

Impact on security You are in the May 2019 voter identification pilot schemes section Home Our research Voter identification pilots May 2019 voter identification pilot schemes First published: 12 July 2019 Last updated: 12 July 2019 Contents Overview Our findings Impact on voters: experience Impact on voters: confidence Impact on security Impact of administration of the polls Background to our evaluation Key findings There were no allegations of electoral fraud at polling stations in the pilot scheme at the May 2019 elections. Each of the 2019 pilot models had security strengths and weaknesses, but the photo ID only model has the greatest security strengths compared with the other models. The security of the mixed and poll card models could be further improved with some changes to the process and requirements. Allegations of electoral fraud at polling stations The local police forces covering the pilots informed us that there were no allegations of electoral fraud at polling stations for the May 2019 elections. In other areas where local elections took place in May 2019, police forces have informed us that there were a total of nine allegations of electoral fraud at polling stations. Eight of these were still under investigation at the time we published this evaluation, and one needed no further action following police investigation as there was no evidence an offence had been committed. It is not possible to assess whether the identification requirement prevented any actual attempts to commit impersonation fraud. There is no evidence to suggest that the absence of allegations in the pilots was because of the ID requirements. Security assessment We asked an experienced identity verification expert to review the three ID models that were piloted in 2019. This review looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the security of each model, using well-established common standards and guidance for identity verification. It took into account the processes for issuing ID documents and how polling station staff could check the documents that voters showed. Key findings from security evaluation of acceptable ID documents Photo ID only model Strengths Includes only documents considered high or medium strength, including locally issued photo ID Officially issued documents with security features that uniquely identify the individual Both high and medium strength documents can be reasonably checked by non-experts in polling station Documents can be checked by non-experts in a polling station for a reasonable photo likeness and obvious signs of tampering as well as the registered name Locally issued ID with a photo would provide strong evidence that it was issued to the person showing it Weaknesses Polling station staff would not be able to carry out specialist document checking Mixed photo and non-photo ID model Strengths Includes the same high or medium strength documents, as in photo ID only model Some documents may show voter's current registered address Officially issued non-photo documents are harder to forge than other paper documents Weaknesses Other non-photo documents (not officially issued) are considered low strength unless presented together with an officially issued document Polling station staff would not be able to carry out specialist document checking Difficult for polling station staff to differentiate between original and home-printed documents Bank cards or national insurance number cards cannot be validated or verified by polling station staff Poll card model Strengths Returning Officers control the issuing process, linked to individually verified identities through the electoral registration process Poll card shows the voter's current address Additional security features (e.g. scannable QR code or other printed features) could make it harder to forge Weaknesses Poll card is a non-photo document, which is normally considered low strength unless presented together with an officially issued document Final bit The review also indicated that

the security of the mixed and poll card models could be further improved with some changes to the process and requirements. This could include, for example: requiring locally-issued ID or poll cards to include the holder's photo; requiring at least one officially-issued non-photo document to be presented in the mixed model; adding printed security features to make it harder to forge poll cards; and improving polling station processes to require all voters to state their full name and address without referring to their ID. Report navigation links Previous Next 3. Impact on voters: confidence 5. Impact of administration of the polls 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 Report: How the 2017 UK general election was run Read our report about how the 2017 general election was run