i.e. maintaining the register of electors, and administering the election) in the public interest, as provided for in electoral law: An application to register to vote requires an ERO to process National Insurance numbers and dates of birth as part of the application. 1 Processing applications to register is part of the ERO's overall statutory duty to maintain the register of electors. 2 An RO is required to process personal data relating to a candidate for nomination purposes as part of the RO's overall statutory duty to administer the election in accordance with the rules. 3 You will also need to consider the appropriate lawful basis for the processing of personal data not covered by electoral legislation. For example, employment legislation may require you to process personal data relating to the right of polling station staff or canvassers to work in the UK. Where it is necessary for the performance of a public task to process personal data, you should determine and record what the basis for that public task is. This will enable you to demonstrate the lawful basis on which you are processing all personal data. The legislative references in the Commission's guidance for EROs and ROs may help with this. 1. Regulation 26 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001; Regulation 26 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 9 Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. S23 RPA1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Processing personal data for the performance of a public task Lawful basis for processing personal data Processing personal data and the edited register Processing personal data and the edited register As an ERO you are required to publish an edited register. 1 You are required to include electors details in the edited register if they do not opt out. The ICO have confirmed that as legislation provides for a statutory opt-out, coupled with the duties placed on EROs, this means that EROs are processing personal data for inclusion on the edited register is on the lawful basis that it is necessary to perform a public task. Therefore the data protection conditions for consent will not apply and will not impact on the edited register. 1. Regulation 93 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001; Regulation 93 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Processing personal data and the edited register Processing personal data for the performance of a public task Right to object to the processing of personal data Right to object to the processing of personal data Article 21 of the UK GDPR includes the right to object, meaning that the data subject can object to the processing of their personal data. This right does apply when processing is required for the performance of a public task (such as maintaining the electoral register). For example, legislation prevents an elector from changing their edited register preference on a canvass communication. 1 However, if you receive a response to a canvass communication and the elector has themselves clearly indicated on the form that they want to be removed from the open register until further notice, you should treat the canvass response as a notice under Article 21 of the UK GDPR and amend the register accordingly. Further information on this process is set out in our guidance for running electoral registration. The right to object to processing cannot however be

applied to information where the collection of or the nature of the processing is specified in electoral law. For example, the data subject can object to the processing of their email or telephone contact details in relation to electoral registration, but not to the use of their name or home address. You should maintain records to detail any request made under the right to object to processing to demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Your Electoral Management Software (EMS) provider may have the facility to record consent against elector records and you should liaise with them to understand how to manage the process in practice. The email invitation to register (ITR) that you must use includes an unsubscribe option to allow electors to make a request under the right to object to the use of their contact information for this purpose. You should ensure that where you communicate with electors by email, you include an 'unsubscribe' option on all emails to allow the data subject to object to the use of their contact information for this purpose.

1. Regulation 93A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001; Regulation 93A Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Right to object to the processing of personal data Processing personal data and the edited register Right to be forgotten Right to be forgotten

Article 17 of the UK GDPR includes the right to be forgotten. This means that a data subject can request that you delete their information without undue delay. The right to be forgotten does not apply when: processing is required for the performance of a public task (such as the maintaining of electoral registers) it is necessary for archiving in the public interest For example, an elector cannot ask the ERO to remove them from old or historical electoral registers because their inclusion on that register was a result of a legal obligation on the ERO. However, an elector may request that information collected on grounds of consent (for example, where an elector gives consent to use of their email address) is deleted or removed at any time. The RO is required to publish notices relating to an election. These notices may include personal information relating to candidates, subscribers and agents. A person cannot use the right to be forgotten to require that their details are removed from a statutory notice. However, they could exercise the right to have their details removed from a notice you have published on your council website after the election, if the deadline for an election petition had passed (when the notice serves no further purpose). For this reason, once the petition deadline for an election has passed, you should either remove notices published on your website, or remove the personal data contained in these notices. You should also consider whether it is appropriate to retain that data. For example, if you have existing records of email addresses or phone numbers collected through an application to register, at the time that you next use that information, you should take appropriate measures such as: explaining the data subjects right to object to further processing linking to your privacy notice including the unsubscribe option, which allows the data subject to object to the use of their contact information for this purpose For more information see our guidance on document retention . Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Right to be forgotten Right to object to the processing of personal data Special categories of personal data Special categories of personal data

Electoral legislation requires an individual applying to register to vote to provide their nationality or nationalities, or, if they are not able to provide that information, the reason they are not able to do so. 1 As ERO you are required to process this nationality data in order to determine which elections the elector is

entitled to vote at. Data protection legislation does not affect the requirement for nationality information to be provided, however, nationality data is classed as a special category of personal data because it may reveal an individual's racial or ethnic origin. You may also deal with special categories of personal data through: documents received as part of the documentary exceptions process documents received as part of an application for anonymous registration information relating to staff appointments

Processing special category data Data protection legislation prohibits the processing of special categories of personal data unless an additional lawful basis beyond those for the main purposes of processing data is met. For electoral purposes, the appropriate lawful basis for processing special categories of personal data would be that it is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest and with a basis in UK law. For more information on this see our guidance on Lawful basis for processing personal data . To process nationality data you must have in place a policy document which must explain: the procedures for complying with the data protection principles the policies for retention and erasure Your policy document will need to reflect your: local processing procedures policies for the retention of personal data policies for the erasure of personal data This policy document must: be kept until six months after the processing ceases be reviewed and updated at appropriate times be made available to the ICO on request

1. Regulation 26 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001; Regulation 26 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ [Back to content at footnote 1](#) Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Special categories of personal data](#)

Right to be forgotten Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) Data protection impact assessments ensure that data protection principles are integral to the design of processes by helping to identify, assess and mitigate risks. Data protection legislation requires that a DPIA is undertaken before processing when: you are using new data processing technologies for example, if you introduce a new initiative to issue canvassers with tablets, you need to undertake a DPIA first. the processing is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals for example, processing applications for anonymous registration is high risk processing (see our guidance on high risk processing for further information). A DPIA is not required where a processing operation has a lawful basis that regulates the processing and a DPIA has already been undertaken. For example, if your canvassers are already using tablets and processing is underway you are not required to conduct a retrospective DPIA. However, you should ensure that data protection principles are integral to your existing processing operations, and a DPIA can help evidence this. When you undertake any new process, you should undertake DPIAs as a matter of good practice. This will enable you to demonstrate that data protection is integral to your processes and support the principle of accountability. We have produced the following template DPIA which is used by the Electoral Commission. [Example Data Protection Impact Assessment \(DPIA\) \(DOC\)](#) The template relates to our activities, so you will need to adapt it to make it relevant, but it may support you in undertaking your own DPIAs. You should speak to your council's Data Protection Officer/Information Officer before undertaking a DPIA.

DPIAs and anonymous registration applications Applications for anonymous registration contain data relating to anonymous electors' or applicants' personal safety. The lawful basis for processing this data is set out in legislation but the processing is high risk due to the nature of the data. You should have a DPIA in place for processing anonymous registration applications, and if you don't you should undertake one. Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Data protection impact](#)

assessments (DPIAs) Special categories of personal data Requirements of a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Requirements of a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Data protection legislation does not specify a particular process to be followed when undertaking a DPIA. However, it does set out minimum required features: a description of the proposed processing and the purposes – in relation to anonymous registration, this should include: what the personal data is who will have access how it will be stored who it will be disclosed to an assessment of the necessity and proportionality of the processing – in most cases for an ERO or RO this will be processing for the performance of a public task an assessment of the risks to the rights of the individuals affected the measures envisaged to address the risks and demonstrate compliance with data protection rules for example, the measures you put in place to keep the identity of anonymous electors secure A single DPIA may be undertaken where a set of similar processing operations present similar high risks. The ICO has provided guidance on DPIAs on their website which includes examples of good practice. You should: keep any DPIAs you have in place under review to determine if your processing operations require any further DPIA to be undertaken consider how you can ensure data protection is integral to all of your processing ensure that all your training – whether for canvassers, polling station staff, or your electoral services team – reflect data protection requirements. This will help you to embed the data protection principles in your work and demonstrate compliance ensure you discuss any data protection training with your council's Data Protection Officer/Information Officer Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Requirements of a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) Privacy notices - the right to be informed Privacy notices - the right to be informed Data subjects must be provided with sufficient information to enable them to understand how their personal data is used. This is achieved via a privacy notice which is sometimes called a fair processing notice. You will need to ensure you have a privacy notice published on your website. This can be a standalone privacy notice or can be included as part of your council's privacy notice. The information in a privacy notice must be provided in clear plain language, particularly when addressed to a child, and be provided free of charge. It is important that your privacy notice is specific to your local circumstances and the personal data that you process. It must be kept up to date to meet any changes in your approach to processing data. Your council's data protection/information officer will be able to help you with the contents of the required notices. Due to the differences across ERO and RO functions due to devolution, shared services, differences in EMS suppliers and internal structures and processes within each council it is not appropriate for the Commission to provide a template privacy notice. In particular, your privacy notice needs to set out how you will use the personal data that is collected. The following bullet points are not an exhaustive list, but give an indication of the sort of things that could be covered in your privacy notice: the fact that personal data contained in the electoral register will be used to conduct an annual canvass, including issuing canvass communications to all households and following up with non-responding properties how information in the electoral register may be used using the prescribed wording to describe the electoral register and the open or edited register (as included on the voter registration form) the fact that personal data contained in the electoral register and absent voting lists will be used to issue poll cards in advance of an election that a postal voter's signature (where required) and date of birth provided on a postal voting statement will be compared against that postal voter's signature and date of birth held on the personal identifiers record You must

be clear for what purpose you collect, hold and use people's data – and ensure that you are not using it for other unrelated purposes. You should periodically review your privacy notices with your council's data protection officer/information officer to ensure they remain compliant with the current data protection legislation. You should ensure your privacy notice is clearly visible on your website and is referenced when communicating with electors and others. We have produced a checklist for what a privacy notice must contain: [Checklist for Privacy Notice \(DOC\)](#) Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Privacy notices - the right to be informed](#) Requirements of a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Notifying data subjects about how their personal data is used Notifying data subjects about how their personal data is used Data protection legislation sets out requirements for notifying data subjects about how their personal data is used. When data is collected directly from the data subject, the notice must be given at the point of collection. For example, a notice needs to be included: in letters requesting documentary evidence under the exceptions process on application forms for the appointment of election staff When data is not collected directly, the notice must be given to the data subject within one month or at the first point of contact. But this is not necessary if the data subject was notified of the terms of the privacy notice when the data was originally collected by the primary data controller (for example, if you use personal data collected by council tax to verify an applicant for registration, a notice is not required if one was given to the applicant by the council tax department when the personal data was originally collected). It is not necessary to provide a link to a privacy notice on poll cards. Poll cards do not collect personal information, they contain information from the electoral register and absent vote lists which are publicly available under electoral law. Your privacy notice should set out that personal data contained in the electoral register and absent voting lists will be used to issue poll cards in advance of an election. Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Notifying data subjects about how their personal data is used](#) Privacy notices - the right to be informed Data protection considerations for the inspection of the electoral register Data protection considerations for the inspection of the electoral register We have produced a cover sheet for the inspection of the register which sets out how it may be used and the penalty for misuse. [Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection \(DOC\)](#) You should maintain records of every person or organisation supplied with the electoral register and absent voting lists, not just those who pay to receive it. You should ensure that every person/organisation receiving the register, whether on publication, by sale, or on request, is aware that: they must only use the register for the purpose(s) specified in the Regulations permitting its supply once the purpose for which the register has been supplied has expired, they must securely destroy the register they understand penalty for misuse of the register We have included the information suggested above in the following cover sheets for the sale and supply on request of the electoral register: [Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale \(DOC\)](#) [Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request \(DOC\)](#) Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Data protection considerations for the inspection of the electoral register](#) Notifying data subjects about how their personal data is used Inspecting council records as ERO Inspecting council records as ERO As ERO, you will need to demonstrate that all information obtained from inspecting council records or disclosed by your council complies with the principles of processing personal data, ensuring that it is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner. Maintaining records will help you to demonstrate

that you are complying with your obligations under data protection and electoral legislation. 1 You should keep a record of: the records to be checked a schedule of when those checks are carried out the lawful basis on which you are processing that information. 2 For example, your obligation as ERO to inspect records you are permitted to inspect as part of your duty to maintain the electoral register measures to ensure appropriate security are in place to protect the data, for example: encrypting or password protecting data whenever it is transmitted using secure storage the action you have taken on the basis of the information you have obtained retention and secure disposal of data in accordance with your document retention plan You should ensure you maintain records of the council records you inspect, and should have the maintenance of records as a clear part of your overall registration plan. Further guidance on inspecting council records 3 is contained in our guidance for EROs . 1. Regulation 35 and 35A Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR (E&W) 2001); Regulation 35 and 35A Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR (S) 2001) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983) provides the statutory basis by which you process personal data obtained through council records ■ Back to content at footnote 2 3. Regulation 35 and 35A RPR (E&W) 2001; Regulation 35 and 35A RPR (S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 3 Last updated: 20 March 2023 Book traversal links for Inspecting council records as ERO Data protection considerations for the inspection of the electoral register Document retention Document retention Personal data processed for any purpose must not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose. Once the purpose for collecting the data has passed, you need to consider if there is a reason for you to retain that data. Data protection legislation does permit personal data to be stored for longer periods if, subject to the implementation of appropriate safeguards, the data will be processed solely for: archiving purposes in the public interest scientific purposes historical purposes statistical purposes Examples might include old electoral registers held to determine the eligibility of overseas applicants, or election results. You should practice data minimisation – don't ask for, and process, personal data if you don't need it. For every document you possess, ask yourself "for what reason am I keeping this document?" Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Document retention Inspecting council records as ERO Document retention policy Document retention policy Maintaining your document retention policy will help you to: demonstrate that you are complying with the principles of processing personal data ensure that data is processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner Your document retention policy should set out the following for all documents you receive and hold: whether the document contains personal data the lawful basis on which any personal data was collected your retention period your rationale for the retention period (which might relate to a requirement in electoral law, for example, home address forms at UK Parliamentary elections must be destroyed after 21 days) In some cases, maintaining your document retention policy will be straightforward as electoral legislation will require a set period for which documents are retained. For example, at a UK Parliamentary election, specific documents relating to the election must be retained for one year 1 and then, unless otherwise directed, be destroyed. In other cases, you will need to make a local decision and justify this in your document retention policy. If you are an ERO, your document retention policy will include (but will not be limited to) how you process and store documents received due to: an application to register (i.e. application form and any documentary evidence where required) an application for an absent vote your inspection of council records or your power to

require information from any other person for the purposes of maintaining the register a request to an applicant/elector for further information to help you determine if they are resident your power to require evidence as to age or nationality For further information, refer to the relevant section on Access and Supply in our guidance for EROs. Our guidance for ROs for each election type contains specific advice on the retention of election documents . Your retention plan should reflect your approach to the retention of all documents. For example, storage and retention of nomination papers and home address forms may differ for each election type. You will also need to consider your document retention policy for: notices published for the election staff records, including appointment and payment records

1. Rule 57, Schedule 1 Representation of the People Act 1983 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 20 March 2023 Book traversal links for Document retention policy Document retention Retention of election notices published on your website Retention of election notices published on your website You will need to ensure that election notices published on your website are removed at the appropriate time. Election notices serve specific purposes: for example, a statement of the candidates standing at an election. Once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, the election notices have no further purpose. You will need to consider whether it is appropriate or necessary for election notices to remain published on your website beyond the expiry of the petition period for that election. Once the petition deadline for that election has passed, you should either remove notices published on your website, or remove the personal data contained in these notices. Unless there is a reason not to, for example a legal challenge, it is essential that you securely destroy documents in accordance with your document retention policy. You should appropriately label documents and tag electronic files with destruction dates. You should reference these dates in your electoral registration and election plans. You should ensure that you and your staff are familiar with and adhere to your document retention policy, and that it is up-to-date and covers every document you process. Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Retention of election notices published on your website Document retention policy Data storage Data storage As data controller, you have a duty to protect against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss and are required to have appropriate technical and organisational measures in place to ensure a level of security, appropriate to the risk. 1 You must determine what appropriate security measures are in place to protect personal data. For example ensuring that personal data is encrypted when it is being transferred, thus ensuring that you act as a guardian for that data. Your council will have corporate standards and processes for data handling and security. Your Data Protection Officer will be able to advise you on the processes you use as part of carrying out your specific duties as RO and/or ERO. They will also be able to help you identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper or stored electronically on your systems. You should ensure that you have processes in place to retrieve data and securely destroy it at the appropriate time, in accordance with your document retention policy. 1.

Article 32 General Data Protection Regulation 2018 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Data storage Retention of election notices published on your website Using contractors and suppliers Using contractors and suppliers As a data controller, you may use a processor to act on your behalf to process data. For example, you are using a processor if you send register data to a contractor to provide an automated response facility during the canvass or send absent vote data to a contractor to produce postal ballot packs for

an election. Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Using contractors and suppliers](#) [Data storage Requirement for a written contract with a processor](#) [Requirement for a written contract with a processor](#) [Data protection legislation requires that whenever you use a processor, you must formalise the working relationship in a written contract which sets out: the subject matter, nature and purpose of the processing the obligations and rights of the data controller duration of the processing and the types of personal data and categories of data subjects](#) The contract must also set out specific obligations on the processor, including that they: comply with your instructions are subject to a duty of confidentiality keep personal data secure and notify you of any breach maintain written records of the processing activities they carry out for you only use a sub-processor with your consent submit to audits and inspections and provide you with whatever information you need to ensure compliance with current data protection legislation delete or return all personal data to you as requested at the end of the contract As data controller, you are ultimately responsible for ensuring that personal data is processed in accordance with data protection principles. However, if a processor fails to meet any of its obligations, or acts against your instructions, then it may also be liable to pay damages or be subject to fines or other penalties or corrective measures. You should consider the guidance the ICO provides on ‘Contracts and liabilities between controllers and processors’ in relation to your contracts with data processors. [Appointing data processors](#) [Data protection legislation requires that you only appoint a processor that can provide sufficient guarantees that the requirements of the current data protection legislation will be met.](#) You should ensure that data protection is integral in any tender exercise (documenting your decision-making process) and that the requirements set out in our guidance are met in any contract awarded. You should also ensure that your existing contractors or suppliers are aware of their obligations under the current data protection legislation, and that any existing contracts meet the requirements set out in our guidance. Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Requirement for a written contract with a processor](#) [Using contractors and suppliers](#) [Data sharing agreements with external organisations](#) [Data sharing agreements with external organisations](#) As ERO, you may be obtaining personal data from external partners. For example, you may receive student data from local higher education providers or receive data from care homes regarding their residents. In this situation, the external partner will be a data controller in their own right. It is strongly recommended that you agree a data sharing agreement or protocol with any external partners and have a written agreement when sharing data between data controllers, even though the legislation does not specifically require it. A written agreement or protocol will help both you and the external partner demonstrate that you are acting in accordance with the data protection principles and will help to avoid any liability implications of one party being seen as a controller and the other being seen as a processor. We have produced the following checklist that you can use when developing a data sharing agreement: [Checklist for data sharing agreement \(DOC\)](#) Alternatively, your council may have developed a template agreement that you can use. In any case, you should discuss any data sharing agreement with your council’s Data Protection Officer or Information Officer. Last updated: 22 February 2023 [Book traversal links for Data sharing agreements with external organisations](#) [Requirement for a written contract with a processor](#) [Data sharing agreements and supply of the electoral register](#) [Data sharing agreements and supply of the electoral register](#) Electoral law provides a statutory framework for the supply of the electoral register

and, as ERO, you must supply the register in accordance with the relevant regulations. 1 The recipient of the electoral register must only use the register for the purposes specified in those Regulations. 2 As ERO you could choose to have a data sharing agreement with an organisation relating to the supply of the register, a credit reference agency for example. However, there is no requirement for such an organisation to have an agreement with you. If you choose to have an agreement you would need to be careful that the provisions contained in it do not go beyond the requirements in the Regulations. You should ensure that you have written data-sharing agreements in place with external organisations where you are receiving/sharing data on an ongoing basis. We have produced the following checklist you can use to help you with this. Checklist for data sharing agreement (DOC) For EROs in Scotland, the Scottish Assessors Association (SAA) have made available the following data sharing agreement being used by EROs to share data in Scotland. Sharing good practice: Data sharing agreement – an example data sharing agreement 1. Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR(E&W)); Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (RPR(S)) ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. RPR (E&W) 2001; RPR (S) 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Data sharing agreements and supply of the electoral register Data sharing agreements with external organisations Subject access requests Subject access requests A data subject is entitled to see personal information that is held about them. You must provide information requested by data subjects without delay and in any event within one month (although it can be extended to two months in certain conditions). There is no requirement for the request for a subject access request to be made in writing. You must be satisfied of the requester's identity before fulfilling the request. Subject to a few conditions, these must be provided free of charge. Subsequent copies of subject access requests may be charged for, but the charge must be reasonable and based on administrative costs. Providing Certificates of registration Under data protection legislation no charge can be made for fulfilling a subject access request unless the request can be deemed excessive or repetitive. In the majority of instances, providing confirmation of a data subject's entry on the register via a certificate of registration will not meet this test and therefore no charge should be made. Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Subject access requests Data sharing agreements and supply of the electoral register Access requests relating to crime prevention Access requests relating to crime prevention Data protection legislation provides an exemption to data processing rules for the purposes of crime prevention. 1 Where you receive a request for information that you hold you will therefore need to consider: the person or organisation making the request, the purpose of the request, and the enactment quoted requesting access If you are satisfied that the request is for the purposes of: the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders then you should supply the data. The ERO must supply the full register to the council that appointed them. 2 An employee or councillor of that council may, disclose or make use of information contained in in the full register, where necessary for the discharge of a statutory function of the council relating to security, law enforcement and crime prevention (or, in England and Wales, any other local authority). If a request relates to the council's copy of the register, you should direct the request to your council's Monitoring Officer. 1. Schedule 2 Data Protection Act 2018 ■ Back to content at footnote 1 2. Regulation 107 Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001; Regulation 106 Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 ■ Back to content at footnote 2 Last updated:

22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Access requests relating to crime prevention Subject access requests Data protection breaches and sanctions Data protection breaches and sanctions You should ensure that your registration and election plans and risk registers highlight the safeguards you have in place to avoid a personal data breach, particularly when you are undertaking high risk activities – such as producing poll cards and postal votes. Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Data protection breaches and sanctions Access requests relating to crime prevention Personal data breaches Personal data breaches A personal data breach includes breaches that are the result of both accidental and deliberate causes. They may include: access by an unauthorised third party – for example, your EMS system/council network being hacked deliberate or accidental action (or inaction) by a controller or processor – for example, your print supplier failing to process all absent vote data you have sent them, meaning that some electors are disenfranchised because they do not receive their postal votes in time sending personal data to an incorrect recipient – for example, sending an electoral register to someone who is not entitled to receive it computing devices containing personal data being lost or stolen – for example, laptops or iPads containing register or election data being stolen alteration of personal data without permission – for example, a canvasser falsifying canvass responses You should have robust quality assurance and proof-checking processes in place to help detect any errors and avoid data breaches before they occur. For example, when producing postal votes, you should have in place a process for checking live proofs, including those for postal proxies. You should attend the issue of postal votes to check the actual stationery being produced. This will highlight if any of the signed-off proofs have been inadvertently altered. Once postal votes have been issued, you should monitor returns to ensure that you have received completed postal votes back from every polling district. This will help you identify at an early stage if the issue was incomplete. We have published guidance containing full details of the quality assurance measures you should have in place. Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Personal data breaches Data protection breaches and sanctions Requirement to notify when a personal data breach has occurred Requirement to notify when a personal data breach has occurred When a personal data breach has occurred, you need to establish the likelihood and severity of the resulting risk to people's rights and freedoms: if there is a risk, you must notify the ICO within 72 hours of becoming aware of the breach if there is a high risk – in addition to notifying the ICO, you must inform the individuals concerned directly without undue delay ICO guidance defines a high risk in terms of the severity of the potential or actual impact on individuals: "If the impact of the breach is more severe, the risk is higher; if the likelihood of the consequences is greater, then again the risk is higher. In such cases, you will need to promptly inform those affected, particularly if there is a need to mitigate an immediate risk of damage to them. One of the main reasons for informing individuals is to help them take steps to protect themselves from the effects of a breach." Where the risk is unlikely to impact on people's rights and freedoms, you don't have to report it to the ICO. If the risk is not high, you do not have to notify the individuals concerned. In both cases, you need to be able to justify your decision, so you should document your reasoning in line with the accountability principle. The ICO also has the power to compel you to inform affected individuals if they consider that there is a high risk. Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Requirement to notify when a personal data breach has occurred Personal data breaches Sanctions and penalties for

data breaches Sanctions and penalties for data breaches Under data protection legislation, fines of up to around £17.5 million or 4% of turnover (whichever is greater) may be imposed for: failure to process personal data on a lawful basis, infringing the rights of data subjects; failure by a data controller in relation to the engagement of processors; or failure of a processor to process data only in accordance with the controller's instructions; A maximum of £8.7million (or 2% annual turnover) applies for other breaches including: failure to maintain security of personal data failure to report breaches (including to the data subject where required) failure to maintain records of processing activities failure to undertake a Data Protection Impact Assessment when required to do so In addition to imposing fines, the ICO may audit offenders, issue reprimands and impose restrictions on the breaching party. Reputational damage could also be significant. You should make sure you understand the consequences of failing to comply with your data protection obligations, and ensure you have procedures in place to detect, report and investigate any personal data breach. Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Sanctions and penalties for data breaches Requirement to notify when a personal data breach has occurred Resources for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers - Data protection Resources for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers - Data protection Checklist for data sharing agreement (DOC) Checklist for Privacy Notice (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for inspection (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register for sale (DOC) Cover sheet for copies of full register supplied free of charge on request (DOC) Example Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) (DOC) Quality Assurance Guidance for ROs (PDF) Sharing good practice: Data sharing agreement – an example data sharing agreement Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Resources for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers - Data protection Sanctions and penalties for data breaches