



YOUR LONDON. YOUR VOTE

The
Electoral
Commission

Greater London Authority
(GLA) elections

Guidance for candidates and agents

Overview document

This document applies to Greater London Authority elections (elections for the Mayor of London and London Assembly) only. It does not apply to district, borough, county borough, unitary authority, other mayoral or parish/town/community council elections. Our full suite of guidance and resources, including guidance for those elections, can be found on our website at: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-those-we-regulate/candidates-and-agents/

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Purpose of this guidance

1.1 This guidance, which the Electoral Commission has produced with the Greater London Returning Officer aims to provide practical advice for anyone who wants to stand as a candidate or be an agent at the Greater London Authority elections. It covers the whole election process, including the main steps towards standing as a candidate, the campaign and election periods, the declaration of the result and election spending. It includes relevant factual material as well as a guide to sources of further information. Standing for election can be complicated, but we hope that our guidance will make it as straightforward as possible.

How to use the guidance

1.2 The guidance is made up of six parts, setting out the different stages candidates and agents need to go through when standing in the Greater London Authority elections.

1.3 Each part is accompanied by a number of forms and resources, which can be directly accessed via links in the individual parts.

1.4 Alternatively, the relevant guidance, forms and resources will be available on the Commission's dedicated webpage for candidates and agents at a Greater London Authority election at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-those-we-regulate/candidates-and-agents/greater-london-authority-elections and on London Elects' website at www.londonelects.org.uk.

1.5 The following parts make up the full guidance for Greater London Authority elections:

- [Part 1 – Can you stand for election?](#)
- [Part 2a – Standing as a candidate for London Mayor](#)
- [Part 2b – Standing as a Constituency Member candidate](#)
- [Part 2c – Standing as a London Member candidate](#)
- [Part 3 – Spending and donations](#)

- [Part 4 – The campaign](#)
- [Part 5 – Your right to attend key electoral events](#)
- [Part 6 – After the declaration of results](#)

1.6 Before starting the process of standing for election potential candidates need to be confident that they meet all of the requirements for standing for election. You should therefore first read [Part 1](#) of our guidance, which covers all of the qualifications and disqualifications.

1.7 Once satisfied that you can stand, you should read [Part 2a](#) (if you are a candidate for London Mayor), [Part 2b](#) (if you intend to stand as a Constituency Member candidate) or [Part 2c](#) (if you are a London Member candidate), which deal with the nominations process and guide you through which forms you need to submit and by when.

1.8 Candidates and agents at Greater London Authority elections must follow certain rules about how much they can spend, who they can accept donations from, and what they must report after the election. [Part 3](#) of our guidance explains these rules.

1.9 [Part 4](#) covers what you need to bear in mind when campaigning, including rules on the publication and display of campaign literature.

1.10 Candidates and agents also have a right to attend key electoral events. These are: the opening of postal votes; the poll; and the count. Additionally, candidates can appoint representatives to attend these electoral events on their behalf. Details on your rights and what to expect at these events are provided in [Part 5](#).

1.11 Finally, there are a number of things candidates and agents will need to do once the result has been declared, including submitting their spending returns to the relevant Returning Officer and signing their declaration of acceptance of office if elected. This is covered in [Part 6](#).

1.12 To keep the guidance as relevant to the reader as possible, we have split most guidance parts into an ‘Essential information’

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section, which all candidates and agents should read as it contains information that is relevant to all, and a 'Supplementary information' section, that will be relevant only to some. You will be directed to the 'Supplementary information' section at relevant points throughout the 'Essential information' section.

Terminology used in our guidance

1.13 Three contests make up an ordinary election to the Greater London Authority:

- The mayoral election
- The Election for London Members to the Assembly
- The Constituency election to the Assembly

1.14 We use this terminology (or slight variations) throughout our guidance to refer to the various contests and the documents will make clear which contest is being covered in each case.

1.15 With the exception of Part 3: Spending and donations and Part 2c: Standing as a London Member candidate, we use 'you' in our documents to refer to candidates at the constituency, London member and Mayoral contests. Whenever we mean to refer to a particular type of candidate in those documents, for example, constituency candidates only, this will be clearly indicated.

1.16 We use the term 'Greater London area' or 'Greater London Authority area' to cover all of the 32 London boroughs and the City of London.

Who does what at a Greater London Authority election?

1.17 Returning Officers are responsible for organising and ensuring a fair and accurate election in accordance with election

law. There are a number of Returning Officers across London who deal with different parts of the Greater London Authority elections. While undertaking election duties, Returning Officers, although usually senior employees of councils, are not accountable to the council, but are independent and answerable only to the courts.

1.18 Returning Officers will offer briefings ahead of an election and we strongly encourage you to attend, even if you have been an agent or stood for election before.

Greater London Returning Officer

1.19 The Greater London Returning Officer is responsible for overseeing the elections. They are a senior officer at the Greater London Authority. The Greater London Returning Officer will announce the London Member and Mayoral results at the conclusion of the count. The Greater London Returning Officer can be contacted through London Elects (see paragraph 1.24 below).

Constituency Returning Officers

1.20 London Assembly constituencies are made up of two to four London boroughs. Typically, the Returning Officer of the largest borough (usually the one with the most registered voters) is the Constituency Returning Officer. A Constituency Returning Officer will often draw on the experience and knowledge of the other Returning Officers in the constituency (borough Returning Officers) and will work closely with them on operational issues in connection with the election. Constituency Returning Officers will announce the results for the Constituency Member contest.

1.21 The names of the Constituency Returning Officers are shown in the table below. Contact details can be found at www.londonelects.org.uk:

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Constituency	Name	Borough
Barnet & Camden	Nick Walkley	Barnet
Bexley & Bromley	Doug Patterson	Bromley
Brent & Harrow	Gareth Daniel	Brent
City & East (City of London, Barking & Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets)	Kim Bromley-Derry	Newham
Croydon & Sutton	Jon Rouse	Croydon
Ealing & Hillingdon	Martin Smith	Ealing
Enfield & Haringey	Rob Leak	Enfield
Greenwich & Lewisham	Barry Quirk	Lewisham
Havering & Redbridge	Cheryl Coppell	Havering
Lambeth & Southwark	Derrick Anderson	Lambeth
Merton & Wandsworth	Paul Martin	Wandsworth
North East (Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest)	Martin Esom	Waltham Forest
South West (Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames and Richmond upon Thames)	Mary Harpley	Hounslow
West Central (Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster)	Mike More	Westminster

Borough Returning Officers

1.22 The Returning Officers at London boroughs and the Returning Officer at the City of London will carry out certain functions on behalf of the Constituency Returning Officer. These include identifying polling stations, appointing staff, conducting

the election and sending out and receiving postal votes. Contact details for borough Returning Officers can be found at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

Electoral Registration Officers

1.23 The Electoral Registration Officer is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is normally a senior officer of the London borough or the City of London and may also be the Returning Officer. You can contact the Electoral Registration Officer through your local elections office. Again, contact details can be found at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

London Elects

1.24 London Elects (www.londonelects.org.uk) is involved with planning and managing the administration and publicity for the elections of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly. It is an independent team working directly for the Greater London Returning Officer and has two functions – operations and communications.

1.25 The operations team is responsible for the planning and coordination of all logistical aspects of the elections. It works closely with electoral staff in the 32 London boroughs and the City of London to provide training and support. The team will also manage candidate nominations for the Mayoral election and the London-wide list part of the London Assembly election.

1.26 The communications team ensures that the election process is transparent and that information is made available to everyone concerned – to London voters, candidates and political parties, the media and other stakeholders. Another important part of the team's work is voter education. It will explain the voting process and how the Mayor and London Assembly affect the lives of Londoners. The communications team is also responsible for coordinating communications and media management during the counting of the ballot papers and declaration of result.

The Electoral Commission

1.27 The Commission is an independent statutory body established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. It is headed by ten Commissioners, including a Chair. It reports directly to the UK Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

1.28 The Commission is responsible for overseeing a number of aspects of electoral law – the registration of political parties and third parties, the monitoring and publication of significant donations to registered political parties, and the regulation of national party and local candidate spending on election campaigns. It also has a role in promoting voter awareness and is required to report on the administration of every national election and, if requested, on any other electoral matter. The Commission also accredits observers to be present at election proceedings.

1.29 The Commission does not run elections but has responsibility for providing advice and assistance on electoral matters to all those involved in elections, including Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers, political parties and candidates.

Contact information

1.30 We are here to help, so please get in touch if you have any questions.

1.31 For advice on **standing as a candidate**, please contact **London Elects** at:

Tel: 020 7983 4444

Email: info@londonelects.org.uk

1.32 If your question is about your **spending or donations**, please contact the **Commission's Party and Election Finance team** at:

Tel: 020 7271 0616

Email: pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

1.33 For any other questions, please contact the **Commission's London office** at:

Tel: 020 7271 0689

Email: london@electoralcommission.org.uk