

## Template press release for Scotland – annual canvass 2023

Don't lose your vote – residents in <local authority area> urged to check voter registration details

<Name of local authority area> residents are being urged to check their electoral registration details or risk losing their chance to vote on decisions that affect them.

The Electoral Registration Officer will be getting in touch with every household to check that the electoral register is up to date, and to identify any residents who should be registered but are currently missing.

**<Name>, Electoral Registration Officer for <name of local authority>, said:**

“Keep an eye out for important updates from <name of local authority>. The annual canvass is our way of making sure that the information on the electoral register for every address is accurate and up to date. To make sure you don't lose your say at upcoming elections, simply follow the instructions sent to you.

“If you're not currently registered, your name will not appear in the messages we send. If you want to register, the easiest way is online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).”

Recent home movers in particular are urged to check their details. Electoral Commission research has found that recent home movers are less likely to be registered than those who have lived at the same address for a long time. In Great Britain, 92% of those who have lived in their home for 16 years will be registered, compared with 36% of people who have lived at an address for less than a year.

**Andy O'Neill, Head of the Electoral Commission in Scotland, said:**

“It's really important that everyone who is eligible to vote is able to do so. We urge people to check for updates from their Electoral Registration Officer on this year's canvass. You might receive an email, a letter, or a phone call, or someone might knock on your door.

If you are not registered to vote, make sure you provide the necessary information to your Electoral Registration Officer when asked and register to vote online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).”

Information on registering to vote is available on the [Electoral Commission](http://www.electoralcommission.gov.uk) website.

Residents with questions about their registration status can contact their local electoral registration office at <contact details for ERO>.

## Ends

For more information contact [<local authority's communications team contact details>](#). Alternatively contact the Electoral Commission press office on 0131 225 0211 (out of hours on 07789 920 414) or at [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk).

## Notes to editors

1. The Representation of the People Act 1983 places a duty on electoral registration officers to maintain the electoral register for their area and to conduct an annual canvass of all residential properties.
2. The electoral register lists the names and addresses of everyone who is registered to vote. The register is used for electoral purposes, such as making sure only eligible people can vote. It is also used for other reasons as specified in law, such as detecting crime (e.g. fraud), calling people for jury service or checking credit applications.
3. The open register is an extract of the electoral register, but is not used for elections. It can be bought by any person, company or organisation. For example, it is used by businesses and charities to confirm name and address details. Your name and address will be included in the open register unless you ask for them to be removed. Removing your details from the open register does not affect your right to vote.
4. To be eligible to register to vote a person must be:
  - Aged 14 or over (a person may register to vote at 14, but may not vote until they are 16 for Scottish Parliament and council elections and aged 18 for UK Parliament elections)
  - A British, Irish, EU or other foreign citizen who has leave to enter and remain in the UK or does not require such leave.
5. Full details on who can vote in elections in Scotland can be found [here](#).
6. Full details of the Electoral Commission's research on the electoral registers [can be found on its website](#).