First published: 24 July 2019 Last updated: 24 July 2019 Our recommendations When the UK Government invited local councils to run voter identification pilot schemes in May 2018, it also said that it was open to looking at further piloting in future elections. We agree that it would be helpful to collect more evidence from further pilot schemes at elections in 2019. This will help the Government and Parliament to decide whether or not to introduce an identification requirement for future elections, and how any such requirement should be designed. This first round of pilots has shown that there could be several different ways of delivering a voter identification scheme in Great Britain. It is right that the Government should now focus on the detail of what further evidence they need, and how the design of future pilot schemes will help to provide that evidence. We have some limited evidence from these pilots that younger people and those who don't always vote were less likely to say that they would find it easy to show identification. We think that more work is needed to look at evidence about the impact of different schemes on these people, and to identify what additional steps can be taken to minimise the risk that they are not able to vote in future. We have identified some important lessons from the 2018 pilot schemes in this report and we have set out our recommendations for further work and future pilot schemes below. These recommendations would help provide the best possible evidence base for any decisions about identification requirements for voters at polling stations in Great Britain in the future. The UK Government should: ensure that a wider range of local councils run pilot schemes in May 2019 These should include a mixture of rural and urban areas, and areas with different demographic profiles. This would help make sure there is more evidence about the impact of voter identification requirements on different groups of people. set out more specifically how pilot schemes in May 2019 should be designed and run The Government should take a stronger role in setting the design of pilot schemes in 2019, instead of allowing Returning Officers as much flexibility to design their own schemes as in 2018. This would help to make sure there is a good range of evidence to test the impact of different options in different parts of England. Too many different schemes will make it harder to identify the impact of requirements on different groups of people. work with the Equality and Human Rights Commission and organisations that represent people with different needs to carry out robust Equality Impact Assessments for future pilot schemes This would help to make sure that the Government and Returning Officers think carefully about the potential impact of different voter identification requirements for different groups of people. It would also help Returning Officers to identify the most effective ways to communicate the requirements to different groups of people in their areas. carry out further work to identify what kinds of alternative identification are available for people who would find it harder to show their passport, driving licence 21 or travel pass This is particularly for people with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act Most voters in the 2018 pilot schemes that required either photo or non-photo identification were able to show their passport, driving licence or travel card, but some groups of people are less likely to have these documents. Further work, which could include research as well as more pilot schemes, should look at whether these groups in particular would find it helpful to show other types of identification, and should also look at the impact on polling station staff. carry out further work to gather more evidence on the levels of identity assurance provided

by different types of documents This would help the Government and Parliament to assess the relative security benefits of different types of identification, and consider those against the potential impact on voters. carry out further work to establish whether poll cards could be included as acceptable identification without needing scanning technology in polling stations This would help to establish whether this could be a cost-effective and affordable part of a future identification scheme. The pilot schemes in Swindon and Watford were significantly more expensive than those in Bromley, Gosport and Woking. This was because of the extra cost of the scanners and technology that staff used in the polling stations. Further work, which could include more pilot schemes, should explore whether it would be possible to check poll cards without using such expensive technology. Future pilot schemes should: continue to include options for people who don't have any of the required forms of identification This will make sure that no-one who is eligible is prevented from voting because they don't have the right identification. Although only a small number of people in the 2018 pilot schemes used alternative options, it will still be important to offer these or similar options in future pilot schemes. It will also be important to promote these options more widely and to test the practical impact if they are used by larger numbers of voters. Related content Register to vote All you need to register to vote is 5 minutes and your National Insurance number. Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Party registration decisions View our decisions on political party names, descriptions and emblems Report: How the 2017 UK general election was run Read our report about how the 2017 general election was run