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Scotland and Wales Guidance on electoral registration communications This guidance

sets out the different voter materials available and how they should be used. It

should be read alongside the template communications. This guidance complements our

guidance for Electoral Registration Officers in England, Scotland and Wales, which

sets out which communications you can send, and when. The Electoral Commission has a

duty to design certain voter materials. The designs have been through a thorough

process of consultation and testing with electoral administrators, software

suppliers, printers and the general public. The design and content of the materials

have been approved by the UK Minister for the Constitution and Devolution and

Scottish and Welsh Ministers. We recommend that you read this guidance with your

printer and/or designer and work through the technical instructions to ensure that

you can put the files together in a way that works for you. Guidance Table of

template voter materials Name File reference Layout Country versions Format

Prescribed or recommended Mono or colour Canvass Communication A (pre-populate) CCA

A4 letter 2 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and

Word Prescribed Mono and colour Canvass Communication B (pre-populate) CCB A4 letter

2 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word

Prescribed Mono and colour Canvass Communication B (blank) CCB-B A4 letter 2 sided

Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono

and colour Canvass form (pre-populate) CF A3 folding booklet form 4 sided Scotland,

England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Canvass form (blank) CF-B A3 folding booklet form 4 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Electronic communication (Email Canvass Communication) EC A4 email template 1 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) Word Recommended Mono and colour Invitation to register ITR A3 folding booklet form 4 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Invitation to register – letter (used with ITR form) ITR-L A4 letter 1 sided Great Britain () and Great Britain (Welsh) Word Prescribed Mono Invitation to register – Anonymous ITR-A A4 form 6 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Invitation to register – Overseas ITR-O A4 form 6 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Invitation to register – Crown ITR-C A4 form 5 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Invitation to register – Armed Forces ITR-F A4 form 5 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Invitation to register – No fixed address ITR-N A4 form 5 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Change of name form CNF A4 form 3 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) InDesign, PDF and Word Prescribed Mono and colour Confirmation of a successful application letter (solicited and unsolicited) CSA A4 letter 1 sided Scotland, England, Wales () and Wales (Welsh) Word Prescribed Mono Email Invitation to register E-ITR A4 email template – 1 sided Great Britain () and Great Britain (Welsh) Word Prescribed Mono Invitation to register – reminder ITR-R A4 letter 1 sided Great Britain () and Great Britain (Welsh) Word Prescribed Mono Requirement to register RTR A4 letter 1 sided Great Britain () and Great Britain (Welsh) Word Prescribed Mono Country versions Most voter material templates have three country variations reflecting different statutory requirements in England, Wales and Scotland. For example, materials for use in England and Wales will refer to the jury service exemption for those aged 76 or over, while those for use in Scotland omit this. In Wales we provide voter materials in separate and Welsh language versions, with the exception of bi-lingual envelopes. The Welsh Language Standards require the Commission to provide voter materials bilingually in Wales. In this instance, taking into account feedback from electoral administrators in Wales, the Commission has provided separate and Welsh language form designs. They are separate form designs, which are not designed to be bound together. Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) in Wales must 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. File format Most of the materials are available in three software formats; InDesign, Word and PDF. We have not specified which format should be used. Most templates have been designed in Adobe InDesign, the industry standard for graphic design, but in response to stakeholder demand we have also provided the files in Word. However, Word is not a graphic design program and is not designed for this kind of advanced layout, so we recommend you use the InDesign files wherever possible. Colour and mono designs Most materials have been provided in both colour and mono. Colour draws attention, focusing the reader's attention on the places where information is required. Mono versions are suitable for local laser printing, or where budgets will not allow for colour printing. If you print in black and white, use the mono versions, as printing the colour versions in black and white will result in poor quality printing. Layout The voter material templates are arranged in a number of layouts: A3 folding booklets; A4; and C5

envelopes. Some of the materials are prescribed and some are recommended. Where the material is prescribed you must use the material designed by us and approved by the Ministers, except where stated otherwise. The materials provided reflect feedback from electoral administrators and suppliers and many have been user tested with the public. A number of the materials have customisable areas. We have used a colour coding system to provide instructions on how to edit each section. The parts highlighted in pink must be customised with your information. The parts highlighted in green should be customised to reflect your particular circumstances. The parts highlighted in yellow must be pre-printed with the information you hold about residents.

**Canvass communication A (CCA) letter** The CCA is a prescribed letter: both the content and layout must not be changed except where stated otherwise. The letter must be printed on A4 paper.

**Page Guidance Page 1** At the top of the page add the property address and date the letter. Alongside this, add the ERO's address, contact details and logo. You should also select either resident or occupier when addressing the letter. In the table on page 1 you must pre-print the information you hold on residents. There is space to pre-print information for 5 people. Use a continuation sheet or extend the table if more than 5 people are registered. Avoid leaving blank rows where there is no data. New wording has been included in the top line of the table for properties where there is no one registered to vote stating that 'There is no one currently registered to vote at this address'. This wording should be removed and replaced with resident data if it does not apply. In the flow diagram on page 1 you should add the online response address, along with part 1 and 2 of the unique security code. The flow diagram and associated text should only be included where the online response channel is available.

**Page 2** The top of the page is editable for you to include information relevant to the response channels you provide. The whole section can be removed if no other response channels are available. On page 2 add both your name and title to the end of the letter.

**Page 2** contains guidance for the recipient which should not be changed. The required privacy statement is also included and you will need to add contact details and a link to your privacy notice. Further information on privacy notices is contained in our guidance on data protection.

**Canvass communication B (CCB) letter** The CCB is a prescribed letter: both the content and layout must not be changed except where stated otherwise. The letter must be printed on A4 paper.

**Page Guidance Page 1** At the top of the page add the property address and date the letter. Alongside this, add the ERO's address, contact details and logo. You should also select either resident or occupier when addressing the letter. In the table on page 1 you must pre-print the information you hold on residents. There is space to pre-print information for 4 people. Avoid leaving blank rows where there is no data. Use a continuation sheet or extend the table if more than 4 people are registered. The CCB-blank has no pre-populated table of residents. New wording has been included on the CCB-blank stating that: 'Our records show that there is no one living at this property who is registered to vote'. In the flow diagram on page 1 you should add the online response address, along with part 1 and 2 of the unique security code. The flow diagram and associated text should only be included where the online response channel is available.

**Page 2** The top of the page is editable for you to include information relevant to the response channels you provide. The whole section can be removed if no other response channels are available. On page 2 add both your name and title to the end of the letter.

**Page 2** contains guidance for the recipient which should not be changed. The required privacy statement is also included and you will need to add contact details and a link to your privacy notice. Further information on privacy

notices is contained in our guidance on data protection. Canvass form (CF) The CF is a prescribed form: both the content and layout must not be changed except where stated otherwise. The form must be printed on A3 paper, folded to make an A4-size booklet. Page Guidance Page 1 Page 1 is the letter component of the form, it is prescribed and must not be changed except where stated otherwise. At the top of the page add the property address and date the letter. Alongside this, add the ERO's address, contact details and logo. You should also select either resident or occupier when addressing the letter. In the flow diagram on page 1 you should add the online response address, along with part 1 and 2 of the unique security code. The flow diagram and associated text should only be included where the online response channel is available. The bottom of the page is editable for you to include information relevant to the response channels you provide. The whole section can be removed if no other response channels are available. Add your name and title to the end of the covering letter. A placeholder is reserved at the foot of pages 1 – 4 on the right for barcodes to be added locally if required to support processing. Page 2 At the top of the page add the property address. In section 1 add the online response channel address (only include address and associated text if online response channel available). In section 1A you must pre-print the information you hold on residents. There is space to pre-print information for 5 people. Avoid leaving blank rows where there is no data. Use a continuation sheet or extend the table where more than 5 people are registered. Page 3 A placeholder is reserved at the foot of the page for barcodes to be added locally if required to support processing. Page 4 The last page contains guidance for the recipient which should not be changed. The required privacy statement is also included and you will need to add contact details and a link to your privacy notice. Further information on privacy notices is contained in our data protection guidance. The CF-blank has no pre-populated table of residents. The blank version of the CF has a blank final page to which you can add FAQs or other information. The Invitation to register form This includes Anonymous, Overseas, Crown servant, Armed forces, No fixed address. Page 1 Page 2 Page 3 Page 4 All ITR forms are prescribed: both the content and layout must not be changed except where stated otherwise. The forms must be pre-populated with the name and address of the individual if you have it. If not, it can be sent as a blank form. The standard ITR form must be printed on A3 paper, folded to make an A4-size booklet. The other ITRs can be produced in either A4 or A3 folded to make an A4-size booklet. The first page of the standard ITR is blank for you to include the relevant letter. All other ITRs have a combined cover letter on the first page that must be used with the form. The back pages of the ITR contain guidance for the recipient which should not be changed. The required privacy statement is also included and you will need to add contact details and a link to your privacy notice. Further information on privacy notices is contained in our data protection guidance. A placeholder is reserved at the foot of each page on the right for barcodes to be added locally if required to support processing. Electronic communication (Email canvass communication) EROs have the option to send electronic communications as part of the canvass, including by email. The email template provided can be used for either route 1 or route 2 communications as a response is always required to an email communication. The email template is not prescribed, however we recommend that you use it because it has been tested with the public. We have provided it in Word, but you can simply copy and paste the content into an email. Invitation to register – letter The first page of the standard ITR form is blank for you to include the ITR-letter. You must use the letter designed by us. You will need to decide on a deadline to include, taking into account that you

are required to send a 'reminder' invitation if the recipient does not make an application to register within a reasonable period of time. The deadline should not be more than 28 days (4 weeks) from the date on the invitation. In testing, a 4 week deadline was felt to strike the right balance between being near enough for the task to remain in people's minds, but not so close that it would feel unreachable or overly demanding. In some circumstances, where you are approaching the conclusion of the canvass or an election is due to take place, you may choose to set a shorter deadline. You will need to edit the letter to reflect the response channels you provide. In Scotland and Wales you will need to include the line 'You will not be fined if you are under 16'. Email Invitation to register EROs have the option to send an electronic invitation to register, including by email. The email ITR includes a link to [gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://gov.uk/register-to-vote). An invitation to register should not be emailed as an attachment. The email template is prescribed: both the content and layout must not be changed, except where stated otherwise. We have provided it in Word, but you can simply copy and paste the content into an email. Change of name form (CNF) The CNF is a prescribed form: both the content and layout must not be changed except where stated otherwise. The form can be produced in either A4 or A3 folded to make an A4-size booklet. The first page is blank for you to include your own covering letter. The back page contains the required privacy statement and you will need to add contact details and a link to your privacy notice. Further information on privacy notices is contained in our data protection guidance. A placeholder is reserved at the foot of each page on the right for barcodes to be added locally if required to support processing. Confirmation of a successful application letter (solicited and unsolicited) The letter is prescribed: both the content and layout must not be changed, except where stated otherwise. At the top of the page you should add the individual's address and date the letter. Alongside this add the ERO's address, contact details and logo. Edit the date and details of when the individual will be added to the register following a successful application. Include the last sentence if unsolicited, or exclude it if the letter is sent in response to an ITR. We have provided it in Word, but you may use whichever format you prefer, and can simply copy and paste the content. Recommended letters In addition to the prescribed letters, we have created a number of other letters that we recommend you use. Invitation to register – reminder (ITR-R) Requirement to register (RTR) Exceptions letters (E1-E5) Civil penalty notice letters (CP1-CP5) Attestation letters (A1-A6) The list of recommended letters has been developed based on feedback we've had about what will be most useful for us to provide. We know you may need to send several other types of letter, and we recommend you use one of the recommended letters as the basis for any other letters you send. You can make changes to the recommended letters, but if you do so, you will need to ensure that the letters comply with the relevant legislation. We recommend that where the recipient is being asked to provide information or make an application you include a date by which the recipient must do so. In testing, we found that participants strongly approved of the addition of a deadline date. We have provided the letter in Word, but you may use whichever format you prefer, and can simply copy and paste the content. Envelopes Based on the testing we have done with the public, we suggest your envelopes: be brown (if possible) include a specific note on the front of the envelope that highlights the action required feature the council logo on the front of the envelope You will need to ensure your envelope designs meet your mailing supplier's current specifications and comply with relevant legislation. The below table outlines our recommended messaging for your envelopes. Canvass Communication A England Scotland Wales Front Do not ignore this letter You must

respond if there is a change to report Do not ignore this letter You must respond if there is a change to report Everyone who lives in Scotland and is 14 or over can now register to vote Do not ignore this letter You must respond if there is a change to report Peidiwch ag anwybyddu'r llythyr hwn Rhaid i chi ymateb os oes angen rhoi gwybod am newid If you live in Wales and are 14 or over you can now register to vote Os ydych yn byw yng Nghymru ac yn 14 oed neu drosodd, gallwch bellach gofrestru i bleidleisio Back Include your return address Include your return address Include your return address Canvass communication B and canvass form England Scotland Wales Front Do not ignore this letter Legally you need to respond to this letter Do not ignore this letter Legally you need to respond to this letter Everyone who lives in Scotland and is 14 or over can now register to vote Do not ignore this letter Legally you need to respond to this letter Peidiwch ag anwybyddu'r llythyr hwn Yn unol â'r gyfraith, bydd angen i chi ymateb i'r llythyr hwn If you live in Wales and are 14 or over you can now register to vote Os ydych yn byw yng Nghymru ac yn 14 oed neu drosodd, gallwch bellach gofrestru i bleidleisio Back Include your return address Include your return address Include your return address Invitation to register England Scotland Wales Front Do not ignore this letter Do not ignore this letter Everyone who lives in Scotland and is 14 or over can now register to vote Do not ignore this letter If you live in Wales and are 14 or over you can now register to vote Peidiwch ag anwybyddu'r llythyr hwn Os ydych yn byw yng Nghymru ac yn 14 oed neu drosodd, gallwch bellach gofrestru i bleidleisio Back Include your return address Register to vote online at [gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://gov.uk/register-to-vote) If you receive this letter and the addressee does not live at this address, or if the envelope is incorrectly addressed, please let us know. Don't redirect this letter. Register to vote online at [gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://gov.uk/register-to-vote) If you receive this letter and the addressee does not live at this address, or if the envelope is incorrectly addressed, please let us know. Don't redirect this letter. Include your return address Register to vote online at [gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://gov.uk/register-to-vote) If you receive this letter and the addressee does not live at this address, or if the envelope is incorrectly addressed, please let us know. Don't redirect this letter. Cofrestrwch i bleidleisio ar-lein yn [gov.uk/cofrestru-i-bleidleisio](https://gov.uk/cofrestru-i-bleidleisio) Os byddwch yn cael y llythyr hwn ac nad yw'r person y mae'r llythyr wedi ei gyfeirio ato yn byw yn y cyfeiriad hwn, neu os yw'r cyfeiriad ar yr amlen yn anghywir, rhowch wybod i ni. Peidiwch ag arallgyfeirio'r llythyr hwn. Questions and answers about voter materials In May 2021 we published updated voter materials after a consultation with electoral administrators and groups representing their interests. We also consulted with UK, Scottish and Welsh government officials and ministers. These questions and answers address the most common feedback we received. Questions and answers about voter materials Why are there no barcodes on the CCA and CCB communications? In the 2020 canvass, a small number of residents made changes directly on the CCA and CCB and returned them by post which was time intensive for administrators to process. While a barcode would allow for faster processing time, space on the communications is very limited and prescribed content must be prioritised. If you are receiving a high number of responses to the CCA and CCB returned by post, we would encourage you to assess your data matching for accuracy to ensure properties are being allocated to the correct routes. As this is primarily a behaviour change issue, we expect that it will improve as residents get used to the new communications. How did you test the materials with the public? We did extensive user-testing to make sure the materials were easy for the public to understand and use. This included 241 in-depth interviews in England, Scotland and Wales, over two stages. We took into account the public's views before we finalised the designs and content for all materials. We used both

interviews and eye-tracking technology to understand how people used the materials. We tested initial designs and then re-tested versions we had amended based on the first stage of feedback. In each location we recruited people based on age, gender, tenure, marital status and social grade, with an ethnic mix to match the areas interviews took place in. We did some interviews at participants' homes, including for people with low literacy, visual and physical impairments and parents of attainers. It is important for us to test materials with the public to gain an objective and first-hand account of how people interact with them. What were the key findings from the testing you did with the public? Testing results showed we needed to focus on four attributes when designing the materials. The first attribute was about establishing trust and engagement. One of the main points was to show who the materials are from, through featuring council logos and contact details. This would help people to see the materials are important and come from a credible source. Another point was about using simple language to make it easy for people to understand the information. The second attribute was about layout and design. Findings showed we needed to consider using colour carefully, as it did not make a difference to usability and was a negative factor for some people. We also needed to consider where we used bold text and to reserve this for only the most important information. Content was the third attribute and the main recommendations were to ensure the privacy statement was easy for people to understand and that information was clear about which elections different people are eligible to vote in. The final attribute was about action and ensuring we included clear information about when and how people needed to respond and what the next steps were after they had responded. Why are the canvass communications A4 size while the canvass form and invitation to register are A3? Amongst electoral administrators opinions are mixed about whether they prefer A4 or A3 size forms. This was evident in the responses we had to the consultation that we completed in October 2019. We decide which size is most appropriate in each case based on the volume of content we are legally required to include, combined with results from our research with the public. The legislation for the canvass communications (CCA and CCB) includes fewer mandatory requirements for the content, compared to the legislation for the canvass form (CF) and invitation to register. Therefore we were able to use A4 size for the CCA and CCB and A3 size for the CF and invitation to register. We tested this combination of sizes with the public. For the A3 size forms we wanted to ensure people turned over pages and completed all parts of the form, which they did. What process did you follow to write the privacy statement on the letters and forms? We last updated the privacy statement to coincide with the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations. We sought advice from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as part of this process. We had to change the statement for the canvass communications and form, to include information about the new data matching process, specifying that this would be done in line with relevant data processing and protection legislation. When updating the statement for the new canvass communications and form we sought advice from the ICO again to make sure we did this properly. The majority of the changes we made are as a result of us following the ICO's advice. They recommended we include an example of how companies could use open register data, which is why we reference direct marketing, but they said that it wouldn't be practical or necessary to list all potential uses. We also removed the following wording which was in the previous version of the statement: "Some of the information that is collected in this form is classified as special category personal data". This is because the ICO said it wasn't necessary at the privacy statement level and that instead their guidance states it

needs to be covered in privacy notices. We also consulted with our own legal team, as well as lawyers from Cabinet Office, Scottish Government and Welsh Government, to ensure the statement complies with canvass reform legislation. We added one line to the statement for the canvass communications and form only, in response to feedback from Cabinet Office who wanted to ensure the message was clear about Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) following proper processes when matching data, including data they held already. Why do forms include messaging stating that people may receive a fine or be imprisoned if they do not respond or provide false information? We know that some electoral administrators hear from the public that they find the information about fines or imprisonment threatening or distressing. We include it because we think it would be disingenuous not to, given it reflects the law. Also, when we tested previous materials with the public as part of earlier voter materials projects, results showed that this information helped to encourage responses. Why is it recommended that envelopes and letters include space for the local authority logo and not the 'your vote matters' logo? One key insight from the research we did with the public was the importance of having the local authority logo on both the envelopes and letters, as well as the ERO's contact details in the top right corner of the letter. People said this reassured them that they could trust the information, showed that it was important and helped them to know who to contact if they had any questions. The eye-tracking technology we used during the tests showed that once people had opened the envelope they first looked up to the letterhead to glance at who the letter was from, before moving left to focus their attention on the header text. Public testing results from previous voter materials projects showed that the 'your vote matters' logo did not contribute to encouraging people to open the envelope or read the letter and form. On previous versions of the materials we used the 'your vote matters' logo to make the connection between the materials and people's right to vote in elections. However, this did not increase the likelihood of people noticing or responding to the letter or form. Results showed that it was more effective to highlight that responding is an administrative task. Why did you not include more information on the Wales and Scotland materials to encourage newly enfranchised groups to respond? On the Wales and Scotland envelopes and letters we include the line: 'Everyone who lives in Scotland/Wales and is 14 or over can now register to vote'. In addition we include information about who is eligible to register to vote elsewhere on letters and forms. This was the most efficient and succinct way for us to get this message across while not taking up space that we needed to use for other legally required content. Why do we need to tell people who are 76 or older that the data we have about them confirms this? This is specified in the legislation for the canvass communications and form in England and Wales. Where EROs already have data showing that someone is 76 or older, they have to print it on the letters and forms they send to that person's household. This is because the Ministry of Justice uses data from electoral registers to confirm who they can and cannot call for jury duty and people aged 76 or older are exempt from this. What do we do if the templates include text about how people can respond, but we offer different options to those listed? The text about how people can respond is placeholder text only. Electoral administrators should delete text that is not relevant and replace it with information about the response options they offer. This will ensure the information they send to people in their areas correctly matches the services they have set up to process responses. The guidance on electoral registration communications details what text electoral administrators can and cannot amend. Can you remove the text on the forms which states that providing phone numbers



and email addresses is optional? The legislation specifically states that, where we seek to collect this information, the forms we design must make it clear that providing email addresses and telephone numbers is optional. Why have you not provided envelope templates? When we first published our updated suite of voter materials in April 2020 we included three new envelope templates. These were intended to support you with producing envelopes which would increase the chances of people noticing and opening them. However, following publication we received feedback from a number of electoral administrators suggesting they were not helpful in practice. This is because different mailing services have their own specifications for what needs to feature on an envelope and the optimum position for various elements, so one template isn't able to meet all specifications. While we were aware of the potential for this issue during the development process, we had thought the templates we provided would be a useful starting point, having taken into account the feedback we received from a range of stakeholders when we consulted on the drafts, but unfortunately that did not prove to be the case. We have therefore removed the templates from our suite and have instead focused on providing guidance to help you decide what messaging to include on your own envelopes. Our guidance is based on results from our user-testing and emphasises that envelopes should: be brown; include your council logo on the front; and feature one of the messages we suggest in our guidance – the messages vary depending on which country you're working in and the type of letter or form you're sending out. Why do most materials have a diagram highlighting the online response channel? The flow diagram is an adapted version of messaging we tested as part of a randomised controlled trial we did with local authorities in 2017. Findings showed that this was a low-cost way to increase electronic responses to canvass communications, which are generally easier and cheaper to process. Will you consider changing the materials in the future? We welcome feedback on voter materials. We are interested in knowing about any aspects of the design, layout and content on the materials that the public found hard to understand or that prevented them from responding correctly. We are also interested in feedback about how easy it is to process the materials. All comments will be taken into consideration when planning any future changes.