

Your vote | Electoral Commission Search

Your vote You

are in the Resources for 14-18 year olds section Home Welcome to your vote Resources for 14-18 year olds Your location: Change England Northern Ireland Scotland Wales Overseas We're showing you content for . Select 'change' to choose a different location. On this page Your vote Your vote Welcome to your vote Your vote Who does what? Scottish Parliament's responsibilities Who represents you in the Scottish Parliament? MSPs' responsibilities Councils Councils' responsibilities UK Parliament Who represents you in the UK Parliament? MPs' responsibilities Remember to register to vote Quiz Who does what? The Senedd The Senedd's responsibilities Who represents you in the Senedd? Your MSs' responsibilities Local councils Councils' responsibilities UK Parliament Who represents you in the UK Parliament? MPs' responsibilities Remember to register to vote Quiz The Northern Ireland Assembly The Northern Ireland Assembly's responsibilities Who represents you in the Northern Ireland Assembly? Local councils Who represents you in your local council? UK Parliament Who represents you in the UK Parliament? MPs' responsibilities Remember to register to vote Quiz Local councils Types of local councils Who represents you in your local council? UK Parliament Who represents you in the UK Parliament? MPs' responsibilities Remember to register to vote Quiz What can you vote for? There are different things that influence which elections you're allowed to vote in. Generally, these are your age, your nationality and where you live. And rules are different in different parts of the UK. Overseas voters We're showing you content for England. Select 'change' to see information for other parts of the UK. Your vote Your vote Welcome to your vote Your vote Find out what you can vote in Who does what? Scottish Parliament You can vote in Scottish Parliament elections when you're 16. What's your local hospital like? How are you finding your school or college course? Are you thinking of running your own business one day? The Scottish Parliament makes decisions about all of these issues. The Scottish Parliament, as we know it today, was set up in 1999, but the first Parliament in Scotland was created over 600 years ago. Scottish Parliament's responsibilities Responsibilities held by the Scottish Parliament are called devolved matters. They include: health education training local government housing tourism economic development Who represents you in the Scottish Parliament? The people who represent you in the Scottish Parliament are called Members of the Scottish Parliament, or MSPs for short. You elect your MSPs every five years. There are 129 elected MSPs in the Scottish Parliament and every person in Scotland is represented by eight of them. Each MSP looks after a particular area in Scotland. 73 MSPs are constituency MSPs, representing local areas. 56 are regional MSPs who look after a much bigger parliamentary area, known as a region. You are represented by one constituency MSP and seven regional MSPs. Your MSPs divide their time between work at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and local work in the area they represent. You can contact any of the MSPs who represent you to ask questions about issues that are important to you. You can speak over the phone, by email, or face to face when they hold an open meeting in your area, known as a surgery. You can find their contact details on Scottish Parliament's website You can visit the Scottish Parliament website for information about visiting. You can also watch debates and meetings on Scottish Parliament TV MSPs' responsibilities Your MSPs might: look at the work and policies of the Scottish Government to check that they are serving the people of Scotland take issues forward on behalf of the people they represent respond to letters and emails from local people respond to an issue in their area by asking an official question in the Scottish Parliament hold regular open meetings with constituents to discuss the problems in their area, known as a

surgery debate issues vote on changes in the law sit on committees to look at issues in more detail Councils You can vote in council elections when you're 16. How often is your rubbish collected? What are the roads in your area like? Do you like your local sports facilities? Your council makes decisions about all of these issues and many more that affect you on a daily basis. It deals with matters that directly impact your specific local area and is responsible for local services. You might also hear councils be called local government or local authorities. Councils' responsibilities Councils are responsible for: education services youth and leisure facilities planning decisions, for example, if your neighbour wanted to build an extension on their home social housing managing parks and other public places social services such as foster care, help for disabled people, or care for the elderly local roads and footpaths rubbish and recycling libraries checking up on and supporting local businesses running local elections Councils In most councils, a small number of councillors form a group called a cabinet or executive. This is the top decision-making group of the council. Their decisions are guided by broad policies or plans that have been agreed by the council as a whole. If you want to make a complaint or bring up an issue with your elected representatives, you need to know which council is responsible for your area. Find your council . Who represents you in your council? The people elected to represent you in your council are called councillors. The area covered by your council is divided into smaller areas called wards. Your ward could be represented by up to five councillors. Your councillors might: be involved in working out how much to spend on local services develop future plans for your area help you to deal with any concern with local services the council provides You can contact your councillors to ask them questions about what's happening in your area, or express a concern you may have. You can contact any of the councillors who represent you, and you'll usually find their contact details on your council's website. You could also attend a council meeting in the public gallery at your local town or city hall and watch how decisions are made. So you know what to expect, it might be useful to ask a councillor to explain what happens in a council meeting before you go. UK Parliament When you turn 18, you're able to vote in UK Parliament elections. The UK Parliament makes some decisions that affect Scotland. These are called reserved matters and include things like: defence foreign affairs immigration anything to do with the monarchy The UK Parliament is made up of two chambers – the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The public vote for the people who sit in the House of Commons. UK Parliament The UK Parliament makes decisions about how the UK is run and makes laws that affect everyone's lives. Its roles includes: providing the funds to do government work by voting for tax protecting the public and the rights of individuals looking closely at government policy and actions - this is known as scrutinising debating the major issues of the day Who represents you in the UK Parliament? The person who represents you in the House of Commons is called a Member of Parliament, or MP for short. Every person in the UK is represented by one MP who covers a large area, called a constituency. The UK is divided into 650 constituencies, and Scotland is represented by 59 MPs. You elect your MP every five years. Your MP usually splits their time between work at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster in London and local work in your area. As with MSPs, you can contact your MP to ask them questions. Find out how to get in touch by visiting the UK Parliament's website You can also watch debates and meetings in UK Parliament, either from the public gallery or via a live stream on Parliament Live TV MPs' responsibilities Your MP might: support a campaign to change the law help address the issues of people living in your area by holding regular open meetings help make a law

by speaking in a debate in the House of Commons or sitting on a committee in the UK Parliament ask an official question in the House of Commons find out what the people in your area think about a particular issue Remember to register to vote If you're not registered, you can't vote. It's as simple as that. In Scotland, you can register to vote when you're 14. But you can only start to vote in some elections when you turn 16. Luckily, you don't need to register before every election. You need to register if: you've never registered to vote before you've just become old enough to register You need to register to vote again if: you've moved house recently you've changed your name for any reason You'll stay registered to vote as long as you live at that address and don't change your name. When you become old enough to vote in different elections, your record will be updated automatically. Registering to vote takes just five minutes if you do it online. If you're 16 or older, all you'll need is your National Insurance number. If you're under 16, you won't be asked to supply a National Insurance number. Remember to register to vote Register to vote now. Register to vote A little while after you've registered, you'll appear on the electoral register. This is a list of everyone in your area who is registered to vote. These lists are managed by your local electoral registration office. You can't check online to see if you're registered to vote, but if you have any questions about the electoral register or registering to vote, you should contact your electoral registration office. They'll be happy to help. Find their contact details . Armed forces If you're 14 to 17 and one of your parents is in the armed forces, you will be able to register to vote as a service voter. This means that if your family is posted to a different country, or if you move around a lot, you'll still be able to vote in elections in Scotland. You'll just need to remember to renew this every year. Living abroad If you're thinking about living in another country outside of the UK one day, even for a little while, you'll still be able to vote in UK Parliament elections. As long as you've been registered to vote in the UK, and have been eligible to vote in UK Parliament elections in the last 15 years, you'll be allowed to continue voting to choose your MP. If you leave the UK before you are old enough to vote, you'll still be able to register to vote if one of your parents has been registered to vote in UK Parliament elections in the last 15 years. Tell us what you think What do you think of these resources? Complete our short survey so we can improve them for the future. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Who does what? The Senedd You can vote in Senedd elections when you're 16. How are you finding your school or college course? What's your local hospital like? Is it easy to get where you want to go by train? The Senedd, (Welsh Parliament), makes decisions about these issues. The Senedd passes laws, sets some taxes, and makes decisions about a range of issues that affect the people of Wales. Responsibilities held by the Senedd are called devolved matters. The Senedd's responsibilities The Senedd's responsibilities include: education, training and universities housing, including tackling homelessness protecting the environment and conserving wildlife and natural habitats the NHS setting some taxes promoting the culture and heritage of Wales, including the Welsh language developing transport promoting agricultural schemes and rural development funding for local councils Who represents you in the Senedd? The people who represent you in the Senedd are called Members of the Senedd, or MSs for short. You elect your MSs every five years. There are 60 elected MSs and every person in Wales is represented by five of them. Each MS looks after a particular geographic area in Wales. One of your MSs represents your Senedd constituency and the other four represent a much bigger area called a region. The five regions in Wales are: Mid and West Wales North Wales South Wales West South Wales Central South Wales East You can

contact any of the MSs who represent you to ask questions about issues that are important to you. You can speak over the phone, by email, or face to face when they hold an open meeting in your area, known as a surgery. You can find their contact details on the Senedd's website. You can visit the Senedd's website for information about visiting. Or, you can watch debates and meetings live, or catch up later.

Your MSs' responsibilities

Your MS might:

- debate and pass laws which affect Wales
- make decisions about taxes
- ask questions and look closely at Welsh Government policies to hold them to account
- respond to a problem in your area by asking the responsible politician, known as a minister, an official question
- hold a regular open meeting with people in their area to discuss the problems in your area
- sit on Senedd committees to look at issues in more detail
- influence how schools and hospitals are run in Wales

Local councils

You can vote in local council elections when you're 16.

How often is your rubbish collected? What are the roads in your area like? Do you like your local sports facilities? Your local council makes decisions about all of these issues and many more that affect you on a daily basis. It deals with matters that directly impact your specific local area and is responsible for local services. You might also hear local councils be called local government or local authorities.

Councils' responsibilities

Councils are responsible for:

- education services
- youth and leisure facilities
- planning decisions, for example, if your neighbour wanted to build an extension on their home
- social housing
- managing parks and other public places
- social services such as foster care, help for people with disabilities, or care for the elderly
- local roads and footpaths
- rubbish and recycling
- libraries
- checking up on and supporting local businesses
- registering voters and running elections

Councils

A small number of councillors form a cabinet or executive. This is the top decision-making group of the council but all decisions they make are guided by broad policies or plans that have been agreed by the council as a whole. If you want to make a complaint or bring up an issue with your elected representative, you need to know which council is responsible for your area. Find your council.

Who represents you in your local council? The people elected to represent you in your local council are called local councillors. You and others in your area elect them for a four year period. The area covered by your local council is divided into smaller areas called wards. Your ward could be represented by up to four local councillors. You may also have community councillors who represent you. Your local councillor might:

- be involved in working out how much to spend on local services
- develop future plans for your area
- help you to deal with any concern with local services the council provides
- discuss and set council tax

Many councillors work full or part-time in other jobs on top of their work as a councillor. Councillors receive some money to cover costs but are mostly unpaid. You can contact your local councillors to ask them questions about what's happening in your area, or express a concern you may have. You can usually find their contact details on your council's website. You could also attend a council meeting in the public gallery at your local town or city hall and watch how decisions are made. So you know what to expect, it might be useful to ask a local councillor to explain what happens in a council meeting before you go.

UK Parliament

When you turn 18, you're able to vote in UK Parliament elections. The UK Parliament makes some decisions that affect Wales. These are called reserved matters and include things like: defence, foreign affairs, immigration, anything to do with the monarchy. It is made up of two chambers – the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The public vote for the people who sit in the House of Commons.

UK Parliament

The UK Parliament makes decisions about how the UK is run and makes laws that affect everyone's lives. Its roles include:

- providing the funds to do government work
- voting for tax

protecting the public and the rights of individuals looking closely at government policy and actions - this is known as scrutinising debating the major issues of the day Who represents you in the UK Parliament? The person who represents you in the House of Commons is called a Member of Parliament, or MP for short. Every person in the UK is represented by one MP who covers a large area, called a constituency. The UK is currently divided into 650 constituencies, and Wales has 40 constituencies, represented by 40 MPs. You elect your MP every five years. Your MP usually splits their time between work at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster in London and local work in your area. As with MSs, you can contact your MP to ask them questions. Find out how to get in touch by visiting the UK Parliament's website. You can also watch debates and meetings in UK Parliament, either from the public gallery or via a live stream on Parliament Live TV. MPs' responsibilities Your MP might: support a campaign to change the law help address the issues of people living in your area by holding regular open meetings help make a law by speaking in a debate in the House of Commons or sitting on a committee in the UK Parliament ask an official question in the House of Commons find out what the people in your area think about a particular issue Remember to register to vote If you're not registered, you can't vote. It's as simple as that. In Wales, you can register to vote when you're 15, or in some cases 14. But you can only start to vote in Senedd and local council elections when you turn 16. Luckily, you don't need to register before every election. You need to register if: you've never registered to vote before you've just become old enough to register You need to register to vote again if: you've moved house recently you've changed your name for any reason You'll stay registered to vote as long as you live at that address and don't change your name. When you become old enough to vote in different elections, your record will be updated automatically. Registering to vote takes just five minutes if you do it online. If you're 16 or older, all you'll need is your National Insurance number. If you're under 16, you won't be asked to supply a National Insurance number Register to vote Register to vote now Register to vote A little while after you've registered, you'll appear on the electoral register. This is a list of everyone in your area who is registered to vote. These lists are managed by your local electoral registration office. You can't check online to see if you're registered to vote, but if you have any questions about the electoral register or registering to vote, you should contact your electoral registration office. They'll be happy to help. Find their contact details . Living at two addresses Some people split their time between two addresses. For example, you might be a student living away from home, or split your time between two parents' homes. If this is you, you may be able to register to vote at two addresses, as long as your addresses are in different council areas. This doesn't mean you get two votes though. You must only vote at one address in Senedd elections and UK Parliament elections but you can choose which area to vote in. It's against the law to vote more than once in the same election. In local council elections, you'll be able to vote at both addresses as long as you're voting in different council areas. Armed forces If you're 14 to 17 and one of your parents is in the armed forces, you will be able to register to vote as a service voter. This means that if your family is posted to a different country, or if you move around a lot, you'll still be able to vote in elections in Wales. You'll just need to remember to renew this every year. Living abroad If you're thinking about living in another country outside of the UK one day, even for a little while, you'll still be able to vote in UK Parliamentary elections. As long as you've been registered to vote in the UK, and have been eligible to vote in general elections in the last 15 years, you'll be allowed to continue voting for your MP. If you leave the

UK before you are old enough to vote, you'll still be able to register to vote if one of your parents has been registered to vote in UK general elections in the last 15 years. Tell us what you think What do you think of these resources? Complete our short survey so we can improve them for the future. It will only take a few minutes to complete. The Northern Ireland Assembly You can vote in Northern Ireland Assembly elections where you're 18. How are you finding your school or college course? What's your local hospital like? Is it easy to get where you want to go by bus or train? The Northern Ireland Assembly makes decision about all these issues. The Northern Ireland Assembly's responsibilities The Northern Ireland Assembly passes laws and makes decisions about a range of issues that affect the people of Northern Ireland. Responsibilities held by the Northern Ireland Assembly are called devolved or transferred matters. They include: health and social services the environment education and training historic buildings and culture transport and roads Who represents you in the Northern Ireland Assembly? The people who represent you in the Northern Ireland Assembly are called Members of the Legislative Assembly, or MLAs for short. You usually elect you MLAs every five years. There are 90 MLAs and you are represented by five of them. Your MLA might: debate and pass laws which affect Northern Ireland sit on committees to look at issues in more details hold a regular open meeting with people in their area to discuss the problems in your area respond to a problem in your area by asking the responsible politician, known as a minister, an official question You can contact any of the MLAs who represent you to ask questions about issues that are important to you. You can speak over the phone, by email, or face to face when they hold an open meeting in your area. You can find their contact details on the Northern Ireland Assembly's website where you can also find information about visiting Northern Ireland Assembly's building in Stormont. Or, you can watch debates and meetings live or on catch-up . Local councils You can vote in local council elections when you're 18. How often is your rubbish collected? Do you like your local sports facilities? Your local council makes decisions about these issues and many more that affect you on a daily basis. It deals with matters that directly impact your specific local area and is responsible for local services. You might also hear local councils be called local government or local authorities. There are 11 local councils in Northern Ireland, made up of 462 councillors who are elected every four years. You are usually represented by three to seven councillors. If you want to make a complaint or bring up an issue with one of your local councillors. Find your council . Who represents you in your local council? The people elected to represent you in your local council are called local councillors. You and others in your area elect them for a four year period. The area covered by your local council is divided into smaller areas called wards. Your local councillor might: be involved in working out how much to spend on local services develop future plans for your area help you to deal with any concern with local services the council provides Many councillors work full or part-time in other jobs on top of their work as a councillor. You can contact your local councillors to ask them questions about what's happening in your area, or express a concern you may have. You can usually find their contact details on your council's website. You could also attend a council meeting in the public gallery at your local town or city hall and watch how decisions are made. So you know what to expect, it might be useful to ask a local councillor to explain what happens in a council meeting before you go. UK Parliament The UK Parliament makes some decisions that affect Northern Ireland. Decision for the whole of the UK include: defence foreign affairs immigration The UK Parliament is made up of two chambers – the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The public vote for the

people who sit in the House of Commons. UK Parliament The UK Parliament makes decisions about some aspects of how the UK is run and makes laws that affect our lives. Its roles include: providing the funds to do UK Government work by voting for tax protecting the public and the rights of individuals looking closely at UK Government policy and actions - this is known as scrutinising debating the major issues of the day Who represents you in the UK Parliament? The person who represents you in the House of Commons is called a Member of Parliament, or MP for short. Every person in the UK is represented by one MP who covers a large area, called a constituency. The UK is currently divided into 650 constituencies, and Northern Ireland is represented by 18 MPs. You normally elect your MP every five years. Your MP may split their time between work at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster in London and local work in your area. Some MPs in Northern Ireland choose not to take their seats in the UK Parliament, in a practise known as abstentionism. As with MLAs, you can contact your MP to ask them questions. Find out how to get in touch by visiting the UK Parliament's website You can also watch debates and meetings in UK Parliament, either from the public gallery or via a live stream on Parliament Live TV

MPs' responsibilities Your MP might:

- support a campaign to change the law
- help address the issues of people living in your area by holding regular open meetings
- help make a law by speaking in a debate in the House of Commons or sitting on a committee in the UK Parliament
- ask an official question in the House of Commons
- find out what the people in your area think about a particular

Remember to register to vote If you're not registered, you can't vote. It's as simple as that. In Northern Ireland, you can register to vote if you'll be 17 by the 30 November that year. But you can only start to vote when you turn 18. Luckily, you don't need to register before every election. You need to register if:

- you've never registered to vote
- before you've just become old enough to register
- You need to register to vote again if:
- you've moved house recently
- you've changed your name for any reason
- you're invited to register to vote by the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland canvass Every 10 years, a piece of work is carried out to make sure that the electoral register in Northern Ireland is up to date. This is called the canvass. All voters are asked to register to vote so that their details are accurate. Register to vote now Registering to vote takes just five minutes if you do it online. All you need is your National Insurance number. Register to vote now. Registering to vote A little while after you've registered, you'll appear on the electoral register. This is a list of everyone in your area who is registered to vote. It's managed by the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland. You can't check online to see if you're registered to vote. If you have any questions about the electoral register or registering to vote, you should contact the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland

Living at two addresses Some people split their time between two addresses. For example, you might be a student living away from home, or split your time between two parents' homes. If this is you, you may be able to register to vote at two addresses, as long as your addresses are in different council areas. This doesn't mean you get two votes though. You must only vote at one address in Northern Ireland Assembly elections and UK Parliament elections but you can choose which area to vote in. It's against the law to vote more than once in the same election. In local council elections, you'll be able to vote at both addresses as long as you're voting in different council areas.

Armed forces If you're 16 or 17 and one of your parents is in the armed forces, you will be able to register to vote as a service voter. This means that if your family is posted to a different country, or if you move around a lot, you'll still be able to vote in elections in Northern Ireland. You'll just need

to remember to renew this every year whilst you're under 18. Living abroad If you're thinking about living in another country outside of the UK one day, even for a little while, you'll still be able to vote in UK Parliamentary elections. As long as you've been registered to vote in the UK, and have been eligible to vote in general elections in the last 15 years, you'll be allowed to continue voting for your MP. If you leave the UK before you are old enough to vote, you'll still be able to register to vote if one of your parents has been registered to vote in UK general elections in the last 15 years. Postal votes can't be sent outside of Northern Ireland, so if you're an overseas or service voter, you'll need to apply for a proxy vote. Take a look at 'how to vote'. Tell us what you think What do you think of these resources? Complete our short survey so we can improve them for the future. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Local councils You can vote in local council elections when you're 18. How often is your rubbish collected? What are the roads in your area like? Do you like your local sports facilities? Your local council makes decisions about all of these issues and many more that affect you on a daily basis. It deals with matters that directly impact your specific local area and is responsible for local services. You might also hear local councils be called local government or local authorities. Councils' responsibilities Councils are responsible for: education services youth and leisure facilities planning decisions, for example, if your neighbour wanted to build an extension on their home social housing managing parks and other public places social services such as foster care, help for people with disabilities, or care for the elderly local roads and footpaths rubbish and recycling libraries checking up on and supporting local businesses registering voters and running elections Types of local councils There are different types of councils in England. The type of council you have depends on where you live. If you live in one of the larger cities in England, like London, Birmingham, or Manchester, you will have a London borough or metropolitan district council. These types of councils cover all local services. If you live in a medium-sized town or city, like Nottingham or Middlesbrough, it's likely that your council will be a unitary authority. A unitary authority is very similar to a metropolitan district council and will look after all of your area's services. They may cover a bigger area than just one town or city. For example North Lincolnshire and North Somerset are both unitary authorities. Typically, if you live in a rural or semi-rural area, your local government will be split into two. You'll have a county council and a district council. A county council covers a large area, like Norfolk or Surrey, and is usually responsible for around 80% of local services like schools, roads and social services. A district council is responsible for more locally-based services like rubbish and recycling, tourism, and support for local businesses. Things work a little bit differently everywhere so you may find that your area isn't exactly like this. Find out what kind of councils you have . As well as these councils, there are thousands of parish and town councils in England. These councils look after services for a small area, like allotments, public halls, pathway lighting and litter bins. They often need permission from the larger council in your area to provide certain services. Some areas also have an elected mayor who has powers in their area. Other areas may only have a civic mayor who is ceremonial with has no real powers and is not elected. You might see them opening new roads or businesses or holding open days at council offices. A small number of councillors form a cabinet or executive. This is the top decision-making group of the council but all decisions they make are guided by broad policies or plans that have been agreed by the council as a whole. If you want to make a complaint or bring up an issue with your elected representative, you need to know which council is responsible

for your area and which council is responsible for that service. Find your council . Who represents you in your local council? The people elected to represent you in your local council are called local councillors. You and others in your area elect them for a four year period. The area covered by your local council is divided into smaller areas called wards. Your local councillor might: be involved in working out how much to spend on local services develop future plans for your area help you to deal with any concern with local services the council provides discuss and set council tax Many councillors work full or part-time in other jobs on top of their work as a councillor. Councillors receive some money to cover costs but are mostly unpaid. You can contact your local councillors to ask them questions about what's happening in your area, or express a concern you may have. You can usually find their contact details on your council's website. You could also attend a council meeting in the public gallery at your local town or city hall and watch how decisions are made. So you know what to expect, it might be useful to ask a local councillor to explain what happens in a council meeting before you go. UK Parliament When you turn 18, you're able to vote in UK Parliament elections. The UK Parliament make decisions which affect the whole of the UK, as well as some which are specific only to England. Decision for the whole of the UK include: defence foreign affairs immigration anything to do with the monarchy Decisions only for England include: education, training and universities protecting the environment and conserving wildlife and natural habitats the NHS developing transport links across England funding for local councils The UK Parliament is made up of two chambers – the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The public vote for the people who sit in the House of Commons. UK Parliament The UK Parliament makes decisions about how the UK is run and makes laws that affect everyone's lives. Its roles includes: providing the funds to do government work by voting for tax protecting the public and the rights of individuals looking closely at government policy and actions - this is known as scrutinising debating the major issues of the day Who represents you in the UK Parliament? The person who represents you in the House of Commons is called a Member of Parliament, or MP for short. Every person in the UK is represented by one MP who covers a large area, called a constituency. The UK is currently divided into 650 constituencies. You elect your MP every five years. Your MP usually splits their time between work at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster in London and local work in your area. You can contact your MP to ask them questions. Find out how to get in touch by visiting the UK Parliament's website . You can also watch debates and meetings in UK Parliament, either from the public gallery or via a live stream on Parliament Live TV . MPs' responsibilities Your MP might: support a campaign to change the law help address the issues of people living in your area by holding regular open meetings help make a law by speaking in a debate in the House of Commons or sitting on a committee in the UK Parliament ask an official question in the House of Commons find out what the people in your area think about a particular issue Remember to register to vote If you're not registered, you can't vote. It's as simple as that. In England, you can register to vote when you're 16, but you can only start to vote when you turn 18. Luckily, you don't need to register before every election. You need to register if: you've never registered to vote before you've just become old enough to register You need to register to vote again if: you've moved house recently you've changed your name for any reason You'll stay registered to vote as long as you live at that address and don't change your name. When you become old enough to vote in different elections, your record will be updated automatically. Registering to vote takes just five minutes if you do it online and all you'll need

is your National Insurance number. Register to vote Register to vote now .

Registering to vote A little while after you've registered, you'll appear on the electoral register. This is a list of everyone in your area who is registered to vote. These lists are managed by your local council's elections team. You can't check online to see if you're registered to vote, but if you have any questions about the electoral register or registering to vote, you should contact your electoral registration office. They'll be happy to help. Find their contact details .

Living at two addresses Some people split their time between two addresses. For example, you might be a student living away from home, or split your time between two parents' homes. If this is you, you may be able to register to vote at two addresses, as long as your addresses are in different council areas. This doesn't mean you get two votes though. You must only vote at one address in UK Parliament elections but you can choose which area to vote in. It's against the law to vote more than once in the same election. In local council elections, you'll be able to vote at both addresses as long as you're voting in different council areas.

Living abroad If you're thinking about living in another country outside of the UK one day, even for a little while, you'll still be able to vote in UK Parliamentary elections. As long as you've been registered to vote in the UK, and have been eligible to vote in UK Parliamentary general elections in the last 15 years, you'll be allowed to continue voting for your MP. If you leave the UK before you are old enough to vote, you'll still be able to register to vote if one of your parents has been registered to vote in UK general elections in the last 15 years.

Tell us what you think What do you think of these resources? Complete our short survey so we can improve them for the future. It will only take a few minutes to complete.

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