

Political parties accept donations of nearly £21 million in first quarter of 2023 | Electoral Commission Search Political parties accept donations of nearly £21 million in first quarter of 2023 You are in the section Home Posted: 8 June 2023

Political parties accept donations of nearly £21 million in first quarter of 2023 Political parties registered in the UK have reported accepting £20,887,106 in donations and public funds during the first quarter of 2023, according to figures published today by the Electoral Commission. This compares to £12,792,415 accepted in the same period in 2022 (January to March). Louise Edwards, the Electoral Commission's Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation, said: "We publish details of these donations so that voters understand how political parties are funded. We know transparency of party and campaigner finance is important for people, but our research tells us that only 24 per cent of people believe party funding is transparent. "It's clear that publishing this information is not enough. We continue to recommend to the UK Government that it reforms the system, to help protect parties from those who seek to evade the law, and give voters more confidence." Political parties are required to submit quarterly donation and loan returns to the Electoral Commission. Within these returns, parties report:

- donations accepted above the £7,500 threshold (over £1,500 for accounting units)
- smaller donations from a single donor which exceed the reporting threshold when taken together
- impermissible donations they have received and the action taken in relation to these.

Parties can also report donations which should have been reported in previous quarters. The political parties to report donations in Q1 2023, including public funds, were:

Party	Total accepted (excl. public funds)	Public funds accepted	Total accepted
Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	£51,281	£15,000	£36,281
Conservative and Unionist Party (GB)	£12,277,478	£12,143,082	£134,396
Democratic Unionist Party - D.U.P	£87,165	£0	£87,165
Green Party (GB)	£215,704	£168,926	£46,778
Labour Party	£5,893,841	£4,407,459	£1,435,826
Liberal Democrats	£1,669,749	£1,335,433	£302,044
Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales	£30,467	£0	£30,467
Scottish Green Party	£9,479	£0	£9,479
Scottish National Party (SNP)	£291,339	£4,000	£287,339
SDLP (Social Democratic & Labour Party)	£50,140	£0	£50,140
Sinn Féin	£182,697	£100,000	£82,697
The Reclaim Party	£75,000	£75,000	£0
True & Fair Party	£87,500	£87,500	£0
Ulster Unionist Party	£18,095	£0	£18,095
Women's Equality Party	£30,000	£30,000	£0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£20,969,934</b>	<b>£18,366,400</b>	<b>£2,520,706</b>

The amount that a political party reports to the Commission may be different to the amount it accepts in a quarter. This is because the amount that a party reports can include donations that were returned because they were impermissible and / or donations reported as part of the wrong quarter. Parties will likely have received other donations, from different individuals or bodies, that are below the thresholds for reporting to the Commission. Taken as a total sum these can amount to substantial sources of income for parties. Three parties failed to meet the reporting deadline for this quarter. The Commission will consider each of these matters, as well as donations reported late, in line with its Enforcement Policy , if appropriate. Any sanctions applied will be published at a later date.

Borrowing There were £156,406 of new loans reported in the first quarter of 2023. Loans with a value of £505,000 were fully paid off. Donations accepted by regulated donees in Q1 2023 The Commission also publishes details of donations accepted by regulated donees. Regulated donees are members of registered political parties, holders of relevant elective office and members associations. In the first quarter of 2023, £1,145,095 in donations were accepted by 93 regulated donees. The total includes cash and non-cash

donations, as well as donations towards overseas visits. Full details of cash and non-cash donations are available on our website. Type of regulated donee Value of cash and non-cash donations accepted Value of donations accepted towards overseas visits Total value of donations accepted Mayor £70,136 £0 £70,136 Member of a Registered Political Party £10,000 £0 £10,000 Members Association £357,750 £0 £357,750 MLA - Member of the Legislative Authority of Northern Ireland £0 £1,989 £1,989 MP - Member of Parliament £423,898 £2,792 £2,792 MSP - Member of the Scottish Parliament £0 £2,792 £2,792 Totals £861,784 £283,311 £1,145,095 Further information A summary of donations reported by parties, including the highest donors and details of late reports, is available on the Commission's website. Full details of donations and loans reported in Q1 2023 are available on our political finance register. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to editors The Electoral Commission has recommended for some time that the UK Government and Parliament consider with us how to improve the controls on donations and loans to prevent foreign money being used in UK politics. We continue to recommend reforms that would give voters greater confidence in UK political finance, including:

- o the introduction of a duty on parties for enhanced due diligence and risk assessment of donations, adapted from money laundering regulations
- o the introduction of laws to ensure parties cannot accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan

The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) requires registered parties to report cash and non-cash donations and borrowing to the Electoral Commission on a quarterly basis. Political parties must report all donations and borrowing over £7,500 relating to the central party, or over £1,500 relating to an accounting unit. This includes aggregates of donations and loans from the same source during the calendar year. Once the central party has reported a donation or aggregate donation over £7,500 it must report each subsequent donation of more than £1,500 from that source. As parties only report donations and loans over these thresholds, the figures do not include all donations and loans to political parties. Donations and loans under these thresholds are recorded in political parties' annual accounts. Information on the political parties' most recent statements of accounts is available on the Commission's database. Public funds are donations from the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the Scottish Parliament and the Electoral Commission. 'Short' and 'Cranborne' grants are available to parties in opposition in the House of Commons or House of Lords respectively. Some donations appear on the register as being from the Electoral Commission. These are Policy Development Grants, which were established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 for parties represented in the Commons by two or more sitting members. The grants are intended to assist parties in developing the policies that they will present in an election manifesto. The legislation provides the total sum of £2 million annually for this purpose. Policy Development Grants became reportable as donations for the first time in quarter three of 2006 as a result of the Electoral Administration Act 2006. There were 350 registered political parties in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during quarter one of 2023. 48 were required to submit a quarterly donation report and 32 to submit borrowing information within the deadline. The remaining political parties have previously submitted four consecutive nil returns. Providing they have not received donations in the last quarter, they are therefore exempt from submitting a report. More information on what constitutes a regulated donee and their legal reporting requirements is available on our website. Members of Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Members'

Financial Interests . The registrar then sends these details to the Commission. The Commission identifies any donations that fall within the regulated donee rules and we publish these. The Commission has a regulatory role in relation to the permissibility of donations. Members of Scottish Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Interests for the Scottish Parliament. All other regulated donees report their donations directly to us. We then publish this information monthly as part of our role in providing greater transparency in political finance in the UK. The research which found that 24 per cent of people believe party funding is transparent can be found in the Electoral Commission's website: 2023 UK-wide public attitudes research.

Free voter ID applications open | Electoral Commission Search

Free voter ID applications open You are in the section Home Posted: 16 January 2023 Free voter ID applications open Applications open today for a new form of free ID that can be used at elections. Ahead of a new voter ID requirement, the UK Government has opened the online portal for the ID, known as the Voter Authority Certificate, and local authorities will begin processing applications. Applications can be submitted through the online portal, at [voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/](https://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/). Paper application forms are also available from local authorities. Applicants must be registered to vote, and will need to provide their date of birth, National Insurance number and a photograph with their application. Local elections are taking place across England on 4 May, and those intending to vote at a polling station will need to show photo ID to receive a ballot paper. The deadline to apply for a certificate before the May elections will be 5pm on Tuesday 25 April. Those that have an accepted form of ID do not need to apply for a certificate. Accepted forms of ID at polling stations include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK or EEA drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass or an Oyster 60+ card. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo. Ailsa Irvine, Director of Electoral Administration at the Electoral Commission, said: "The availability of free ID is important to maintaining the accessibility of elections. We are calling on all voters to check whether they have an accepted form of ID, and if not, to apply for the certificate. "We know from research that the vast majority of people already have the ID they need. Those voters only need to remember to bring it with them on polling day. However, anyone who doesn't currently have photo ID can now apply for free voter ID." Earlier this month the Commission launched its public awareness campaign urging voters across England to make sure they are ready for the new voter ID requirement. More information can be found on its website, at [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id). The Commission is working with local authorities and civil society organisations to support those less likely to have an accepted form of ID, so that they are aware of the free ID and apply in time. It has created a wide range of resources, including guides for staff and volunteers, posters, leaflets, and social media content. Ends Spokespeople are available for interview on the Commission's public awareness campaign. For more information contact Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414, or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to Editors The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station is a new requirement, introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act which was passed last year. From May, voters will need to show photo ID before voting in local council elections in England, parliamentary by-elections, and police and crime commissioner elections in England and Wales. From October 2023, photo ID will be needed at UK parliamentary general elections. It will not be a requirement at local elections in Scotland or Wales, or elections to the Scottish Parliament or Senedd. The requirement already exists in Northern Ireland. To apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, voters will need to provide a photo, their full name, date of birth, the address at which they are registered to vote and their National Insurance number. The UK Government's Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities is responsible for the new voter ID policy and for the free voter ID online application system. Enquiries relating to the application system or the policy itself should be directed to the Department. The Electoral Commission is responsible for ensuring voters are aware of the new voter ID requirement, and for supporting local authorities with the process. We are available

to answer questions related to the public awareness campaign. Returning Officers and their teams are responsible for implementing the voter ID policy at the local level. From 4 May 2023, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections. This will apply to: Local elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections UK parliamentary by-elections Recall petitions From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections. Related content Register to vote All you need to register to vote is 5 minutes and your National Insurance number. Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them

UK Government must act to ensure elections remain accessible | Electoral Commission Search

UK Government must act to ensure elections remain accessible You are in the section Home Posted: 13 September 2023 UK Government must act to ensure elections remain accessible Challenges facing the electoral system present a significant threat to future elections, according to a new report from the Electoral Commission. With a UK general election due in the next 16 months, the Commission is calling for urgent action to eliminate barriers for voters and to mitigate risks to the delivery of elections. The report on the May 2023 local elections in England identifies a number of challenges for voters, administrators and campaigners, which would be exacerbated at a general election. A significantly higher number of voters would be expected at a national poll, including those who do not tend to vote at local elections and are less likely to be familiar with recent changes. The research shows that some people found it harder to vote because of the new requirement to show photo ID at polling stations, including disabled people and the unemployed. Barriers stemmed from two overlapping issues: a lack of ownership of the appropriate ID, and of awareness of the need to bring it when voting. Low awareness of the availability of the free Voter Authority Certificate was also an issue. The Commission has made specific recommendations to the UK Government to improve accessibility at future polls. These include reviewing the list of accepted ID to identify if additional documents could be added, exploring whether the deadline for applying for the free ID can be pushed closer to polling day, and providing options on polling day for voters without accepted ID, such as another registered voter being able to 'vouch' for their identity. Craig Westwood, Director of Communications, Policy and Research, said: "Elections in the UK are well run, and voters have high levels of confidence, but challenges need to be addressed across the system if that is to continue, and if barriers experienced by some voters are to be lifted. "The new voter ID requirement has posed a barrier to some voters and is likely to have a larger impact at higher turnout polls. We have made recommendations to expand accessibility and support for voters, which should be introduced ahead of the next UK general election to ensure large numbers of people are not prevented from taking part." More work is also needed to increase awareness of the support available for disabled voters, as it remains low and would help more people to take part. The capacity and resilience of election teams also remains a significant concern in terms of delivering elections. Administrators' capacity is found to be already stretched, with struggles to recruit staff, and significant pressures created by delivering changes to the way elections are run. With further changes to be made ahead of future elections, sufficient time, capacity and functional resources are needed to support them to implement those changes. Craig Westwood added: "The capacity and resilience of electoral administrators was really stretched this year, and they were only able to make these elections work by exceptional efforts, commitment and support from authorities not holding polls. At the next UK general election, there will be even greater demand on staff and polling station venues, as well as more new legislative requirements and added complexity. To ensure administrators can continue to deliver well-run elections, the UK Government must ensure that dependencies and delivery risks are carefully managed for future changes. "We are ready to work with government and wider electoral community to tackle these issues and mitigate risks to well-run elections in future." The Commission has put forward recommendations for meeting these challenges, details of which are available in the report. A report on the local elections in Northern Ireland is also published today. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours

07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to Editors Elections are scheduled to take place across all of England and Wales in May 2024, including in London and Birmingham where there were not elections in May 2023. A UK Parliamentary general election must also take place before the end of January 2025. For many people, these elections will be the first time they will have voted since the requirement to show voter ID was introduced. The Commission published an interim analysis on the implementation of voter ID in June. by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Welsh and Scottish parliaments.

Reforms needed to get thousands of people registered to vote | Electoral Commission Search

Reforms needed to get thousands of people registered to vote You are in the section Home Posted: 18 September 2023 Press release Almost 400,000 people across Wales are either incorrectly registered to vote or missing completely, according to research published today by the Electoral Commission. The research found that young people, private renters and those who have recently moved house continue to be less likely to be correctly registered to vote. The findings show that the current electoral registration system does not work well for voters or those who administer it. Urgent reforms are needed to enable public data to be used to facilitate voter registration, particularly for those less likely to be correctly registered. The Welsh Government has already outlined proposals to modernise electoral registration in a white paper on electoral reform published last year. The Commission is now calling on the Welsh and UK governments to work together to pass legislation to create clear legal gateways for government departments and public bodies to share data on potentially eligible voters with electoral administrators. A consistent approach between both governments would ensure changes are developed and delivered in a way which ensures that voters are accurately included in the registers for all types of elections they are eligible to vote in. Rhydian Thomas, Head of the Electoral Commission, Wales said: "Thousands of people across Wales are not registered to vote or are registered incorrectly. While some may not want to participate in elections, for many people it is a consequence of an outdated registration system that disproportionately affects private renters and young people. This is particularly significant in Wales where our voting franchise includes 16-17 year olds for Senedd and local elections. "A more automated form of voter registration could see applications made at the same time as other tasks, such as updating the address on your driver's licence or when enrolling at university. "The Welsh Government has already highlighted its intention to work with local authorities to pilot automatic voter registration for devolved elections. We welcome these proposals and stand ready to work with them and the wider electoral community to support further development of this important area of work." In addition to improving the experience for voters, these changes would address the burdens faced by electoral administrators, who are currently required to use their limited resources and capacity at the most critical time ahead of major elections to manage high numbers of applications to register to vote. The full report shows the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers across Wales, including breakdowns by age and gender. It also sets out a range of options for how specific data sources could be used to improve the system. Ends For more information contact Ella Downing, Senior Communications Adviser on 029 2034 6824, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [edowning@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:edowning@electoralcommission.org.uk). Notes to editors by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the Welsh, UK and Scottish parliaments. The Commission runs accuracy and completeness studies to measure the quality of the electoral registers. The last time we carried out this research was in 2019, on the 2018 electoral registers. The Commission plays an important part in addressing under-registration through our continuing public awareness campaigning work, which we update regularly to ensure we are in-line with



the latest insights about both voter attitudes and the demographic patterns of under-registered groups. A total of 5,298 interviews were achieved across 127 local authority areas in Great Britain, and 1,015 interviews in 100 wards in Northern Ireland. Police and Crime Commissioner elections are scheduled to take place across Wales in May 2024. A UK parliamentary general election must also take place before the end of January 2025. Everyone must be registered to vote in order to take part in elections. Related content Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them Donations accepted View data about donations accepted by parties and campaigners

Financial accounts for smaller political parties published by the Electoral Commission | Electoral Commission Search Financial accounts for smaller political parties published by the Electoral Commission You are in the section Home Posted: 26 July 2023 Financial accounts for smaller political parties published by the Electoral Commission Financial accounts of political parties and accounting units in the United Kingdom, with income and expenditure of £250,000 or less, have been published today by the Electoral Commission. The accounts are for the year ending 31 December 2022. 335 political parties in the United Kingdom reported their financial accounts as being within this threshold. Details of parties and accounting units with income and expenditure over £250,000 will be published in due course. Louise Edwards, Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation, said: "All political parties must keep financial records and submit annual statements of accounts to us. Publishing this data helps voters see the money that political parties receive and what they are spending. This is a vital part of delivering transparency in political finance in the UK, and in enhancing public confidence and trust in our democratic processes." The ten parties that reported the highest income or expenditure between £50,000 and £250,000: Party Income Expenditure Ashfield Independents (GB) £60,912 £56,980 Breakthrough Party (GB) £90,444 £47,188 Communist Party of Britain (GB) £171,755 £197,024 Conservative and Unionist Party (NI) £62,252 £58,010 Scottish Socialist Party (GB) £62,480 £69,025 Socialist Party (Northern Ireland) (NI) £83,049 £78,852 Traditional Unionist Voice - TUV (NI) £76,592 £74,546 True & Fair Party (GB) £190,642 £168,882 UK Independence Party (UKIP) (GB) £169,121 -£98,528 Upminster and Cranham Residents Association (GB) £70,174 £73,935 The full financial accounts for each of the 335 political parties with income and expenditure of £250,000 or less are available on the Commission's website. Accounting unit income and expenditure Political parties may register 'accounting units' with the Electoral Commission. These are constituent or affiliated units of a political party, including constituency parties, which have separate finances from the main party. Accounting units are only required to deliver an annual Statement of Accounts to the Electoral Commission if either their total income or total expenditure is over £25,000. 387 accounting units in the UK reported income and expenditure between £25,000 and £250,000. Total income and expenditure of accounting units by party Party Income Expenditure Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland £123,020 £93,018 Conservative and Unionist Party (GB) £11,741,592 £12,929,118 Conservative and Unionist Party (NI) £39,770 £18,564 Co-operative Party £66,839 £77,979 Democratic Unionist Party - D.U.P. £199,890 £188,884 Green Party £653,713 £640,651 Labour Party £1,545,841 £1,696,063 Liberal Democrats £5,620,597 £5,347,256 Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales £268,290 £270,519 SDLP (Social Democratic & Labour Party) £107,271 £107,917 Ulster Unionist Party £138,196 £142,635 The financial accounts for all accounting units published today are available on the Commission's website. Comparisons with previous years Below are the total sums of the financial accounts for political parties and their accounting units that fell under the £250,000 threshold in the two previous financial years: Political parties 2022 2021 2020 Income £2,200,380 £2,478,965 £1,546,769 Expenditure £1,891,548 £2,318,549 £1,358,422 Accounting units 2022 2021 2020 Income £20,393,040 £21,438,320 £16,849,475 Expenditure £21,512,604 £22,183,096 £15,728,652 Figures comparing the latest financial accounts for political parties and their accounting units with those for 2021 and 2020 provide a general comparison and do not necessarily compare the same parties and accounting units. The income and expenditure of parties and accounting units vary each year, so they may fall into different reporting thresholds. Late submissions 26 political parties and

accounting units that were expected to have income or expenditure under £250,000 failed to submit their accounts before the deadline of 30 April 2023. Where parties and accounting units have delivered their accounts late we may take appropriate and proportionate action in line with our Enforcement Policy. Political parties and their accounting units with income or expenditure in 2022 of more than £250,000 were required to submit their audited accounts by 7 July 2023. These will be published in due course. Ends For further information please contact the press office on 020 7271 0704 or email [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk). For outside office hours call 07789 920414.

Notes to editors by:

- enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible
- regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches
- using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency

The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. Accounting units with income and expenditure that are either £25,000 or less are not required to submit their accounts. The fact that a statement of accounts has been placed on the Commission's website should not be taken to indicate that the Electoral Commission has verified or validated it in any way. Figures for income and expenditure have been rounded. Please see our online database for exact amounts. Details of how failures to submit a statement of accounts by the deadline have been dealt with in the past can be found in our publication of closed cases .

Political parties accept over £24m in donations in the second quarter of 2023 | Electoral Commission Search Political parties accept over £24m in donations in the second quarter of 2023 You are in the section Home Posted: 7 September 2023 Political parties accept over £24m in donations in the second quarter of 2023 Political parties registered in the UK have reported accepting £24,438,482 in donations and public funds during the second quarter of 2023, according to figures published today by the Electoral Commission. This compares to £12,761,435 accepted in the same period in 2022 (April to June). Louise Edwards, the Electoral Commission's Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation, said: "We know that voters are interested in where political parties get their money from, and this publication is an important part of delivering this transparency for voters. "However, we've seen for some time that public confidence in the transparency of party and campaigner finance is declining. We continue to recommend to the UK Government that it introduces laws to help protect parties from those who seek to evade the law and give voters more confidence in the process." Political parties are required to submit quarterly donation and loan returns to the Electoral Commission. Within these returns, parties report: donations accepted above the £7,500 threshold (over £1,500 for accounting units) smaller donations from a single donor which exceed the reporting threshold when taken together impermissible donations they have received and the action taken in relation to these. donations which ought to have been reported in previous quarters The political parties required to report donations in Q2 2023, including public funds, were: Party Total reported Donations accepted (excl. public funds) Public funds accepted Total accepted in this quarter Alba Party £33,713 £0 £33,713 £33,713 Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland £53,105 £25,000 £28,105 £53,105 Conservative and Unionist Party (GB) £10,100,555 £9,853,327 £160,748 £10,014,074 Conservative and Unionist Party (NI) £10,855 £5,966 £0 £5,966 Co-operative Party £476,230 £476,230 £0 £476,230 Democratic Unionist Party - D.U.P. £232,284 £0 £232,284 £232,284 Green Party (GB) £124,627 £72,936 £51,691 £124,627 Green Party (NI) £20,921 £13,921 £0 £13,921 Labour Party £10,510,260 £7,498,877 £2,937,023 £10,435,900 Liberal Democrats £2,005,194 £1,546,534 £385,082 £1,931,616 Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales £62,827 £0 £62,827 £62,827 Reform UK £135,000 £135,000 £0 £135,000 Scottish Green Party £5,172 £0 £5,172 £5,172 Scottish National Party (SNP) £361,232 £7,400 £353,832 £361,232 SDLP (Social Democratic & Labour Party) £110,607 £0 £110,607 £110,607 Sinn Féin £92,543 £0 £92,543 £92,543 The Reclaim Party £200,000 £200,000 £0 £200,000 The Socialist Party of Great Britain £23,152 £23,152 £0 £23,152 Traditional Unionist Voice – TUV £13,531 £0 £6,767 £6,767 True & Fair Party £91,750 £91,750 £0 £91,750 Ulster Unionist Party £16,509 £0 £16,509 £16,509 Women's Equality Party £11,486 £11,486 £0 £11,486 Total £24,691,554 £19,961,580 £4,476,902 £24,438,482 The value of donations reported by a political party to the Commission may be different to the value of donations it actually accepted in that quarter. This can be due to aggregated donations, impermissible donations, and/or late reported donations. Aggregated donations are donations below the reporting threshold, from a single source, in a single calendar year which exceed the reporting threshold when combined. These are reportable in the quarter in which the party accepted the donation which takes the aggregated value over the reporting threshold. Two parties failed to submit their quarter two reports by the deadline. Three parties included donations in their quarter two report that should have been reported in previous quarterly reports when they were accepted. One party reported an update to a loan which should have been reported in a previous quarter. The Commission will consider these matters in line with its Enforcement Policy , if appropriate. Any sanctions

applied will be published at a later date. Borrowing There were £125,217 of new loans reported in the second quarter of 2023. Loans with a value of £2,528,906 were fully paid off. Loans with a value of £15,000 were fully converted to donations. Donations accepted by regulated donees in Q2 2023 The Commission also publishes details of donations accepted by regulated donees. Regulated donees are members of registered political parties, holders of relevant elective office and members associations. In the second quarter of 2023, £1,229,243 in donations were accepted by 75 regulated donees. The total includes cash and non-cash donations, as well as donations towards overseas visits. Full details of cash and non-cash donations are available on our website.

Type of regulated donee	Value of cash and non-cash donations accepted	Value of donations accepted towards overseas visits	Total value of donations accepted
Mayor	£5,400	£0	£5,400
Member of a Registered Political Party	£15,000	£0	£15,000
Members Association	£480,900	£0	£480,900
MLA - Member of the Legislative Authority of Northern Ireland	£6,559	£6,559	£13,118
MP - Member of Parliament	£541,556	£174,828	£716,384
Police and Crime Commissioner	£5,000	£0	£5,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£1,047,856</b>	<b>£181,387</b>	<b>£1,229,243</b>

Further information Full details of donations and loans reported in Q2 2023 are available on our political finance register . Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk).

Notes to editors The Electoral Commission has recommended for some time that the UK Government and Parliament consider with us how to improve the controls on donations and loans to prevent foreign money being used in UK politics. We continue to recommend reforms that would give voters greater confidence in UK political finance, including:

- the introduction of a duty on parties to carry out enhanced due diligence and risk assessments on donations, adapted from money laundering regulations
- the introduction of laws to ensure parties cannot accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan

The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) requires registered parties to report cash and non-cash donations and borrowing to the Electoral Commission on a quarterly basis. Political parties must report all donations and borrowing over £7,500 relating to the central party, or over £1,500 relating to an accounting unit. This includes aggregates of donations and loans from the same source during the calendar year. Once the central party has reported a donation or aggregate donation over £7,500 it must report each subsequent donation of more than £1,500 from that source. As parties only report donations and loans over these thresholds, the figures do not include all donations and loans to political parties. Donations and loans under these thresholds are recorded in political parties' annual accounts. Information on the political parties' most recent statements of accounts is available on the Commission's database. Public funds are donations from the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the Scottish Parliament and the Electoral Commission. 'Short' and 'Cranborne' grants are available to parties in opposition in the House of Commons or House of Lords respectively. Some donations appear on the register as being from the Electoral Commission. These are Policy Development Grants, which were established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 for parties represented in the Commons by two or more sitting members. The grants are intended to assist parties in developing the policies that they will present in an election manifesto. The legislation provides the total sum of £2 million annually for this purpose. Policy Development Grants became reportable as donations for the first time in quarter three of 2006 as a result of the Electoral Administration Act 2006. There were 386 registered political parties in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during quarter two

of 2023. 51 were required to submit a quarterly donation report and 35 to submit borrowing information within the deadline. The remaining political parties have previously submitted four consecutive nil returns. Providing they have not received donations in the last quarter, they are therefore exempt from submitting a report. More information on what constitutes a regulated donee and their legal reporting requirements is available on our website. Members of Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Members' Financial Interests . The registrar then sends these details to the Commission. The Commission identifies any donations that fall within the regulated donee rules and we publish these. The Commission has a regulatory role in relation to the permissibility of donations. Members of Scottish Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Interests for the Scottish Parliament. All other regulated donees report their donations directly to us. We then publish this information monthly as part of our role in providing greater transparency in political finance in the UK.

Significant changes proposed to UK elections – Electoral Commission responds | Electoral Commission Search Significant changes proposed to UK elections – Electoral Commission responds You are in the section Home Posted: 5 July 2021 Significant changes proposed to UK elections – Electoral Commission responds The Electoral Commission has responded to a new Elections Bill, published today by the UK Government. The Bill proposes significant changes to the rules for elections in the UK, and will affect voters, campaigners and electoral administrators. Its measures include a requirement for voters at polling stations to show photo ID before they receive their ballot paper; extending imprint rules to digital material; and removing the 15 year limit on voting rights for British citizens living overseas. Commenting on the Bill, Craig Westwood, Director of Communication, Policy and Research at the Electoral Commission, said: “The Elections Bill seeks to tackle a range of issues relating to the security, accessibility and transparency of elections and campaigning. It represents a strong commitment from the UK Government to modernising our electoral system and addressing areas that need improvement. “Introducing digital imprint rules is a particularly positive and welcome step. Giving voters information about who is trying to reach them should help boost public confidence in online campaigning.” The changes in the Bill would apply to UK Parliament elections, Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales, and local elections in England. Some provisions would apply to Northern Ireland Assembly elections and local elections in Northern Ireland. We will provide independent advice to parliamentarians on the contents of the Bill, based on published evidence and our expertise. We will also be publishing our views. Commenting on implementing the changes, Craig Westwood added: “The laws around elections are already complex and fragmented, so introducing new requirements can add additional risk. Changes will need to be well planned, with implementation phased and properly funded, to ensure that electoral administrators, and others involved in running elections, can deliver the changes as intended. “Each of the UK’s governments can decide the laws that apply at the elections for which they are responsible. When their approaches diverge, consideration must be given to the bearing that has on how the system as a whole works and ensuring that everyone can understand what rules are in place at different elections. “The Commission will work with voters, electoral administrators, parties and campaigners to help them understand and prepare in good time for the new rules.” A summary of the Commission’s view on each of the Bill’s measures can be found on its website. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to editors 1. by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency 2. The Commission reports to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. Related content Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them Donations accepted View data about donations accepted by parties and campaigners

UK political parties' accounts published | Electoral Commission Search

UK political parties' accounts published You are in the section Home Posted:

24 August 2023 UK political parties' accounts published The financial accounts of political parties and accounting units with income or expenditure over £250,000 have been published today by the Electoral Commission. The accounts of 18 political parties and twelve accounting units in the United Kingdom have been published for the year ending 31 December 2022. Louise Edwards, Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation at the Electoral Commission, said: "We are committed to making sure political funding is transparent. Larger parties spend and receive considerable sums of money so it's important that information on their finances is accessible to the public. Publishing their accounts allows voters to see how parties are funded and choose to spend their money." Party income or expenditure over £250,000 19 parties in the UK reported having an income or expenditure of more than £250,000. We are publishing the accounts of 18 parties today, having agreed an extended deadline for Britain First. The Ulster Unionist Party was granted an extension, and we received their accounts by the deadline of 22 August. In total, these 18 parties reported £99,993,948 of income and £101,686,906 of expenditure. This compares with 19 parties that reported income or expenditure of over £250,000 in 2021, reporting totals of £101,162,626 of income and £107,657,216 of expenditure. Party Income Expenditure Alba Party £480,056 £462,631 Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland £522,368 £545,477 Conservative and Unionist Party £30,682,000 £33,062,000 Co-operative Party £1,404,712 £1,385,042 Democratic Unionist Party - D.U.P. £426,175 £487,968 Green Party £3,146,966 £3,226,391 Labour Party £47,171,000 £44,450,000 Liberal Democrats £5,945,228 £6,699,016 Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales £970,293 £942,273 Reform UK £692,434 £949,028 Scottish Green Party £566,443 £594,634 Scottish National Party (SNP) £4,248,625 £5,052,903 SDLP (Social Democratic & Labour Party) £423,786 £395,644 Sinn Féin £1,186,378 £1,533,335 The Reclaim Party £716,084 £719,072 The Socialist Party of Great Britain £463,849 £114,055 Ulster Unionist Party £234,161 £399,622 Women's Equality Party £713,390 £667,815 Total £99,993,948 £101,686,906 In addition to the parties listed above, in July the Commission published the accounts of 335 political parties that reported an income and expenditure of £250,000 or less. Political parties' financial accounts are available on the Commission's website. Accounting unit income and expenditure Political parties can register 'accounting units' with the Electoral Commission. These are constituent or affiliated units of a political party, including constituency parties, which have separate finances from the main party. 12 accounting units in the UK reported income or expenditure of more than £250,000. In total, these 12 accounting units reported £10,267,150 income and £10,195,151 expenditure. The 12 accounting units that reported income and expenditure above £250,000: Party Accounting unit Income Expenditure Conservative and Unionist Party Cities of London & Westminster £461,805 £591,710 Conservative and Unionist Party Croydon £203,213 £286,438 Conservative and Unionist Party Kensington, Chelsea and Fulham £288,731 £314,811 Labour Party National Trade Union Liaison £259,737 £272,644 Labour Party Scottish Labour Party £773,999 £897,786 Liberal Democrats ALDC £1,162,557 £1,265,143 Liberal Democrats England £2,441,474 £2,408,878 Liberal Democrats Parliamentary Office of the Liberal Democrats £1,479,821 £1,495,405 Liberal Democrats Scotland £885,635 £594,348 Liberal Democrats Westmorland, Furness and Eden £265,574 £278,735 Liberal Democrats Winchester District £280,112 £147,472 Scottish National Party (SNP) SNP Westminster Parliament Group £1,764,492 £1,641,781 Total £10,267,150 £10,195,151 The financial accounts of all accounting units are available on the Commission's website. Comparisons with totals in previous years Below are the



total sums of all financial accounts for political parties and their accounting units above the £250,000 threshold in the two previous financial years: Political parties

	2022	2021	2020
Income	£99,993,948	£101,162,626	£86,441,126
Expenditure	£101,686,906	£107,657,216	£91,960,717

Accounting units

	2022	2021	2020
Income	£10,267,150	£10,423,890	£9,330,756
Expenditure	£10,195,151	£10,176,988	£9,039,842

The income and expenditure of parties and accounting units differs each year, so they may fall into different reporting thresholds. The total sums of all 2022 financial accounts compared with those from 2021 and 2020 provide a general comparison and do not necessarily compare the same parties and accounting units. The total sums for 2022 are without Britain First's accounts. Ends For further information please contact the press office on 020 7271 0704 or email [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk). For outside office hours call 07789 920414.

Notes to editors by:

- enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible
- regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches
- using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency

The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. All registered political parties must submit annual statements of accounts. Political parties with income or expenditure of more than £250,000 are required by law to independently audit their accounts and include this report in their submission. The fact that a statement of accounts has been placed on the Commission's website should not be taken to indicate that the Electoral Commission has verified or validated it. Figures for income and expenditure have been rounded. Please see our online database for exact amounts. Accounting units with income and expenditure that are either £25,000 or less are not required to submit their accounts. Details of how failures to submit a statement of accounts by the deadline have been dealt with in the past can be found in our publication of closed cases.

Urgent action needed to remove barriers to voting in Northern Ireland | Electoral Commission Search Urgent action needed to remove barriers to voting in Northern Ireland You are in the section Home Posted: 13 September 2023 Urgent action needed to remove barriers to voting in Northern Ireland Voters in Northern Ireland were confident with how May's council elections were run, but over 5,000 postal and proxy applications were rejected due to a missing Digital Registration Number (DRN), according to a new report published today by the Electoral Commission. A DRN is required for those registered to vote online to apply for a postal or proxy vote. The rejection rates and low public awareness levels of the DRN are acting as a barrier to voters, a view that was explicitly expressed in feedback to the Commission from candidates, political parties, and electoral administrators. The Commission is calling on the UK Government to urgently review the operation of the DRN. Cahir Hughes, Head of the Electoral Commission in Northern Ireland, said: "Voters continue to have positive views about how elections are run, with most feeling confident and satisfied with the registration and voting processes. However, issues remain. A large number of postal and proxy applications were rejected due to a missing DRN, demonstrating that it continues to be a barrier to voters in Northern Ireland. "It is vital eligible voters can access their right to vote. We continue to call on the UK Government to urgently review the operation of DRN in Northern Ireland to ensure barriers are removed while also maintaining the integrity of the absent voting process." The report also finds that the capacity and resilience of election administrators, both in Northern Ireland and across the UK, remains a significant challenge. Recruiting and retaining experienced polling station and count staff continues to be difficult. Alongside this, these were the first elections with changes introduced from the Elections Act came into force, and further significant administration changes are expected ahead of the next set of elections. Cahir Hughes added: "It's important the UK Government carefully considers whether the necessary time and resources are available before making final decisions about implementing the remaining Elections Act changes." Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 028 90 894 032, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) . Notes to Editors In total there were 14,286 postal and proxy vote applications approved for the 2023 local government elections, with 7,014 applications rejected. Of those rejected applications, 5,118 (73%) were rejected because there was no DRN. This is a significant increase from the 2022 Assembly election in which 3,636 (60%) of all applications were rejected because there was no DRN. by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Welsh and Scottish Parliaments.

Urgent reforms needed to get millions of people registered to vote | Electoral Commission Search Urgent reforms needed to get millions of people registered to vote You are in the section Home Posted: 18 September 2023 Intro Up to 8 million people across the United Kingdom are either incorrectly registered to vote or missing completely, according to research published today by the Electoral Commission. This is more than the combined adult population of Scotland and Wales, and would be equivalent in number to more than 100 UK Parliament constituencies. The research found that young people, private renters and those who have recently moved house continue to be less likely to be correctly registered to vote. The current electoral registration system does not work well for voters or those who run elections, and urgent reforms are needed so that public data can be used to facilitate voter registration, particularly for those less likely to be correctly registered. The Commission is calling on the UK's governments to pass legislation to create clear legal gateways for government departments and public bodies to share data on potentially eligible voters with electoral administrators. This would enable electoral registration officers to register voters directly, or to send them invitations to register. Craig Westwood, Director of Communications, Policy and Research, said: "Millions of people across the UK are not correctly registered to vote. While some may not want to participate in elections, for many people it is a consequence of an outdated registration system that disproportionately affects private renters and young people. "Without action, we'll continue to see large numbers of people unable to take part in elections. The electoral community needs a clear plan to ensure that electoral registration processes are modernised so that people are registered and able to exercise their right to vote. As part of this plan, governments will need to pass legislation to enable data to be shared with electoral administrators. "We stand ready to work with the UK's governments and electoral administrators to improve the system and make sure as many people as possible are registered to vote." In addition to improving the experience for voters, these changes would address the current burdens faced by electoral administrators, who are currently required to use their limited resources and capacity at the most critical time ahead of major elections to manage high numbers of applications to register to vote. The full report shows the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers across the UK, including breakdowns by country, age and gender. It also sets out a range of options for how specific data sources could be used to improve the system. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to eds Notes to editors by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Welsh and Scottish parliaments. The Commission runs accuracy and completeness studies to measure the quality of the electoral registers. The last time we carried out this research was in 2019, on the 2018 electoral registers. The Commission plays an important part in addressing under-registration through our continuing public awareness campaigning work, which we update regularly to ensure we are in-line with the latest insights about both voter attitudes and the demographic patterns of under-registered groups. Fieldwork and data analysis was carried out by Ipsos on behalf of The Electoral Commission based on the

December 2022 Electoral Registers. Fieldwork was conducted between 11 January and 19 May 2023. A total of 5,298 interviews were achieved across 127 local authority areas in Great Britain, and 1,015 interviews in 100 wards in Northern Ireland. Estimates are based on the local government registers and within a margin of error of 1.1% in Great Britain and 1.9% in Northern Ireland. This means between 6.7 – 7.8 million eligible voters were incorrectly registered or missing from the register in Great Britain and between 228,000 – 283,000 in Northern Ireland. These estimates are based on incompleteness figures from the survey. They include the proportion of eligible residents who are currently not included on the register at their current address (e.g., the surveyed address) and entries found containing errors which would prevent an eligible elector from casting their vote (e.g., incorrect name or a recorded date of birth which is later than an attainer's birthday). Elections are scheduled to take place across all of England and Wales in May 2024, including in London and Birmingham where there were not elections in May 2023. A UK Parliamentary general election must also take place before the end of January 2025. Everyone must be registered to vote in order to take part in elections. Related content [Our Commissioners](#) [Donations and loans](#) [Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation](#) [Our Executive Team](#) [Meet our Executive Team](#), and find out more about them [Donations accepted](#) [View data about donations accepted by parties and campaigners](#)

latest news from us! On this page you can find our press releases, as well as other resources including media guides and illustrations. Some of our press releases have been archived. If you cannot find the information you are looking for then please contact us. England, Great Britain or UK-wide Andreea Ghita, Liberty Davidson, or Orla Hennessy on 020 7271 0704 Email the team on [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Northern Ireland Niamh Burns on 028 9089 4032 Scotland Sarah Mackie or Catherine Heggie on 0131 225 0211 Wales Ella Downing on 029 2034 6824 Out of office hours Out of office hours press office (for media calls only): 07789 920 414 This number is staffed from 6pm to 9am, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and bank holidays. Other useful contacts House of Commons Information Office (MPs expenses, register of member's financial interests, general information about the House of Commons): 0207 219 4272 The Electoral Commission does not have a role in relation to electoral boundaries. Please contact the following boundary commissions: Boundary Commission for England: 020 7276 1102 Boundary Commission for Scotland: 0131 538 7510 Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland: 028 9069 4800 Boundary Commission for Wales: 029 2046 4819 The Local Government Boundary Commission: 020 7664 8530 Latest press releases Filter by date September 2023 August 2023 July 2023 June 2023 May 2023 April 2023 March 2023 January 2023 December 2022 November 2022 October 2022 September 2022 August 2022 July 2022 June 2022 May 2022 April 2022 March 2022 February 2022 January 2022 December 2021 November 2021 October 2021 September 2021 August 2021 July 2021 June 2021 May 2021 April 2021 March 2021 February 2021 January 2021 December 2020 November 2020 October 2020 September 2020 August 2020 July 2020 June 2020 May 2020 April 2020 March 2020 February 2020 January 2020 November 2019 October 2019 September 2019 July 2019 June 2019 May 2019 April 2019 March 2019 February 2019 January 2019 December 2018 November 2018 October 2018 September 2018 August 2018 July 2018 June 2018 May 2018 December 2017 July 2017 May 2017 April 2017 March 2017 December 2016 November 2016 October 2016 September 2016 August 2016 July 2016 June 2016 May 2016 April 2016 March 2016 February 2016 January 2016 September 2015 June 2015 April 2014 January 2014 December 2013 Filter by topic Regulation Investigations Voting Involved in elections Running elections The Electoral Commission Funding Spending Fines Enforcement Campaigning Electoral fraud Regulating all political finance of elections Observing elections Electoral register Board Registered parties Registering a party Handling postal votes Clear all filters Electoral Commission concludes investigations into four political parties Date published: 19 September 2023 Urgent reforms needed to fill the gaps in Scotland's electoral registers Date published: 18 September 2023 Improvement in quality of electoral registers but urgent reform needed to get thousands of people registered to vote Date published: 18 September 2023 Urgent reforms needed to get millions of people registered to vote Date published: 18 September 2023 Reforms needed to get thousands of people registered to vote Date published: 18 September 2023 Urgent action needed to remove barriers to voting in Northern Ireland Date published: 13 September 2023 UK Government must act to ensure elections remain accessible Date published: 13 September 2023 Political parties accept over £24m in donations in the second quarter of 2023 Date published: 7 September 2023 UK political parties' accounts published Date published: 24 August 2023 Pagination Current page 1 Page 2 Page 3 Page 4 Page 5 Page 6 Page 7 Page 8 Page 9 ... Next page Last page Last » Media Handbook Local government elections in England A guide for journalists on the local government elections in England in May 2023. Local council elections in Northern Ireland A guide for journalists on the local government elections in Northern Ireland in May 2023.

Recall petitions media guide A guide for journalists on recall petitions across the UK. UK parliamentary by-elections A guide for journalists on by-elections. Illustrations and resources Illustrations and resources A guide to polling day Voter registration resources Photographs for media use Related content Freedom of Information Search our previous FOI responses, and find out how to make a request. Blog Explore our latest blog posts and learn more about key topics. Welcome to your vote Take a look at our education resources for use with young people. Download our democratic engagement resources, and use them on your own channels to engage voters.

Improvement in quality of electoral registers but urgent reform needed to get thousands of people registered to vote | Electoral Commission Search

Improvement in quality of electoral registers but urgent reform needed to get thousands of people registered to vote You are in the section Home Posted: 18 September 2023

Improvement in quality of electoral registers but urgent reform needed to get thousands of people registered to vote Substantial improvements have been made to the quality of the electoral registers in Northern Ireland following the last canvass of electors in 2021, according to research published today by the Electoral Commission. However, up to 300,000 people in Northern Ireland are still either incorrectly registered to vote or missing completely. In particular, young people, private renters, and those who have recently changed address continue to be less likely to be correctly registered to vote. This means that almost one fifth (17%) of the eligible voting population in Northern Ireland may not be able to vote if an election was called now. The Electoral Commission is calling on the UK Government to create clear legal gateways for government departments and public bodies to share data on potentially eligible voters Ireland to further improve accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers. Such reform could enable the Chief Electoral Officer to register voters directly or send them invitations to register. Cahir Hughes, Head of the Electoral Commission in Northern Ireland, said: "While the increased levels of accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers in Northern Ireland are welcome, almost 300,000 people are still either missing from the registers or not correctly registered to vote. While some may not want to participate in elections, for many people, it is a consequence of an outdated registration system that disproportionately affects private renters and young people. "Changes to the current electoral registration system are needed. A more automated form of voter registration could see applications made at the same time as other tasks, such as updating the address on your driver's licence or when enrolling at university." In addition to improving the experience for voters, these changes would address the burdens faced by the Chief Electoral Officer, who is currently required to use limited resources and capacity at the most critical time ahead of major elections to manage high numbers of applications to register to vote. The full report shows the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers across Northern Ireland, including breakdowns by age and gender. It also sets out a range of options for how specific data sources could be used to improve the system. Ends

For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk)

Notes to editors by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible. regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches. using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency. The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments. The Commission runs accuracy and completeness studies to measure the quality of the electoral registers. The last time we carried out this research was in 2019, on the 2018 electoral registers. Fieldwork and data analysis was carried out by Ipsos on behalf of The Electoral Commission based on the December 2022 Electoral Registers. Fieldwork was conducted between 11 January and 19 May 2023. A total of 5,298 interviews were achieved across 127 local authority areas in Great Britain, and 1,015 interviews in 100 wards in Northern Ireland. Estimates are based the local government registers and within a margin of error of 1.1% in Great Britain

and 1.9% in Northern Ireland. This means between 6.7 – 7.8 million eligible voters were incorrectly registered or missing from the register in Great Britain and between 228,000 – 283,000 in Northern Ireland. These estimates are based on incompleteness figures from the survey. They include the proportion of eligible residents who are currently not included on the register at their current address (e.g., the surveyed address) and entries found containing errors which would prevent an eligible elector from casting their vote (e.g., incorrect name or a recorded date of birth which is later than an attainer's birthday). Completeness is now at its highest level in Northern Ireland since the Commission began measuring it in 2012. Related content Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them Donations accepted View data about donations accepted by parties and campaigners



Improvements needed to ensure voter ID does not become a barrier to voting | Electoral Commission Search Improvements needed to ensure voter ID does not become a barrier to voting You are in the section Home

Posted: 23 June 2023

Improvements needed to ensure voter ID does not become a barrier to voting Further work is required to ensure that elections remain accessible to all, according to interim findings from the Electoral Commission on the new voter ID policy. New public opinion research on the measure found that 4% of all people who said they did not vote at the elections on 4 May listed the ID requirement as the reason. 3% said they did not have the necessary ID, and 1% said they disagreed with the new requirement. Of those that went to polling stations on 4 May, 0.25% of people who tried to vote were not issued with a ballot paper because of the new voter ID requirement. The data suggests that approximately 14,000 voters who went to a polling station were not able to vote as a result of not being able to show ID. In the context of very high awareness levels of the new requirement, the analysis also found lower levels amongst those who did not own ID, and 57% awareness of the availability of the free ID (Voter Authority Certificate). The results indicate that further work is required in order to ensure that elections remain truly accessible to all; to ensure the Voter Authority Certificate works well as a back-up for those with no accepted ID, that it is well set-up, delivered and communicated. The Commission is undertaking further research ahead of making recommendations for improvement, to be published in September. Craig Westwood, Director of Communications, Policy and Research, said: "The evidence suggests that the vast majority of voters were able to present an accepted form of ID at the May elections; but, it also shows that some people were prevented from voting in polling stations due to the requirement, and significantly more did not attempt to because they lacked the required ID. "Overall awareness was high and achieved in a matter of months, but we can see that people who lacked ID were less likely to know they needed to show it. We don't want to see a single voter lose the opportunity to have their say. We are working to understand the challenges people faced, and will make recommendations that, with the engagement of Government and wider electoral community, will support the participation of all voters." The Commission's independent analysis, compiling polling station data and public opinion research, found: 92% of people were aware of the need to bring ID to vote at a polling station, though awareness was lower among people who said they did not have ID (74%). 89,552 people applied for a Voter Authority Certificate before the deadline, though only 25,000 were actually used as a form of ID. Awareness of the free ID stood at 57% in May 2023. 0.7% of people were initially turned away from polling stations, but around two thirds of these people (63%) returned later in the day and were able to vote. Among those recorded as being turned away from a polling station, 70% had not brought any ID and 30% brought a type that was not accepted.

Impact of the voter ID requirement on specific groups While definitive conclusions cannot be drawn from the public opinion survey, the data does suggest that disabled people and those who are unemployed were more likely than other groups to give a reason related to ID for not voting. Where the relevant data is available, there is some correlation between the numbers turned away and specific socio-demographic factors, such as ethnicity and unemployment. The Commission is continuing to collect and analyse data to explore these concerns and will report further on the impact in September. Craig Westwood added: "It is too soon to draw conclusions about the impact of voter ID on specific groups of people, but some of the emerging evidence is concerning. Elections should be accessible to everyone, so we are working to build a better understanding of the specific experiences of voters at these elections. This

includes consultation with those voters we know are most at risk of facing barriers to participation.” The Commission’s full election report will be published in September. This will include further scrutiny of the public opinion and polling station data results, as well as a full assessment of the feedback received from charities and civil society organisations, candidates, Returning Officers, polling station staff, election observers and the police.

**Ends Notes to Editors**

The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station is a requirement, introduced by the UK Government’s Elections Act, which was passed last year. The legislation requires voters at polling stations to show an accepted form of ID before they receive their ballot paper. From May, voters need to show photo ID before voting in local council elections in England, parliamentary by-elections, and police and crime commissioner elections in England and Wales. From October 2023, photo ID will be needed at UK parliamentary general elections. It will not be a requirement at local elections in Scotland or Wales, or elections to Scottish Parliament or Senedd. The requirement already exists in Northern Ireland. Data on polling station voters recorded as turned away, and the reasons for refusals, was captured by polling station staff across England and reported to the Commission. Data on Voter Authority Certificate applications was provided by the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities. Public opinion figures are from two separate surveys both carried out by YouGov plc. For levels of public awareness: Total sample size was 3,705 adults (18+). Fieldwork was undertaken between 5 - 22 May 2023. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults within electorate areas (aged 18+). For all other opinion figures: Total sample size was 3,225 adults (aged 18+) who are eligible to vote. Fieldwork was undertaken between 5 - 24 May 2023. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults in the electorate by age, gender, region, social grade and ethnicity.

by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency

The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Scottish and Welsh parliaments.

Recall petitions media guide You are in the section Home Currently reading: of 13 - Show page contents On this page Overview Opening a recall petition Signing the petition Signing in person : Great Britain : Northern Ireland Absent voting Close of the signing period and petition outcome Media reporting in the petition period Campaigning at the petition Previous recall petitions Roles and responsibilities More information Introduction This guide is designed to provide answer to key questions on recall petitions. You can use the contents box to easily jump to different sections of this webpage, and click the drop-down questions to see answers. Overview What is a recall petition? A recall petition is the process by which an MP can lose their seat in the House of Commons. Once open, constituents have six weeks to sign a recall petition, to say they believe their MP should be removed. Only those who want to see the MP removed need to sign the petition. If at least 10% of the electorate in the constituency signs the petition, the MP will lose their seat and a by-election will be triggered. The recalled MP can stand as a candidate at the by-election. The recall petition process was introduced by the Recall of MPs Act 2015. When can a recall petition be triggered? A recall petition will be triggered if an MP has been: convicted of an offence and received a custodial sentence (including a suspended sentence) or ordered to be detained, other than solely under mental health legislation barred from the House of Commons for 10 sitting days or 14 calendar days, or convicted of providing false or misleading information for allowance claims under the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009 In the case of a conviction, the recall petition will only be opened if the conviction, sentence or order have not been overturned during the appeal period and when any appeals have been heard and dismissed. A recall petition will not be opened if: a UK Parliamentary general election is due to be held within the next six months a recall petition is already underway in respect of the MP, or the MP's seat has already been vacated Opening a recall petition Who opens a recall petition? The Petition Officer opens a recall petition when the Speaker of the House of Commons notifies them that an MP has met the conditions above. The Petition Officer is the Returning Officer for the constituency (in England and Wales this is the Acting Returning Officer). What steps must the Petition Officer take in opening the recall petition? The Petition Officer must designate up to 10 signing places in the constituency where people can sign the petition. Signing places must be open for the six weeks of the recall petition on Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am and 5pm. However, the Petition Officer has discretion to extend these hours. The Petition Officer must also designate the opening date of the petition. This will usually be the 10th working day after they have received notice from the Speaker. Once the Petition Officer has designated the signing places and date for opening the petition, they must send a notice to all voters who are eligible to sign the petition. This is similar to a poll card at elections and will tell voters what the petition is about and which signing place they are allocated to and the opening hours. Registered postal voters can sign the petition by post. No later than three working days after receiving the notice from the Speaker, the Petition Officer must publish: the number of people entitled to sign the petition, the number of people who would need to sign the petition for it to be successful. This notice would usually be published on the council website. The Petition Officer must also publish a notice stating: the name of the MP who is subject to the petition process the conditions which have triggered the petition for that MP the start and end dates for the signing period the location and opening hours of each signing place who is eligible to sign the petition. Signing the petition Who is eligible to sign the petition? To sign the

petition a person must be registered to vote at an address in the relevant UK Parliament constituency, and be: aged 18 or over (or will turn 18 before the end of the six-week signing period) a UK, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen Can a person apply to register to vote while the petition is open and still sign? No. In order to sign the petition a person must have been added to the register three working days before the petition opens. In practice this means that any new applications to register must have been made on or before the date that the speaker gives notice of the petition in order to be eligible (which is usually ten working days before the petition opens for signing). What does the signing sheet look like? The signing sheet is set out in law and will look like this in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland: The signing sheet will look like this in Wales: Signing in person How do electors sign the petition in person? Eligible voters who want to sign the petition go to their allocated signing place. The Petition Officer will send them details of the location and opening hours. Voters need to bring an accepted form of photo ID in order to sign the petition at a signing place. The signing place will be set up in a similar way to a polling station. When a voter arrives at a signing place, a member of staff will: Ask their name and address so they can find them on the electoral register Ask for their photo ID, and check if it is acceptable If their ID is acceptable, they will issue them their signing sheet Once the voter has signed the sheet they place it in the ballot box. How are the signing sheets kept secure during the six-week period? At the end of each day that the petition is open, the ballot box is opened and the signing sheets are verified. This means checking that the total number of signing sheets matches the record of the number of signing sheets issued in that signing place. The signing sheets are then stored securely until the end of the signing period. : Great Britain What ID can people use? Accepted forms of ID include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK or EEA drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass or an Oyster 60+ card. The full list of accepted ID is available on the Electoral Commission website. Those who do not have an accepted form can apply for free voter ID. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo. How do people apply for free voter ID? Anyone without an accepted form of ID can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate at [voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk](https://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk), or by requesting a paper form from their local electoral registration office. The deadline for applying for a free Voter Authority Certificate is 5pm six working days before the close of the petition. What if someone loses their ID? If voters lose their existing form of ID, or if it is stolen or damaged and the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate has passed, people will be able to appoint an emergency proxy to sign on their behalf up until 5pm on the last day of the signing period. : Northern Ireland What ID can people use? Accepted forms of ID include a UK, Irish or EEA driving licence or a UK, Irish or EU passport (including the Irish Passport Card). The full list of accepted ID is available on the Electoral Commisison website. Those who do not have an accepted form can apply for an Electoral Identity Card. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo. How do people apply for an Electoral Identity Card? Anyone without an accepted form of ID can apply to the Electoral Office of Northern Ireland for a free Electoral Identity Card. More information and details of how to apply are available from the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland (EONI) website . Absent voting Signing by post Existing postal voters will be issued with a signing sheet by post. They must ensure that the completed signing sheet is returned to the Petitions Officer before the end of the signing period in order for their signing sheet to be counted. Anyone

who is not an existing postal voter but who does not want, or is unable, to go to a signing place can apply to their electoral registration office for a postal signing pack for the petition. The deadline to apply is 5pm 11 working days before the close of the signing period. about postal voting along and postal voting application forms . Signing by proxy Voters can register for a 'proxy vote'. This means they ask someone they trust to sign on their behalf. They need to complete and sign a proxy application form and return it to their local electoral registration office by 5pm six working days before the close of the signing period (in Northern Ireland it is eleven working days before the close of signing period). Their proxy will need to show an accepted form of ID at the signing place before they can sign. about voting by proxy and proxy vote application forms . Close of the signing period and petition outcome The count The Petition Officer must take reasonable steps to count the signatures as soon as practicable after the end of the signing period, and no later than one day after. The only people who can attend the counting of signatures is the Petition Officer and their staff and any representatives of the Electoral Commission or an observer accredited by the Electoral Commission. Media are not entitled to attend the count. What happens after the signatures are counted? As soon as reasonably practicable the Petition Officer must: determine whether the recall petition is successful or unsuccessful notify the Speaker of the outcome, and give public notice of the outcome. If at least 10% of the eligible electorate have signed the petition, the petition will be successful. The MP's seat will become vacant on the date that the Petition Officer notifies the Speaker of the outcome. When would any by-election take place? As with any UK Parliamentary by-election, the writ for the vacant seat is moved by the party who previously held the seat. This means the party's Chief Whip must notify the Speaker of the House of Commons, they must put a motion to MPs, and if agreed, the Speaker will notify the relevant Returning Officer. There is no statutory time limit for the moving of the writ. More information on by-elections processes can be found on Parliament's website. Can a recall petition be closed early? A petition can only be closed before the end of the six-week signing period, if: the MP's seat is made vacant for any other reason (such as resignation) the MP's conviction, sentence of imprisonment or detention order is overturned, or Parliament calls an early UK Parliamentary general election which will be held within six months of the Speaker's notice. Media reporting in the petition period What can the media report during the petition period? Electoral law prevents the publication of any statement that could indicate if an individual has signed the petition or not; any forecasts on the result of the petition; and the publication of exit polls before the end of the final day of the signing period. Anyone who makes any statement on turnout or about individuals who sign the petition would be guilty of an offence. Campaigning at the petition When do rules on petition campaigning apply? People or organisations may wish to campaign for or against the recall petition. There are rules for spending and donations on petition campaigns. There is a set time, or 'regulated period', when the rules on spending and donations apply. The regulated period will: start on the day after the Speaker of the House of Commons notifies the Petition Officer that the conditions for opening a petition have been met and end on the day the Petition Officer notifies the Speaker of the House of Commons of the result of the petition. What types of campaigners are there and what are the spending rules for them? There are two types of campaigners; 'registered' and 'un-registered' campaigners. During the regulated period, the spending limits are: £500 for non-registered campaigners £10,000 for registered campaigners An eligible person or organisation can become registered by notifying the Petition Officer in writing. They

can only be a registered campaigner if they are: an individual registered on a UK electoral register or resident in the UK a UK registered political party (including 'minor' parties) a UK registered company which is incorporated in the UK and carries on business in the UK a UK registered trade union a UK registered building society a UK registered limited liability partnership which carries on business in the UK a UK registered friendly, industrial or provident society a UK based unincorporated association that carries on the majority of its business or other activities in the UK Registered campaigners must also notify the Petition Officer of a 'responsible person'. This person is responsible for making sure the registered campaigner follows the rules on spending, donations and reporting. If a campaigner incurs spending as part of a joint plan with one or more other campaigners, that spending will count towards the spending limit of all the campaigners involved in the arrangement. Registered campaigners must submit a spending return to the Petition Officer with details of donations and spending. The return must be submitted within 30 days from the day after the Petition Officer notifies the Speaker of the House of Commons of the result of the petition. More information about the spending rules is available in our spending and donations guidance . What are the donations rules for campaigners? Registered campaigners are subject to rules on donations they receive towards spending on petition campaigns. Donations over £500 must come from a permissible source. Permissible sources are: a UK registered political party (including 'minor' parties) an individual registered on a UK electoral register, including overseas electors and those leaving bequests a UK registered company which is incorporated within the UK and carries on business in the UK a UK registered trade union a UK registered building society a UK registered limited liability partnership (LLP) that carries on business in the UK a UK registered friendly society a UK unincorporated association that is based and carries on business or other activities wholly or mainly in the UK s have 30 days from receipt to check permissibility. s must return impermissible donations. If a campaigner does not return the donation within this time, they will be deemed to have accepted it and may also be subject to enforcement action, including forfeiture of the donation. Registered campaigners who are registered political parties (excluding minor parties) do not report donations to the Petition Officer as they report their donations to the Electoral Commission. All other registered campaigners must report donations over £500, including impermissible donations, in the spending return to the Petition Officer. Please see our spending and donations guidance for more information about the donations rules. Previous recall petitions Have there been previous recall petitions? There have been three recall petitions to date: North Antrim in 2018 Peterborough in 2019 Brecon and Radnorshire in 2019 The Commission published a combined report on both 2019 recall petitions and a separate report on the North Antrim recall petition . Roles and responsibilities The Petition Officer's role is to: open a recall petition notify voters that a recall petition has been opened oversee the administration of the petition, including publishing a register of voters who can sign the petition and notifying those voters of the petition declare the result, including notifying the Speaker of the House of Commons receive donation and spending returns and make them available for public inspection. The Petition Officer is the same person as the Returning Officer in a constituency. The Electoral Registration Officer's role is to: maintain the register of electors and list of absent voters (postal and proxy voters) The role of the police is to: investigate breaches enforce compliance with the law The Electoral Commission's role is to: provide advice and guidance to help people understand the rule forfeit impermissible donations, if necessary, by court order

publish a report on any issues relating to administration of a recall petition and the framework for campaign spending and donations at these events. More information Further guidance This factsheet explains the main rules. We have published full guidance for petition campaigners on spending and donations and imprints . We have also published guidance for Petition Officers. Contact the Electoral Commission press office Email: [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) England, Great Britain or Northern Ireland phone number: 020 7271 0704 Scotland phone number: 0131 225 0211 Wales phone number: 029 2034 6824 Out of office hours phone number (for media calls only): 07789 920 414 Page history First published: 8 June 2023 Last updated: 20 June 2023 Related content Find our press releases, resources, and media contacts Types of elections about the types of elections in the UK. Accepted forms of photo ID Learn about the different types of photo ID that will be accepted at elections that require photo ID Blog Explore our latest blog posts and learn more about key topics.

Bring ID to vote: new campaign launched | Electoral Commission Search  
Bring ID to vote: new campaign launched You are in the section Home Posted: 9  
January 2023 Bring ID to vote: new campaign launched A new public awareness campaign,  
launched today by the Electoral Commission, is urging voters across England to make  
sure they are ready for changes to how we vote. A new requirement to show  
photographic ID at polling stations comes into force this year, and will apply for  
the first time at local elections in May. The Commission's public awareness campaign  
features giant sticky notes with handwritten reminders to bring ID to the polling  
station. The adverts will feature on TV, radio, billboards and buses, on social feeds  
and website banners, and in local newspapers across England. The tv ad can be viewed  
here. Craig Westwood, Director of Communications at the Electoral Commission, said:  
"May's elections may seem a distant thought, but it is worth voters taking note of  
the changes now, and checking they have appropriate ID. That way, when polling day  
arrives, all they have to do is remember to bring it. "Those who don't have an  
accepted form of ID will shortly be able to apply for free ID. We are working closely  
with local authorities and civil society organisations to support those less likely  
to have ID, so that nobody misses the opportunity to have their say." Accepted forms  
of ID include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK, EEA  
or Commonwealth drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an  
older person's bus pass or an Oyster 60+ card. Voters will be able to use expired ID  
if they are still recognisable from the photo. Anyone who does not have one of the  
accepted forms of ID will be able to apply for free ID. Applications can be submitted  
through the UK government's online portal or by submitting a paper form to the  
relevant local authority. Applications are expected to open next week. Craig  
Westwood, added: "Our campaign aims to build awareness of the change amongst voters  
and remind them to bring ID on polling day. Those seeking more information on  
accepted forms of ID and the free ID should visit the Commission's website for more  
information." From May, voters will need to show photo ID before voting in local  
council elections in England, parliamentary by-elections, and police and crime  
commissioner elections in England and Wales. From October 2023, photo ID will be  
needed at UK parliamentary general elections. Ends Commission spokespeople are  
available for interview on the launch of the campaign. High quality images of the  
campaign can be shared by the press office. For more information contact Electoral  
Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414, or  
press@electoralcommission.org.uk Notes to Editors The requirement to show photo ID at  
the polling station is a new rule, introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act,  
which was passed last year. From May, voters will need to show photo ID before voting  
in local council elections in England, parliamentary by-elections, and police and  
crime commissioner elections in England and Wales. From October 2023, photo ID will  
be needed at UK parliamentary general elections. It will not be a requirement at  
local elections in Scotland or Wales, or elections to the Scottish Parliament or  
Senedd. The requirement already exists in Northern Ireland. Applications for the free  
ID, called the Voter Authority Certificate, are expected to open later this month.  
The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is responsible for the  
online application portal . To apply for the Voter Authority Certificate, voters will  
need to provide a photo, full name, date of birth, the address at which they are  
registered to vote and their National Insurance number. The Electoral Commission is  
responsible for ensuring voters are aware of the new voter ID requirement, and for  
supporting local authorities with the process, and we are available to answer  
questions related to the public awareness campaign. The UK Government's Department



for Levelling up, Housing and Communities is responsible for the new voter ID policy and for the free voter ID application system. Enquiries relating to the application system or the policy itself should be directed to the Department. Returning Officers and their teams are responsible for implementing the voter ID policy at the local level. From 4 May 2023, voters in England will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in some elections. This will apply to: Local elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections UK parliamentary by-elections Recall petitions From October 2023 it will also apply to UK General elections. Related content Register to vote All you need to register to vote is 5 minutes and your National Insurance number. Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them

Urgent reforms needed to fill the gaps in Scotland's electoral registers | Electoral Commission Search Urgent reforms needed to fill the gaps in Scotland's electoral registers You are in the section Home Posted: 18 September 2023 Intro Up to one million people in Scotland are either incorrectly registered to vote or missing completely, according to research published today by the Electoral Commission. The research found that young people, private renters and those who have recently moved home continue to be less likely to be correctly registered to vote. This means that nearly one fifth (19%) of the eligible voting population in Scotland may not be able to vote if an election was called now. The current electoral registration system does not work well for voters or those who administer it, and urgent reforms are needed so that public data can be used to facilitate voter registration, particularly for those less likely to be correctly registered. The Commission is calling on the Scottish and UK governments to pass legislation to create clear legal gateways for government departments and public bodies to share data on potentially eligible voters with electoral administrators. This would enable them to register voters directly, or to send them invitations to register. A consistent approach between both governments would ensure changes are developed and delivered in a way that voters can be accurately included in the registers for all types of elections they are eligible to vote in. Andy O'Neill, Head of Electoral Commission, Scotland, said: "Up to one million people in Scotland are not correctly registered to vote. While some may not want to participate in elections, for many people it is a consequence of an outdated registration system that disproportionately affects private renters and young people. "A more automated form of voter registration could see applications made at the same time as other tasks, such as updating the address on your driver's licence or when enrolling at university. "In its recent consultation on electoral reform the Scottish Government made clear its commitment to increasing levels of electoral registration. We stand ready to work with them and the wider electoral community to improve the system and make sure as many people as possible are registered to vote." In addition to improving the experience for voters, these changes would address the burdens faced by electoral administrators, who are currently required to use their limited resources and capacity at the most critical time ahead of major elections to manage high numbers of applications to register to vote. The full report shows the accuracy and completeness of the electoral registers across Scotland, including breakdowns by age and gender. It also sets out a range of options for how specific data sources could be used to improve the system. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office in Scotland on 0131 225 0211, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to eds Notes to editors by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the Scottish, UK and Welsh parliaments. The Commission runs accuracy and completeness studies to measure the quality of the electoral registers. The last time we carried out this research was in 2019, on the 2018 electoral registers. The Commission plays an important part in addressing under-registration through our continuing public awareness campaigning work, which we update regularly to ensure we are in-line with the latest insights about both voter attitudes and the demographic patterns of under-registered groups.

Fieldwork and data analysis was carried out by Ipsos on behalf of The Electoral Commission based on the December 2022 Electoral Registers. Fieldwork was conducted between 11 January and 19 May 2023. A total of 5,298 interviews were achieved across 127 local authority areas in Great Britain, and 1,015 interviews in 100 wards in Northern Ireland. Estimates are based on the local government registers and on incompleteness figures from the survey. They include the proportion of eligible residents who are currently not included on the register at their current address (e.g., the surveyed address) and entries found containing errors which would prevent an eligible elector from casting their vote (e.g., incorrect name or a recorded date of birth which is later than an attainer's birthday). A UK Parliamentary general election must take place before the end of January 2025. Everyone must be registered to vote in order to take part in elections. The Scottish Government's consultation on electoral reform was published on 14 December 2022

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A guide to polling day - information for media use | Electoral Commission Search  
A guide to polling day - information for media use You are in the section Home  
First published: 28 April 2023 Last updated: 28 April 2023 A guide to polling day  
We've pulled together a guide to polling day to help media with reporting. Please  
feel free to use all, or some of the below in your articles. Local elections in  
England On Thursday 4 May 2023, 230 local authorities across England will be holding  
local elections. People will be voting to choose their local councils, and in some  
areas they will also be voting in mayoral elections. Where is my polling station? If  
you have registered to vote, you will receive a poll card through the post from your  
local council. It will tell you where your polling station is. Make sure you check  
your poll card before heading out to vote, in case your polling station has changed  
since you last voted. You can also find out where your polling station is on our  
website , by entering your postcode. Polling stations are open from 07.00 until  
22.00. You can vote at any time within this window. And don't forget, you need to go  
to your designated polling station; you can't go to a different one, for example,  
near where you work. Do I need to take anything with me? Yes, you now need to bring  
an accepted form of photographic ID in order to receive your ballot paper. The full  
list of accepted forms is available on the Electoral Commission website . You can  
bring your poll card with you on the day, but this isn't necessary, and it won't be  
accepted as a form of ID. You can also bring your own pen or pencil if you prefer,  
but there will be pencils at the polling station as well. What if I do not want my ID  
to be checked in public? You can ask to have your ID checked in private. You can also  
request that a female member of staff checks your ID. This request will be granted if  
possible. If you wear a face covering for any reason, such as a mask worn for medical  
reasons or a face veil worn on religious grounds, you will be asked to momentarily  
remove it so polling station staff can check your photo ID looks like you. Face  
coverings can be worn for the rest of the voting process. How do I complete the  
ballot paper? Take your time: read the ballot paper carefully and complete it in line  
with the instructions. Don't write anything else on the paper, or your vote may not  
be counted. If you make a mistake, don't worry – as long as you haven't already put  
it in the ballot box, just let the polling station staff know and they can give you a  
replacement ballot paper. What if I need help? If you're not sure what to do, or need  
any help, just ask the staff at the polling station – they will be happy to assist  
you. What if I have access issues? Changes introduced in the Elections Act permit  
disabled voters to choose anyone who is over 18 to accompany them in the polling  
station to help them vote. If you have a disability which means you can't fill in the  
ballot paper yourself, you can ask the presiding officer – the person in charge of  
the polling station - to mark the ballot paper for you, or you can take someone along  
with you to help you. If you have any questions about what will be available at the  
polling station, you can contact your local council. Should I tell anyone who I voted  
for? Your vote is yours and yours alone: you do not need to tell anyone how you  
voted. Exit polls are sometimes conducted, where people – usually private companies  
working for newspapers or broadcasters – ask voters leaving the polling station who  
they voted for to help them predict what the outcome might be. You do not need to  
respond to their questions if you don't want to. Political discussion is not allowed  
inside and immediately around the polling station and staff will ask you to stop so  
that there's no risk of influencing other voters. If you want to debate your vote  
with friends or family, do it away from the polling station. What are 'tellers'? Why  
are they asking for the number on my poll card? You might see people outside the  
polling station who ask you for the number on your poll card. These people are called

'tellers', and are volunteering on behalf of candidates or parties. They will use the information you give them to check who has voted, and to remind people who haven't yet voted, to do so. They are allowed to be there and to ask for the information, but you don't have to give them any information if you don't want to. If you are concerned about the conduct of a teller, speak to a member of staff at the polling station. Can I take selfies or other photos while I'm voting? You shouldn't take photos inside the polling station as it might put the secrecy of the ballot at risk. You are more than welcome to take photos outside the polling station and share them on social media to encourage your friends and family to vote. Can I take my friend / partner / children / parents / dog? You can go along to the polling station with whomever you like, but only those registered to vote at that station will be able to go inside. You must not be accompanied into the polling booth by another adult, unless you have a disability, in which case you can take someone in to help you, or you can ask one of the polling station staff for their help. Children are welcome at polling stations. While your child must not mark the ballot paper for you, you will be allowed to take them into the polling booth with you. With the exception of assistance dogs, animals are not usually allowed inside polling stations, so will need to be secured outside if you do decide to take them with you. Related content Our Commissioners Donations and loans Find out about donations and loans to a political party, individual or other organisation Our Executive Team Meet our Executive Team, and find out more about them Registers of unincorporated associations Download and view the registers of unincorporated associations

You are in the [section Home](#) First published: 26 July 2019 Last updated: 15 March 2023 Overview If you are a journalist and you have a query about us, please contact the media relations team on: England, Great Britain or UK-wide issues Andreea Ghita or Orla Hennessy on 020 7271 0704 Email the team on [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Northern Ireland issues Sarah Doherty on 02890 894 032 Scotland issues Sarah Mackie on 0131 225 0211 Wales issues Ella Downing on 029 2034 6824 Out of office hours Out of office hours press office (for media calls only): 07789 920 414 This number is staffed from 6pm to 9am, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and bank holidays. Other useful contacts House of Commons Information Office (MPs expenses, register of member's financial interests, general information about the House of Commons): 0207 219 4272 The Electoral Commission does not have a role in relation to electoral boundaries. Please contact the following boundary commissions: Boundary Commission for England: 020 7276 1102 Boundary Commission for Scotland: 0131 538 7510 Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland: 028 9069 4800 Boundary Commission for Wales: 029 2046 4819 The Local Government Boundary Commission: 020 7664 8530 Related content Find out about accessibility and our website Freedom of Information Search our previous FOI responses, and find out how to make a request. Find out how to contact us Read our privacy policy and statements

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Posted: 8 August 2023 Electoral Commission subject to cyber-attack The Electoral Commission has been the subject of a complex cyber-attack, it has announced today, highlighting that the UK's democratic process and its institutions remain a target for hostile actors online. The incident was identified in October 2022 after suspicious activity was detected on the regulator's systems. It became clear that hostile actors had first accessed the systems in August 2021. The Commission has since worked with external security experts and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to investigate and secure its systems. Shaun McNally, the Electoral Commission Chief Executive, said: "The UK's democratic process is significantly dispersed and key aspects of it remain based on paper documentation and counting. This means it would be very hard to use a cyber-attack to influence the process. Nevertheless, the successful attack on the Electoral Commission highlights that organisations involved in elections remain a target, and need to remain vigilant to the risks to processes around our elections. "We regret that sufficient protections were not in place to prevent this cyber-attack. Since identifying it we have taken significant steps, with the support of specialists, to improve the security, resilience, and reliability of our IT systems." As part of the attack, hostile actors were able to access reference copies of the electoral registers, held by the Commission for research purposes and to enable permissibility checks on political donations. The registers held at the time of the cyber-attack include the name and address of anyone in Great Britain who was registered to vote between 2014 and 2022, the names of those registered as overseas voters during the same period, and the names and addresses of anyone registered in Northern Ireland in 2018. The registers did not include the details of those registered anonymously. The Commission's email system was also accessible during the attack. Shaun McNally continued: "We know which systems were accessible to the hostile actors, but are not able to know conclusively what files may or may not have been accessed. "While the data contained in the electoral registers is limited, and much of it is already in the public domain, we understand the concern that may have been caused by the registers potentially being accessed and apologise to those affected." Electoral registers are held and maintained by individual Electoral Registration Officers for each local authority area, but the Commission is one of a number of organisations which has copies to support it in fulfilling its role in the democratic process. In line with requirements under the law, the Commission notified the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours of identifying that data on its systems may have been accessed, and has today published a formal notification. The ICO is currently investigating the incident. Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to editors by: enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK and Scottish Parliaments, and the Senedd. The Commission has published a public notification on its website today, alerting people to the data breach and setting out the data which was accessible. In addition to data held on the electoral registers, any details provided to the Commission via email or through the 'contact us online' function on

its website between August 2021 and October 2022 was accessible to the cyber attackers. There is no indication that information accessed during this cyber-attack has been copied, removed or published online. The Electoral Commission is required by law to hold electoral registers and uses them for research and regulatory purposes, such as checking the permissibility of donors to political parties. Any questions regarding the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) investigation into the breach, should be addressed to the ICO press team. Update This press release was updated on 14 August to specify exactly which Northern Ireland registers had been accessible.



Electoral Commission concludes three investigations into political parties |  
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three investigations into political parties You are in the section Home  
Posted: 17 January 2023 Electoral Commission concludes three investigations into  
political parties Investigations into three political parties have closed over the  
last month, with the Electoral Commission imposing a fine on one party. Publishing  
closed cases is an important part of delivering transparency in political finance in  
the UK. Who we investigated What we investigated What we found Outcome Democrats  
(political party) Late delivery of annual statement of accounts Offence found £1,500  
fine Portsmouth Independent Party (political party) Late delivery of annual statement  
of accounts Offence found No sanction Case closed Late notification of change of  
registered officer Offence found No sanction Case closed Scotland's Independence  
Referendum Party (de-registered political party) Failure to deliver annual statement  
of accounts Offence found No sanction Case closed Louise Edwards, Director of  
Regulation, said: "Political finance laws are in place to make sure the system is  
transparent and accurate. The requirements for political parties are clear so it's  
disappointing when they are not met. "We consider every case in line with our  
Enforcement Policy. Where we find an offence has taken place, we take a proportionate  
approach and do not automatically issue a sanction. For more information contact the  
Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414  
or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to editors Notes to editors 1. by:  
enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the  
needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote  
remains secure and accessible regulating political finance – taking proactive steps  
to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches using our expertise  
to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness,  
transparency and efficiency The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK,  
Welsh, and Scottish parliaments. 2. This release forms part of the Commission's  
regular monthly investigations update, an important part of its commitment to deliver  
transparency in political finance in the UK. Information of this nature is published  
routinely on the third Tuesday of each month. Details for sanctions from previous  
months are available. 3. Penalties imposed by the Commission go into the Consolidated  
Fund. This is managed by HM Treasury and not the Electoral Commission.

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This guide is designed to provide answer to key questions on the upcoming elections in England, relating to candidates, spending and donations, and the voting process. You can use the contents box to easily jump to different sections of this webpage, and click the drop-down questions to see answers.

What elections are taking place? There are 230 local elections and four mayoral elections. Local government elections (district, borough, county borough and unitary authority elections) will take place in local authorities across England. Voters will elect councillors, who make decisions on services in the local area. Local authority mayoral elections in Bedford, Leicester, Mansfield and Middlesbrough. A local authority mayor is responsible for running the council.

Election timetable

Event	Deadline
Publication of notice of election	Monday 27 March
Delivery of nomination papers	4pm on Tuesday 4 April
Publication of statement of persons nominated	4pm on Wednesday 5 April
Deadline to apply to register to vote	11:59pm on Monday 17 April
Deadline to apply to vote by post, by postal proxy, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes	5pm on Tuesday 18 April
Deadline for new proxy vote applications	5pm on Tuesday 25 April
Deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate	5pm on Tuesday 25 April
Publication of notice of poll	Tuesday 26 April
Polling day	7am to 10pm on Thursday 4 May
Deadline to apply for a replacement for spoilt or lost postal votes	5pm on Thursday 4 May
Deadline for emergency proxy applications	5pm on Thursday 4 May
Delivery of return of election expenses	35 calendar days after the day the results have been declared

Becoming a candidate

Who can become a candidate? Anyone who wants to stand as a candidate must be at least 18 years old, and a British or qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of a European Union country. Anyone wanting to stand at a local government election will need the signatures of a proposer and seconder from the ward and must meet at least one of the following four qualifications.

- Be, and continue to be, registered to vote in the local authority area that they are standing in, from the day of their nomination onwards
- Occupy, as owner or tenant, any land or other premises in the local authority area that they are standing in, during the whole of the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of election
- Their main or only place of work must be in the local authority area that they are standing in. This applies to the 12 months prior to the day of their nomination and the day of election
- Have lived in the local authority area that they are standing in during the whole of the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of election

What are the disqualification rules? The rules around standing for election and the disqualifications that apply are complex. Further information can be found in the Electoral Commission's guidance for candidates and agents .

Can someone stand for election in more than one ward within the same local authority? Anyone who wants to stand as a candidate can submit nomination papers for more than one ward, but they cannot stand for election in more than one ward within the same local authority after the deadline of withdrawals. When does someone become a candidate? The earliest that a person can officially become a candidate is 27 March, the last day for the publication of the notice of election. If a person has already declared themselves a candidate at the election, or the party has announced the candidate's intention to stand, then they will officially become a

candidate on this date. If they declare that they will be a candidate at the elections after 27 March, they become a candidate on that day, or the date they formally submit their nominations papers – whichever is earliest. When will we know who all the candidates are? The relevant Returning Officer will publish the full list of candidates standing in their constituency. This will happen in most cases by 4pm on Wednesday 5 April. This information will usually be available on the respective local authority website.

**Campaigning at the election**

When can candidates start campaigning? Candidates can start campaigning at any time. They do not have to wait until they are validly nominated to declare that they will run for election, ask people to support them or publish campaign material. Election spending limits apply from the day after a person officially becomes a candidate. What can candidates say about one another during the campaign? It is illegal to make a false statement about the personal character of a candidate to influence the result of the election. The police may investigate allegations of the specific electoral offence of making a false statement. Rules about defamation also apply to election materials. Defamation issues are a matter for the civil courts. The Electoral Commission does not have a regulatory role in relation to the content of campaign material or what candidates say about each other. However, we do encourage all campaigners to undertake their vital role responsibly and to support campaign transparency.

**What are the electoral rules regarding campaign materials?** By law, candidates, parties and non-party campaigners must use 'imprints' on all their printed campaign material. An imprint includes the name and address of the printer and promoter (the person who authorised the material to be printed). It must be included on all printed material such as posters, placards and leaflets. This is so that electors can be clear about the source of the campaign material. It is an offence not to include an imprint on printed election material. While it is not currently a legal requirement, the Electoral Commission recommends that candidates, parties and non-party campaigners wherever possible, place an imprint on their digital materials (e.g. websites, emails and social media platforms). Voters need to know who is targeting them with political messages online. The UK Government's Elections Act 2022 introduces an imprint requirement for digital political material, which will apply year round. It is due to come into effect in November 2023.

**Can candidates see the electoral register?** Once someone becomes a candidate, they are entitled to receive, free of charge, a copy of the full electoral register and the lists of people voting by post or proxy (the absent voters' lists) for the electoral area that they are contesting. Candidates may only use the full electoral register to help them complete their nomination form, to campaign and to check that donations they receive come from a permissible source. Candidates must not release any details that appear in the electoral register (this is different from information on the open register, which is available for general sale).

**Spending and donation rules**

**What is the regulated period for May elections?** The regulated period is the period in the run up to an election during which electoral spending rules apply to campaigning. The regulated period for these elections begins the day after someone officially becomes a candidate and ends on polling day, 4 May. The earliest someone can officially become a candidate is on 27 March.

**What are the spending limits?** Spending limits apply for the regulated period, and are different depending on the election: For local government election candidates : £806, plus 7p per local government elector registered to vote on the last day for publication of the notice of election in the ward where the candidate is standing. For local authority mayoral election : £2,362 plus 5.9p per registered elector in the local authority area in which the candidate is standing

To assist candidates and

agents in calculating their spending limit for the local government election, the local electoral registration officer will be able to provide candidates with the number of registered electors in the ward and, where needed, the number of constituent councils. What activities count towards the spending limit? The Commission provides guidance to candidates and agents. Further information on what activities count towards the spending limit can be found in from page 9 of our guidance . Candidate spending includes, among other things, the costs of: advertising of any kind, such as posters, newspaper adverts, websites or social media unsolicited material sent to voters, such as letters, leaflets or emails that are not sent in response to specific queries Activities that do not count include, among other things: use of someone's personal car or other means of transport acquired principally for that person's personal use and provided free of charge costs that are reasonably attributable to the candidate's disability Who is responsible for candidate spending? It is the responsibility of the candidate's agent (or the candidate if they act as their own agent) to fully and accurately report spending. Both the candidate and the agent should ensure they understand the rules and that all spending is properly authorised, recorded, and reported. Both the candidate and the agent must make a declaration that their reporting is accurate. Making this statement falsely is an offence. What happens if a candidate exceeds their spending limit? Exceeding the spending limit can be a criminal offence. Allegations relating to candidate spending offences are generally made to the relevant local police force to consider. Whilst the Electoral Commission has a statutory duty to monitor compliance with laws relating to candidate and agent expenses, it is not legally empowered to investigate and impose sanctions for these offences. What counts as a donation? A donation is money, goods, property or services given to a candidate, without charge or on non-commercial terms, and which has a value of over £50. Anything with a value of £50 or less does not count as a donation. Who can donate to candidates? Candidates must only accept donations over £50 from permissible sources. This applies to cash donations and donations in kind. Donations that are not from a permissible source must be returned to the donor within 30 days. After that, the donation may be forfeited. Permissible donors are, amongst others, individuals on a UK electoral register (including overseas electors), most registered UK companies, and UK-registered trade unions. The full list of permissible donors can be viewed on page 50 of our guidance for candidate and agents . Can political parties fund their candidates? Many political parties run a local 'fighting fund' for their candidate. If the fund is managed and controlled by the party and not the candidate, then donations to the fund are usually treated as having been made to the party and the agent does not need to treat them as donations to the candidate, unless the donations are specially made towards the candidate's election campaign. However, candidates will need to report donations from the local party that are made for the purpose of meeting their campaign spending. What are the rules on crowdfunding? Candidates can use crowdfunding websites to raise donations for their campaign. The candidate must know who the money comes from so that they can carry out the permissibility checks, and ensure that there are measures in place to return donations that are from impermissible sources. The Commission has published guidance on crowdfunding donations and the rules on permissibility. How do candidates report their regulated spending and donations? Details of the candidate's spending and donations must be reported to the local Returning Officer, together with declarations from the agent and candidate confirming the return is complete and correct no later than 35 days after the election result is declared. If no spending is incurred, a nil return must

be submitted by the candidate (or their agent). What are the rules for non-party campaigners? Non-party campaigners are individuals and organisations that campaign in the run up to elections but do not stand as political parties or candidates. Under candidate campaigning rules, where a non-party campaigner campaigns for or against one or more candidates in a particular constituency, ward or other electoral area, certain rules apply to spending on this activity within the regulated period. Local non-party campaigners can spend up to £50 plus 0.5p per local government elector during the regulated period on campaigning for or against a candidate in the ward. A local non-party campaigner cannot spend more than £50 plus 0.5p per elector without a candidate's authorisation. Further information is in our guidance for candidates and agents .

Registering to vote What is the registration deadline and how do people register to vote? The deadline to apply to register to vote is 11:59pm on Monday 17 April . Voters can register online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) . People can still apply by completing a paper registration form if they prefer. They can contact their local electoral registration office for forms or download them on the UK Government's website. Who can vote in the elections? A person can vote in the 4 May elections if they are on the local government register in an area where elections are taking place, and if they are: aged 18 or over on polling day a British citizen an Irish, EU or qualifying Commonwealth citizen British citizens living overseas who are registered as overseas voters cannot vote in local government elections. Service voters stationed abroad are eligible to vote in local government elections. More information on eligibility can be found on our website at [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter) .

Can someone register at two different addresses? In some cases, voters may be eligible to register at two different addresses. For example, if they own two homes or if they are a student living away from home. It is for the local Electoral Registration Officer to determine whether someone is eligible to register. If an individual is registered to vote in two different local authority areas, then at May's local elections, they are legally entitled to vote in both of those areas. However, it is an offence to vote twice in the same local authority area. Can prisoners vote? Remand prisoners (those who have not been convicted and sentenced) can vote. Convicted prisoners detained because of their sentence cannot. In some limited circumstances, prisoners released on temporary licence may meet the criteria to register to vote. What do voters need to know about the voter ID requirement? From May 2023, voters across England will be required to bring photo ID to vote in person in a polling station, following new requirements introduced by the Elections Act. A new form of free ID, the Voter Authority Certificate, is available for those who do not have another type of accepted ID. If voters lose their existing form of ID, or if it stolen or damaged and the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate has passed, people will be able to appoint an emergency proxy to vote on their behalf up until 5pm on polling day. What ID can people use to vote? Accepted forms of ID at polling stations include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK or EEA drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass or an Oyster 60+ card. The full list is available [here](#). Those that do not have an accepted form can apply for a free voter ID. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo. How can voters apply for free ID? Anyone without an accepted form of ID can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate at [voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk](http://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk) , or by requesting a paper form from their local council. Anyone who needs to apply for free ID, in order to vote in the May 2023 elections, must apply by 5pm on Tuesday 25 April. How will the Commission evaluate

the introduction of voter ID after the polls? Following the polls, we will independently examine how the new voter ID requirement was implemented and how voters found taking part. To fully assess the impact of the new voter ID requirement and the success of its implementation, it will be necessary to collect evidence from a wide range of sources, including all local authorities holding elections in May. A robust evidence base will take time to collect. It is unlikely we will have sufficient data to draw conclusions immediately following the polls, however we will publish our initial findings as soon as possible. This will be followed by our usual, more in-depth, election report in the autumn.

**The voting process**

What voting system is used in these elections? How do voters complete their ballot paper? The voting system used to elect councillors and local authority mayors is 'first past the post'. Voters can choose from a list of candidates on the ballot paper who will either be part of a political party or standing as an independent candidate. In order to cast a vote, a voter should simply put an X (a cross) next to the one candidate that they wish to vote for. The ballot paper will indicate how many candidates the voter may choose. Under this system, the candidate with the most votes is elected. In some authorities, there may be two or more seats to fill in each ward, in this instance the candidate with the most votes is elected first, then if required the candidate with the second highest number of votes is elected, then the third placed candidate. In the event of a tie, then a candidate is selected by the drawing of lots (i.e., a method of selection by chance such as tossing a coin or picking a name out of a hat).

**Voting in-person**

What should voters know ahead of polling day? Polling stations will be open between 7am and 10pm on Thursday 4 May. Voters should arrive in plenty of time to avoid missing out on having their say. Any voter who is in a queue at the polling station waiting to vote at 10pm will be able to vote. Voters will need to bring an accepted form of ID in order to vote. Before polling day, voters will be sent a poll card, which includes details of where their polling station is. Voters can only vote at the polling station specified on this card. Anonymous voters need to bring their poll card to the polling station, it is not required of all other voters, though doing so may speed up the process. Polling station staff will be on hand to explain the ballot paper(s) and how to vote. The law relating to obtaining information in polling stations and disclosing such information is complex, but we advise against taking selfies or other photos in the polling station, given the risks that this may be in breach of the law. How will the voter ID requirement work in the polling station? When a voter arrives at a polling station, a member of staff will: Ask their name and address so they can find them on the electoral register Ask for their photo ID, and check if it is acceptable If their ID is acceptable, they will give them their ballot paper and direct them to complete it at a polling booth as usual

**How is voting made accessible to voters with disabilities?** The Commission provides guidance to polling station staff, to help them make sure that polling stations are accessible to everyone. Changes introduced in the Elections Act permit disabled voters to choose anyone who is over 18 to accompany them in the polling station to help them vote. The Act also changes the assistance available at polling stations. We consulted charities and electoral administrators, before updating our accessibility guidance for administrators, to make sure that disabled voters can access the service they are entitled to in polling stations. Our guidance aims to support Returning Officers to understand and identify the barriers to voting faced by disabled voters. It sets out the equipment that should be made available as a minimum at the polling station, and what other equipment or support may also be helpful to provide. This should include measures such as a tactile voting device, polling booth at wheelchair level,

magnifiers and pencil grips. Returning Officers must have regard to this guidance.

**Absent voting** How to vote by proxy Voters can register for a 'proxy vote'. This means they ask someone they trust to vote on their behalf. They need to complete and sign a proxy application form and return it to their local electoral registration office by 5pm on Tuesday 25 April. Their proxy will need to show an accepted form of ID at the polling station before they can vote.

**How to vote by post** If voters do not wish, or are unable, to go to a polling station, they may apply for a postal vote. Voters may apply for a postal vote for a specific election, a specific period of time, or for all elections. They need to complete and sign a postal vote application form and return it to their local electoral registration office by 5pm on Tuesday 18 April.

Is it ok for someone to take a picture of their postal ballot and post it on social media showing how they have voted? Postal ballot papers are treated differently in electoral law than polling station ballot papers. A postal voter may take a picture of their own postal ballot paper and publicise it (including via social media). However, while the postal voter themselves may publicise the information, if someone else persuades or induces them to make this information available, they would be committing an offence. If there are any suggestions or allegations that this could be happening, the person making the complaint should report the matter to the police.

What safeguards are in place to ensure postal voting is secure? Postal voters have to provide their signature and date of birth when applying for a postal vote. When casting their postal vote, they are asked again for their signature and date of birth. Both records are compared and if the Returning Officer is not satisfied that they match, the ballot paper is not counted.

Can political parties handle postal votes? The Electoral Commission has developed a Code of Conduct for campaigners , which applies to all political parties, candidates and their supporters. The Code includes the following guidance for parties, candidates and campaigners. Do not assist in completing a ballot paper - instead, campaigners should always refer the voter to the Returning Officer's team who may be able to arrange a home visit or provide assistance at the polling station. Do not handle or take any completed ballot papers from voters. Instead, voters should be encouraged to post their postal ballot pack themselves - alternatively, the Returning Officer's team may be able to arrange for it to be collected.

Provisions in the Elections Act will ban parties and campaigners from handling completed postal votes and postal vote envelopes These changes are expected to come into force in autumn 2023 ahead of the May 2024 elections. We encourage campaigners to follow the Code of Conduct .

**The count and declaration of results** Who is responsible for the count process? When will the results be declared? The relevant local Returning Officer has overall responsibility for counting the votes at their respective election. The relevant local authority will be able to provide projected count times. To support electoral administrators with the count process, we have published guidance .

**How are the votes counted?** There are four stages to the count process. The postal ballot boxes and ballot boxes from the polling stations arrive at the count venue. Staff carry out a verification process and ensure that the number of postal ballot papers and ballot papers matches the numbers recorded by the relevant Returning Officer, and by the Presiding Officer at the polling station respectively. The votes are counted and the results are declared by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer will announce the name of the candidate(s) with the most votes as duly elected.

Can the result be challenged after it has been announced? Someone can challenge the result of an election by issuing an election petition. This is a legal action and will be adjudicated by a judge in court. A petition can be presented by: a person claiming to have been a

candidate at the election, or four people who voted as electors at the election or had a right to vote at the election, except for electors registered anonymously A petition at a local government election must normally be presented within 21 calendar days after the day on which the election was held. Further time may be allowed in certain circumstances.

**Electoral fraud** Who is responsible for putting plans in place to deal with electoral fraud? The primary responsibility lies with the local Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer(s) for each area. They work closely with their local police force. Guidance on policing elections has been published to support police officers as they put in place plans to prevent and detect electoral fraud in England and Wales. This guidance, which builds on work previously carried out by the Electoral Commission and the National Police Chiefs Council, now forms part of the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice for police forces in England and Wales.

**What are the criminal offences that relate to electoral fraud?** The Representation of the People Act 1983 specifies a number of criminal offences relating to electoral fraud. The relevant police force for the area in which the election is taking place would investigate any allegations that an offence may have taken place. Every police force has designated a single point of contact officer (known as a SPOC) to lead on election-related crime, who will give advice to local police officers. People can also choose to contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111. Anyone, including candidates, politicians and members of the public, who has evidence of electoral fraud taking place should report it to the police immediately, using the 101 non-emergency number, unless there is a crime in progress.

**Personation** – It is an offence to vote as someone else (whether that person is living, dead or fictitious), either by post or at a polling station, in person or as a proxy.

**Undue influence / intimidation** – A person is guilty of undue influence if they attempt to influence someone's vote by: using or threatening force, violence or restraint inflicting or threatening injury, damage, loss or harm impeding or preventing someone from freely exercising their right to vote – even where the attempt is unsuccessful

**Bribery** – A person is guilty of bribery if they directly or indirectly offer any reward (financial or otherwise) in order to induce any voter to vote or refrain from voting.

**Treating** – A person is guilty of treating if either before, during, or after an election they offer food, drink or entertainment to corruptly influence any voter. Treating requires a corrupt intent - it does not apply to ordinary hospitality.

**False statements** – It is an offence to make or publish a false statement of fact about the personal character or conduct of a candidate in order to affect the return of a candidate at an election. False statements that are not about a candidate's personal character or conduct are not illegal under electoral law, but could be considered as libel or slander. It is an offence to knowingly provide a false statement on a nomination paper.

**Multiple voting and proxy voting offences** – There are various offences regarding multiple voting and proxy voting, including voting (whether in person, by post or by proxy) when you are not allowed to and voting more than once in the same election.

**False information in connection with registration and absent voting** – It is an offence to supply false registration information to an Electoral Registration Officer. It is also an offence to supply false information for a postal or proxy vote.

**Roles and responsibilities**

**Returning Officer (RO)** The Returning Officer (RO) is personally responsible for the conduct of the local government election, including the nomination process, counting the votes and declaring the result.

**Electoral Registration Officers (EROs)** Electoral Registration Officers (or EROs) are responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the electoral registers and list of absent voters within their area. They must ensure that the electoral



registers are as accurate and complete as possible. Presiding Officers Presiding Officers are appointed by local ROs to run polling stations. Duties include organising the layout of the polling station, supervising poll clerks, issuing ballot papers, assisting voters, accounting for all ballot papers and ensuring that ballot boxes are transported securely to the count venue. The Electoral Commission . Our role in these elections is to: produce guidance for ROs and EROs, set performance standards and report on how electoral administrators perform against these standards produce guidance for candidates standing for election and their agents produce guidance for parties that are campaigning at the election produce guidance for non-party campaigners that are campaigning at the election register political parties and non-party campaigners raise public awareness of the elections and how to take part in them report on the conduct of the elections publish details of where political parties get their money from and how they spend it Page history First published: 28 February 2022 Last updated: 11 March 2022

Political parties report donations of £51m in 2022 | Electoral Commission Search

Political parties report donations of £51m in 2022 You are in the section Home

Posted: 2 March 2023 Political parties report donations of £51m in 2022 Political parties registered in the UK have reported accepting over £51 million in donations and public funds during 2022, according to figures published today by the Electoral Commission. Parties and campaigners reported accepting a total of £51,594,424 in 2022, compared to £51,290,954 in 2021, with £14,779,158 of the 2022 total accepted in the final quarter of the year (October to December). Louise Edwards, the Electoral Commission's Director of Regulation, said: "We know that voters are interested in the source and recipients of political donations, but that public confidence in the transparency of party and campaigner finance is declining. We publish this information so that voters understand where the money is coming from. This is intended to give voters confidence in the system. "However, just having information about who donors are and how much they're donating is not enough to build confidence that the system is truly transparent. We have recommended reforms to UK government, which would help strengthen the political finance system further." Political parties are required to submit quarterly donation and loan returns to the Electoral Commission. Within these returns, parties report: donations accepted above the £7,500 threshold (over £1,500 for accounting units) smaller donations from a single donor which exceed the reporting threshold when taken together impermissible donations they have received and the action taken in relation to these. Parties can also report donations which should have been reported in previous quarters. The political parties to report donations in quarter four of 2022, including public funds, were:

Party	Total reported	Donations accepted (excl. public funds)	Public funds accepted	Total accepted in this quarter
Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	£56,966	£25,000	£31,966	£56,966
Breakthrough Party	£40,000	£0	£0	£0
Conservative and Unionist Party (GB)	£4,858,373	£4,744,114	£31,833	£4,775,947
Conservative and Unionist Party (NI)	£10,881	£10,881	£0	£10,881
Co-operative Party	£47,444	£47,444	£0	£47,444
Democratic Unionist Party - D.U.P.	£86,066	£0	£86,066	£86,066
Green Party	£172,192	£122,202	£46,778	£168,980
Labour Party	£7,220,437	£5,054,462	£2,119,808	£7,174,270
Liberal Democrats	£1,432,226	£966,851	£377,637	£1,344,488
People Before Profit Alliance	£13,164	£2,100	£4,764	£6,864
Plaid Cymru - The Party of Wales	£34,719	£7,000	£27,719	£34,719
Scottish Green Party	£52,139	£47,761	£4,378	£52,139
Scottish National Party (SNP)	£538,339	£251,000	£287,339	£538,339
SDLP (Social Democratic & Labour Party)	£148,816	£0	£50,105	£50,105
Sinn Féin	£232,814	£150,000	£82,814	£232,814
Social Democratic Party	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£20,000
The Reclaim Party	£75,000	£75,000	£0	£75,000
Traditional Unionist Voice – TUV	£6,783	£0	£6,783	£6,783
True & Fair Party	£54,500	£54,500	£0	£54,500
Ulster Unionist Party	£22,854	£0	£22,854	£22,854
Women's Equality Party	£25,000	£20,000	£0	£20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£15,148,712</b>	<b>£11,598,315</b>	<b>£3,180,843</b>	<b>£14,779,158</b>

The amount that a political party reports to the Commission may be different to the amount it accepts in a quarter. This is because the amount that a party reports can include donations that were returned because they were impermissible and / or donations reported as part of the wrong quarter. Parties will likely have received other donations, from different individuals or bodies, that are below the thresholds for reporting to the Commission. Taken as a total sum these can amount to substantial sources of income for parties. Five parties failed to meet the reporting deadline for this quarter. The Commission will consider each of these matters, as well as donations reported late, in line with its Enforcement Policy , if appropriate. Any sanctions applied will be published at a later date. Borrowing There were £2,028,800 of new loans reported in the fourth quarter of 2022. Loans with a

value of £620,017 were fully paid off. Donations accepted by regulated donees in Q4 2022 The Commission also publishes details of donations accepted by regulated donees. Regulated donees are members of registered political parties, holders of relevant elective office and members associations. In the fourth quarter of 2022, £736,637 in donations were accepted by 89 donees. The total includes cash and non-cash donations, as well as donations towards overseas visits. Full details of cash and non-cash donations are available on our website.

Type of regulated donee	Value of cash and non-cash donations accepted	Value of donations accepted towards overseas visits	Total value of donations accepted
Leadership Candidate	£30,350	£0	£30,350
Mayor	£79,891	£0	£79,891
Member of a Registered Political Party	£6,000	£0	£6,000
Members Association	£117,819	£0	£117,819
MLA - Member of the Legislative Authority of Northern Ireland	£0	£4,110	£4,110
MP – Member of Parliament	£296,714	£199,753	£496,467
MSP - Member of the Scottish Parliament	£2,000	£0	£2,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£532,775</b>	<b>£203,863</b>	<b>£736,637</b>

Further information A summary of donations reported by parties, including the highest donors and details of late reports, is available on the Commission's website. Full details of donations and loans reported in Q4 2022 are available on our political finance register . Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk)

Notes to Editors The Electoral Commission has recommended for some time that the UK Government and Parliament consider with us how to improve the controls on donations and loans to prevent foreign money being used in UK politics. We continue to recommend reforms that would give voters greater confidence in UK political finance, including: the introduction of a duty on parties for enhanced due diligence and risk assessment of donations, adapted from money laundering regulations the introduction of laws to ensure parties cannot accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan

The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) requires registered parties to report cash and non-cash donations and borrowing to the Electoral Commission on a quarterly basis. Political parties must report all donations and borrowing over £7,500 relating to the central party, or over £1,500 relating to an accounting unit. This includes aggregates of donations and loans from the same source during the calendar year. Once the central party has reported a donation or aggregate donation over £7,500 it must report each subsequent donation of more than £1,500 from that source. As parties only report donations and loans over these thresholds, the figures do not include all donations and loans to political parties. Donations and loans under these thresholds are recorded in political parties' annual accounts. Information on the political parties' most recent statements of accounts is available on the Commission's database .

Public funds are donations from the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the Scottish Parliament and the Electoral Commission. 'Short' and 'Cranborne' grants are available to parties in opposition in the House of Commons or House of Lords respectively. Some donations appear on the register as being from the Electoral Commission. These are Policy Development Grants, which were established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 for parties represented in the Commons by two or more sitting members. The grants are intended to assist parties in developing the policies that they will present in an election manifesto. The legislation provides the total sum of £2 million annually for this purpose. Policy Development Grants became reportable as donations for the first time in quarter three of 2006 as a result of the Electoral Administration Act 2006. There were 351 registered political parties in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during quarter four of 2022. 50 were required to submit a quarterly donation report and 35 to submit

borrowing information within the deadline. The remaining political parties have previously submitted four consecutive nil returns. Providing they have not received donations in the last quarter, they are therefore exempt from submitting a report. More information on what constitutes a regulated donee and their legal reporting requirements is available on our website. Members of Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Members' Financial Interests . The registrar then sends these details to the Commission. The Commission identifies any donations that fall within the regulated done rules and we publish these. The Commission has a regulatory role in relation to the permissibility of donations. Members of Scottish Parliament report their accepted donations to the Register of Interests for the Scottish Parliament . All other regulated donees report their donations directly to us. We then publish this information monthly as part of our role in providing greater transparency in political finance in the UK.

Electoral Commission concludes investigations into four political parties | Electoral Commission Search Electoral Commission concludes investigations into four political parties You are in the section Home Posted: 19 September 2023 Electoral Commission concludes investigations into four political parties Investigations into four political parties have closed over the last month, with the Electoral Commission imposing fines in each case. Investigations where offences were found: Who we investigated What we investigated What we found Outcome Breakthrough Party (political party) Late reporting of two donations Offences found Two fines of £200 each Fines have been paid Conservative and Unionist Party (political party) Late reporting of four donations Offences found Three fines of £200 each Fines have been paid Liberal Democrats (political party) Late reporting of 21 donations Failure to report two new loans and four changes to existing loans by due date Late reporting of one donation Offences found Thirteen fines totalling £3,300 Fines have been paid Social Democratic and Labour Party (political party) Late reporting of one donation Offences found £1,000 fine Payment due by 6 October 2023 Louise Edwards, Director of Regulation and Digital Transformation, said: "Our investigations found that a number of donations were reported late by parties. In some cases, the lateness was significant and so were the amounts donated. Where we find offences, we carefully consider the circumstances in deciding whether to impose a sanction and if so, the level of that penalty. We take into account proportionality and a range of factors before making our final decision. "The timely and accurate publication of parties' donations and loans is vital to ensuring voters have transparency over how much money parties are raising. The political finance laws we enforce are there to ensure this transparency. The laws are clear, so it is always disappointing when they are not met.". Ends For more information contact the Electoral Commission press office on 020 7271 0704, out of office hours 07789 920 414 or [press@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:press@electoralcommission.org.uk) Notes to editors by: • enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible. • regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches. • using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency. The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Welsh and Scottish parliaments. This release forms part of the Commission's regular monthly investigations update, an important part of its commitment to deliver transparency in political finance in the UK. Information of this nature is published routinely on the third Tuesday of each month. Details for sanctions from previous months are available. Penalties imposed by the Commission go into the Consolidated Fund. This is managed by HM Treasury and not the Electoral Commission.