

annual report You are in the Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23 section Home Our plans and priorities Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23 On this page Work done to achieve our aims Ongoing and future work Commitment to EDI Governance First published: 4 July 2023 Last updated: 27 September 2023 Summary This report provides an overview of our work on devolved matters in Wales and looks at our performance during the last year. We have included summary financial information within the performance report. This is consistent with the financial statements, where more detail is available. The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) established the Electoral Commission. We are independent of government and political parties and directly accountable to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. Amendments made to the Government of Wales Act 2006, by the Wales Act 2017, transferred responsibility for devolved Welsh elections and referendums from the UK Parliament to the Senedd. The Senedd Elections Wales Act 2020 sets out the funding and accountability arrangements for the Electoral Commission's devolved activities in Wales. Work done to achieve our aims Our work in early 2022-23 focused on supporting the delivery of the local government elections across Wales. This included: Working with the Wales Electoral Coordination Board (WECB) to provide advice and guidance to Returning Officers and their staff on preparing for and delivering the polls. Working with political parties and Returning Officers to provide targeted support and briefing sessions to candidates and agents contesting the elections. Running a mass-media public awareness campaign for voters, reminding them of the key deadlines for registration and absent vote applications. There were 38,438 applications made to register to vote in Wales during our voter registration campaign. Publishing our evaluation, in July, on the early voting pilots that took place in four Welsh local authority areas at the May 2022 elections. Publishing our statutory report on the elections in September, which reflected data and evidence gathered on voting, campaigning, and delivering the election. We found that the vast majority of voters were satisfied with the process of voting and almost all were able to use their preferred method of voting. Through the year we focussed activity on our advice and support service to our stakeholders, including electoral administrators, candidates and agents. This included: Consulting administrators in Wales on a new performance standards framework for Returning Officers, which has now been laid in the Senedd. Using our performance standards frameworks to support and challenge Returning Officers at the local government elections and Electoral Registration Officers on their year-round activities to maintain accurate and complete electoral registers. Identifying new opportunities to provide support to the regulated community to help them comply with the rules around campaign finance. We continued to provide expert advice to Welsh Government and the Senedd on policy development in relation to electoral matters: Appearing before the Llywydd's Committee to give evidence as part of its scrutiny of the 2023/24 financial estimate. Providing a comprehensive response to the Welsh Government's Electoral Reform and Administration White Paper, drawing on our policy work and wide-ranging research with voters, electoral administrators, and campaigners. We built on the success of our work to promote democratic education by providing learning resources for teachers and youth workers. This included: Working with local authorities, headteachers and our partner Democracy Box to develop and promote our new resources for democratic engagement for schools and other learning providers to support voter participation and confidence. Promoting our Welcome to Your Vote Week at the end of January, which achieved a good level of involvement from organisations across Wales. We held a launch event at the Senedd with the Minister

for Education and Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles. Ongoing and future work We see a continuing need to support more newly enfranchised voters across Wales to become involved in democracy. We will therefore expand the reach of our education programme, developing resources relevant to the new Welsh curriculum and engaging further with partner organisations. Our aim is to educate young people about the democratic process and prepare educators to teach political literacy with confidence. Through training and briefing sessions, we will support parties and campaigners to comply with the law, while continuing to ensure political finance is transparent. We will support Returning Officers and electoral administrators to help them meet the challenges they face in delivering well-run electoral services. Our focus will be on helping them adapt to a diverse electoral landscape and the changing needs of voters in Wales. We will work closely with the Senedd and Welsh Government as they introduce new primary legislation to bring into effect plans for both Senedd and electoral reforms. Working with the Wales Electoral Coordination Board, we will convey the views of Returning Officers and s to Welsh Government and seek to ensure that they are taken into account in the development of this new legislation. We will work with Welsh police, campaigners and electoral administrators to explore and address concerns raised by candidates about intimidation and abuse at elections. Commitment to EDI The Electoral Commission serves a diverse democracy in Wales, and we are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Our programme of partnership work has developed resources to support democratic inclusion for those who experience barriers to voting. This has included providing material in a variety of languages, including British Sign Language, and in a number of formats including easy read, large print, audio and braille. We have also worked with partner organisations in Wales to develop appropriate materials for Gypsy/Travellers, care experienced young people, domestic abuse survivors and people experiencing homelessness. In the year ahead we will be working closely with representatives from the electoral community to explore how we can improve the accessibility of the electoral process for people who experience barriers to participating in elections. We are also committed to the principle that the Welsh and languages should be treated on a basis of equality in public business and provision of resources and services. This has led to further improvement in the service we provide to partners in the language of their choice, and to ensuring that the Welsh Language Standards, set in July 2016, are not only met, but that we are innovative and ambitious in the services that we provide. We also continue to work closely with the WECB's Welsh Language Advisory Group whose aim is to ensure that the Welsh language is treated equally in matters of electoral legislation and guidance and that necessary support is given to the wider electoral community. Resources During 2022/23 we utilised 98% of £1.54m of budget available. This was predominately staffing £1.1m (71%) with advertising and research £0.3m (19%); the remaining amounts represent the Senedd contribution to common activities and corporate overheads. Our segmental reporting on shows the breakdown between direct and indirect costs. Governance The Commission is formally accountable to, and receives funding from, the Senedd in respect of its functions in relation to devolved Welsh elections and referendums. We report to the Llywydd's Committee which was established for this purpose and works to the "Statement of Funding Principles" which was agreed with the Senedd in early 2021. In September 2022 we submitted our third set of estimates to the Senedd enabling the UK Treasury to transfer the agreed level of funding to the Welsh Consolidated Fund. This process has been agreed by all parties and ensures all parliaments can be confident in scrutinising our work plans and accounts. Navigation Previous Next Northern Ireland annual report Scotland annual report