

Media Handbook

**Mayor of London and London Assembly
elections**

Thursday 5 May 2016

Produced by the Electoral Commission and London Elects

The
Electoral
Commission



YOUR LONDON. YOUR VOTE

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Websites

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

This is the website where people can register to vote.

Registered voters can also download forms to apply to vote by post or proxy from this site.

www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

This website provides information for the public on how to register and vote and forms they can print off to apply to vote by post or proxy. It includes a postcode search facility allowing people to find out where elections are taking place and resources showing people how to successfully complete ballot paper(s) at different elections.

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Our website has a dedicated section for journalists featuring the Electoral Commission's news and views. The website also hosts all of the Commission's guidance for candidates and Returning Officers.

www.londonelects.org.uk

This website provides information on the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections for 2016. As well as information for voters, it has sections for candidates, electoral administrators and journalists

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1 Introduction: what the elections are about

1.1 Who is being elected on Thursday 5 May 2016?

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is made up of one directly elected Mayor and 25 London Assembly Members, supported by several hundred staff. Londoners voted for this unique form of government in a 1998 referendum and the GLA was established in 2000.

On Thursday 5 May 2016, Londoners will vote for the Mayor of London and the 25 Members that make up the London Assembly. Ordinary elections are held once every four-yearly cycle.

There are also elections taking place across other areas of the UK on Thursday 5 May 2016. The Electoral Commission has produced separate media handbooks for each set of elections. These can be accessed via the Commission's website [here](#).

1.2 What does the Mayor do?

The Mayor of London has several functions, including:

- Making plans, strategies and policies for Londoners
- Acting as the executive of London's government and managing a £16bn budget to run transport, police, fire services and investing in London's housing. Part of the Council Tax levied by London's councils is set by the Mayor to help fund these services.
- Acting as a representative for the capital at and home and abroad

While London Boroughs retain responsibility for delivering many services on the ground, the role of Mayor offers strategic and London-wide leadership for the capital. The Mayor of London is responsible for developing strategies for London covering:

- Transport
- Policing
- Housing
- Planning & development (the London Plan)
- Culture
- Economic development
- Health inequalities

- Environmental issues

The Mayor sets the budgets for and appoints board members to: Transport for London, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and the two Mayoral Development Corporations (London Legacy Development Corporation and Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation). The Mayor also directs the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. These five organisations are the GLA's functional bodies and together form the GLA Group.

The Mayor has other responsibilities which include managing Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square Garden and deciding which major building projects can go ahead across London.

The Mayor works closely with a number of partners to fund and commission a wide range of projects.

1.3 What does the London Assembly do?

The Mayor is the Greater London Authority's executive and the Assembly's primary role is to hold the Mayor to account. Assembly Members scrutinise the work of the Mayor and carry out investigations into issues of importance for Londoners.

The Assembly is made up of 25 individuals. Fourteen of the Members are elected by voters in one of London's 14 constituencies (Constituency Assembly Members). The remaining 11 Members are elected by voters across the whole of London (London-wide Assembly Members).

The Assembly has the power to:

- Put questions to the Mayor and his officials during Mayor's Question Time and full London Assembly meetings
- Examine and scrutinise the Mayor's progress against his plans
- Investigate issues that are important to Londoners, publish reports and make recommendations to the Mayor, London Boroughs and the Government
- Amend the Mayor's budget with a two-thirds majority of Members
- Reject statutory Mayoral strategies, again with a two-thirds majority
- Hold confirmation hearings for certain Mayoral appointments

2 Who's who at the elections and what are their responsibilities?

This Media Handbook for the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections has been jointly produced by the Electoral Commission and London Elects. It sets out the two different organisations' roles in the upcoming elections, what the rules are for candidates and what will happen before, during and after polling day.

2.1 The Greater London Returning Officer

Jeffrey Jacobs is the Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO).

The GLRO has overall responsibility for the election of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly.

The GLRO manages the nominations process for Mayoral and London-wide Assembly Member candidates.

He also announces the London-wide Assembly Member and Mayor of London results from the 14 local totals.

He works closely with and has the power to direct the actions of the Constituency Returning Officers where this is desirable to achieve consistency across London and best practice in running the elections.

To arrange an interview with Jeffrey Jacobs or for more information on the GLRO's role, contact the London Elects Media Relations office.

2.2 Constituency Returning Officers

The 14 London Assembly constituencies are each made up of two to four London Boroughs. The 14 Constituency Returning Officers (CROs) are responsible for conducting the poll and the count for their own constituency. They will announce the results for the Constituency Assembly Member election at the relevant count centre and the local totals of the votes cast in their area for the London-wide Member and Mayoral elections.

CROs are supported by Borough Returning Officers (BROs) who, though having no particular status in law, play an important role in organising arrangements at the borough level.

Details of the 14 CROs:

Constituency	Name	Borough
Barnet & Camden	Andrew Travers	Barnet
Bexley & Bromley	Doug Patterson	Bromley
Brent & Harrow	Carolyn Downs	Brent
City & East (City of London, Barking & Dagenham, Newham and Tower Hamlets)	Kim Bromley-Derry	Newham
Croydon & Sutton	Nathan Elvery	Croydon
Ealing & Hillingdon	Martin Smith	Ealing
Enfield & Haringey	Rob Leak	Enfield
Greenwich & Lewisham	Barry Quirk	Lewisham
Havering & Redbridge	Cheryl Coppell	Havering
Lambeth & Southwark	Sean Harriss	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)	Charlie Parker	Westminster

(Details correct at the time of writing)

To ask for an interview with one of the Constituency Returning Officers, contact the relevant borough's press office directly.

2.3 Presiding Officers

Returning Officers appoint Presiding Officers to run polling stations. They are supported by Poll Clerks. Polling station staff act impartially at all times and ensure that proper procedures for voting are followed. Duties include organising the layout of the polling station, issuing ballot papers, assisting voters and ensuring that ballot boxes are transported securely to the count venue.

For more information on the rolls and responsibilities of polling staff, see Electoral Commission guidance [here](#)

2.4 Electoral Registration Officers (EROs)

Electoral Registration Officers are responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists for their local authority area. In London, the Electoral Registration Officer is normally a senior officer of the local authority and may also be the Borough Returning Officer. You can find the contact details for all Electoral Registration Officers at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

2.5 London Elects

London Elects is the programme team that organises the Mayor of London and the London Assembly elections. This includes everything from designing and printing the ballot papers and managing the counting of votes, to delivering a public awareness campaign to tell Londoners about the election and how to vote.

The London Elects Programme Team is drawn from staff across the GLA, leading on finance, marketing and web, media, legislation and guidance, training, venue management of the count centres, and managing the e-counting contractor.

Although part of the Greater London Authority (GLA), London Elects is politically impartial and operationally independent. It works directly for the Greater London Returning Officer and has a separate budget and reporting lines from other GLA staff.

2.6 The Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission is an independent body set up by the UK Parliament. Our aim is integrity and public confidence in the UK's democratic process.

At the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections we are responsible for:

- Producing guidance for Returning Officers, setting performance standards and reporting on how well they have done.
- Producing guidance for candidates standing for election and their agents
- Producing guidance for non-party campaigners that are campaigning at the election
- Registering political parties
- Publishing details of where candidates get their money from and how they spend it
- Promoting public awareness of voter registration
- Reporting on the conduct of the election

2.7 Other elections

Elections in other areas of the UK are also scheduled to take place on Thursday 5 May 2016. There will also be elections to:

- The Scottish Parliament
- The Welsh Assembly
- The Northern Ireland Assembly
- English local government elections in some areas
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales

Media handbooks for these elections can be found at

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/news-and-media/media-resources

3 Election timetable

Timetable for the election to the Greater London Authority: Thursday 5 May 2016

Event	Date (deadline if not midnight)
Publication of notice of election	Not later than Monday 21 March 2016
Delivery of nomination papers	On any working day during the hours stated on the notice of election until 4pm on Thursday 31 March 2016
Regulated period for candidates standing on a party list for London-wide seats begins	The date the agent for the party list submits the list to the Greater London Returning Officer. This will be between Monday 21 March 2016 and Thursday 31 March 2016.
Regulated period for candidates standing for London Mayor, Constituency candidates and Independent London-wide candidates begins	No earlier than Tuesday 22 March 2016
Deadline for delivery of nomination papers	4pm, Thursday 31 March 2016
Deadline for candidates to withdraw	4pm, Thursday 31 March 2016
Publication of statement of persons nominated	Not later than Monday 4 April 2016 (London Elects is aiming to publish the statement on 1 April)
Deadline to register to vote	Monday 18 April 2016
Deadline for applying for a postal vote	5pm on Tuesday 19 April 2016
Deadline for applying for a proxy vote (except for emergency proxies)	5pm on Tuesday 26 April 2016
Polling day	7am to 10pm on Thursday 5 May 2016
Deadline for issuing	5pm on Thursday 5 May 2016

Event	Date (deadline if not midnight)
replacement postal ballot papers	
Deadline for applying for an emergency proxy vote	5pm on Thursday 5 May 2016
Election count	8am on Friday 6 May.
Last day for submission of candidate spending returns to the Constituency Returning Officer – constituency candidates	No later than 35 calendar days after the declaration of the result. For results declared on Friday 6 May 2016, the last date for submission of candidate spending returns for Constituency candidates would be Friday 10 June 2016
Last day for submission of candidate spending returns to the Greater London Returning Officer – London wide and London Mayoral candidates	No later than 70 calendar days after the declaration of the result. For results declared on Friday 6 May 2016, the last date for submission of candidate spending returns for Mayoral and London-wide Assembly candidates would be Friday 15 July 2016

SECTION A – Candidates

4 Becoming a candidate

4.1 Who can become a candidate?

Anyone that wants to become a Mayoral or London Assembly Member candidate must be:

- At least 18 years old on the day of the candidate's nomination
- A British or qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of a European Union country

They must also meet at least one of the following four qualifications:

- Be, and continue to be, registered as a local government elector in Greater London from the day of their nomination onwards.
- Occupy as owner or tenant any land or other premises in Greater London during the whole of the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of election.
- Have as a main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election in Greater London.
- Have lived in Greater London during the whole of the 12 months before the day of their nomination and the day of election.

4.2 Is anyone barred from becoming a candidate?

Certain people cannot stand as a candidate. This includes:

- Anyone employed by the Greater London Authority, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, Transport for London, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority or a Mayoral Development Corporation
- Local government staff who hold politically restricted posts
- Anyone in a public post that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has designated as a post disqualifying persons from standing
- A person currently subject to a bankruptcy order, though bankruptcy itself is not a disqualification
- A person that in the last five years has been convicted of an offence and sentenced to more than three months in prison without the option of a fine

- A paid officer of a London borough council, who is employed under the direction of council committees or joint committees of which the Mayor of London is a member
- Anyone disqualified from being a member of a local authority under the Audit Commission Act 1998
- Anyone guilty of certain offences relating to improper conduct at elections, as set out in the Representation of the People Act 1983

4.3 How does someone become a candidate?

The earliest that someone can officially become a candidate is on the day that nominations open.

Nominations will open on **21 March 2016**. Prospective candidates may announce that they intend to stand before this, but this is the first date that someone can submit a formal nomination.

Anyone that wants to stand as a Constituency Member candidate must submit nomination papers to the relevant Constituency Returning Officer **by 4pm on Thursday 31 March 2016**.

Anyone that wants to stand as a Mayoral or London-wide Member candidate must submit nomination papers to the Greater London Returning Officer **by 4pm on Thursday 31 March 2016**.

There are different requirements for standing as a Mayoral, Constituency Member or London-wide Member candidate. See below for more information on each.

4.4 What does someone that wants to stand as a Mayoral candidate have to do?

Prospective Mayoral candidates must submit the following to the Greater London Returning Officer by 4pm on 31 March 2016:

- A completed nomination form
- Their consent to nomination
- The signatures of 330 registered voters (10 from each borough and the City of London) supporting the nomination
- A deposit of £10,000, returnable if they receive more than 5 per cent of the valid first preference votes

- If they are standing for a registered political party, a certificate from that political party. They can also request to use one of the party's registered emblems on the ballot paper.

4.5 What does someone that wants to stand as a constituency candidate have to do?

Prospective Constituency Member candidates must submit the following to the Constituency Returning Officer for the constituency in which they wish to stand by 4pm on 31 March 2016:

- A completed nomination form
- Their consent to nomination
- A deposit of £1,000, returnable if they receive more than 5 per cent of the valid votes cast in their constituency
- If they are standing for a registered political party, a certificate from that political party. They can also request to use one of the party's registered emblems on the ballot paper

4.6 What does someone that wants to stand as a London-wide candidate have to do?

London-wide candidates can stand either as independents, or as party candidates on a 'party list'.

Prospective independent candidates and political parties must submit the following to the Greater London Returning Officer by 4pm on 31 March 2016:

- A completed nomination form. Political parties that want to put forward a list of up to 25 candidates must submit a party list nomination form. Independent candidates must submit an independent candidate nomination form
- A consent to nomination for each candidate regardless of whether they are on a party list or an independent candidate
- A deposit of £5,000 for an independent and a deposit of £5,000 from each party, regardless of how many names are on their list of candidates. This is returnable if the party or candidate receives more than 2.5 per cent of the valid votes cast across London

- Registered political parties must provide a certificate authorising use of the party name or a registered description. This must be signed by the Party's Nominating Officer or by a person authorised to act on their behalf .

4.7 Who are the candidates?

The deadline for prospective candidates to submit nomination papers is 4pm on Thursday 31st March. The relevant Returning Officer will publish a statement of persons (and parties) nominated no later than 4pm on Monday 4 April.

London Elects will publish a list of all validly nominated candidates on its website www.londonelects.org.uk on or before April 4 2016..

4.9 Can someone stand as more than one type of candidate?

Yes. An individual could stand as a Mayoral candidate, London-wide Assembly candidate and a Constituency Member candidate.

An individual can only be a Constituency Member candidate in one constituency after the deadline for withdrawals. If a candidate stands for election as the London Mayor and as a candidate in a London Assembly Member constituency and is successful in both, they will be returned as the Mayor of London but not as a Constituency Assembly Member. If a candidate is returned either as the London Mayor or as an Assembly Constituency Member, they will not also be returned as a London-wide Assembly Member.

For more information on the specific qualifications for standing as a candidate in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections see Electoral Commission & London Elects Guidance for candidates and agents [here](#)

5 Campaigning at the elections

5.1 What can candidates say about one another during the campaign?

As at all elections, it is illegal to make a false statement of fact about the personal character or conduct of a candidate in order to affect the election of a candidate.

Rules about defamation also apply to election materials.

The police may investigate allegations of the specific electoral criminal offence of making a false statement. Defamation issues are a matter for the civil courts.

Neither the Electoral Commission nor London Elects have any regulatory role in relation to the content of campaign material. Any complaints should be made to the party or candidate in the first instance.

5.3 Are there any electoral rules regarding campaign materials?

Yes. By law, candidates must use “imprints” on all their campaign material.

5.4 What is an “imprint”?

All printed material (i.e. posters, placards and leaflets) and websites must include the name and address of the printer and promoter. This is so that electors can be clear about the source of campaign material. It is an offence not to include an imprint on election material.

The Electoral Commission also recommends that candidates, wherever possible, place an imprint on their electronic materials (i.e. websites, emails and social media platforms), but this is not a legal requirement.

5.5 Can candidates see the electoral register?

Mayoral, Constituency and individual candidates at the London-wide Assembly Member election are entitled to a copy of the register of electors and list of absent voters for the area they are contesting. The relevant register of electors can only be supplied once a person officially becomes a candidate. The earliest that a person can become a candidate is 21 March 2016.

Registered political parties are entitled to the electoral register at any time.

Candidates on a party list are not entitled to be supplied with the register but their election agent can be.

Candidates can only use the full electoral register to help them campaign and to check that donations they receive come from a permissible source.

Candidates and agents are not allowed to pass on details from the register, disclose any information or use it for any purpose other than their election bid.

5.6 Do candidates get free delivery of leaflets?

No, however the GLRO will produce a booklet with the election addresses of all candidates who want to be included in it and who have contributed £10,000 to the production cost of the booklet. The booklet will be sent to all registered electors in London before polling day.

5.7 Party Election Broadcasts

The decision on how many broadcasts to allocate to political parties is for the broadcasters to decide.

The political parties pay for and produce the content of the party election broadcasts (PEBs), which must observe the law – for example on copyright, defamation, contempt, obscenity and incitement to racial hatred or violence. They must comply with the Ofcom Broadcasting Code or the BBC Editorial Guidelines that relate to harm and offence and fairness and privacy.

More information about how PEBs are allocated will be available from the Broadcasters liaison group, the group of broadcasters that discusses the allocation of PEBs, visit www.broadcastersliaisongroup.org.uk

The BBC's draft criteria for PEBs can be found at:

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/assets/files/pdf/our_work/election_guidelines/2014/peb_draft_criteria.pdf

Ofcom's rules on PEBs can be found at:

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/broadcasting/guidance/programme-guidance/ppbrules/>

6 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.

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.

Anyone making an allegation should be prepared to give the police a statement and substantiate their concerns.

The Commission is also working with Crime Stoppers to make sure people can report concerns about electoral fraud anonymously by calling 0800 555 111. This includes being able to provide information in another language via a translation service.

6.1 What are the different types of electoral offences?

Personation

This is where an individual votes as someone else (whether that person is living or dead or is a fictitious person), either by post or in person at a polling station, as an elector or as a proxy.

Undue influence / Intimidation

A person is guilty of undue influence if they directly or indirectly make use of or threaten to make use of force, violence or restraint, or inflict or threaten to inflict injury, damage, loss or harm, in order to induce or compel any voter to vote or refrain from voting.

Bribery

A person is guilty of bribery if they directly or indirectly give any money or procure any office to or for any voter, in order to induce that voter to vote or not vote.

Multiple voting and proxy voting offences

There are various offences regarding multiple voting and proxy voting, including voting as an elector or proxy when subject to a legal incapacity to vote and voting more than once in the same election.

False registration information

It is an offence to supply false registration information to an Electoral Registration Officer. It is also an offence to supply false information in connection with an application for a postal or proxy vote.

6.2 How confident can the electorate feel with regards to postal voting?

Postal voting on demand is more secure following a tightening of the law in 2006 and is used by 16% of the electorate nationally.

Postal voters have to provide their signature and date of birth when applying for a postal vote, and also when casting their postal vote. Both records are checked when the postal vote is returned. If the relevant Returning Officer (RRO/CRO) is not satisfied that they match, the ballot paper is rejected and will not be included in the count.

The system has been further strengthened by the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration in 2014. Anyone applying to register to vote, first has to provide their date of birth and National Insurance number, before going on to provide the additional information above if they want to cast their vote by post.

6.3 How does the Electoral Commission work with political parties to prevent postal vote fraud?

The Electoral Commission has agreed with political parties to strengthen its [code of conduct](#) on the handling of postal vote applications and postal ballot packs by political parties, candidates and canvassers. The code says parties and candidates:

- should **never** assist in completing a ballot paper - instead, candidates should always refer the voter to the Returning Officer's staff who may be able to arrange a home visit or provide assistance at the polling station.
- should **never** handle or take any completed ballot paper from voters. Instead, voters should be encouraged to post their postal ballot pack themselves - alternatively, the Returning Officer's staff can be contacted to arrange for it to be collected.

Some Returning Officers may also identify the need to develop and seek agreement to specific local provisions which supplement the terms of the nationally agreed Code, in order to address identified local risks.

6.4 What happens if a political party breaches your code of conduct?

The Electoral Commission asks political parties to investigate any reported breaches and take action to ensure that any problems are not repeated. This includes potentially taking disciplinary action against party members.

6.5 Who is responsible for putting in place plans to deal with electoral fraud?

The primary responsibility for ensuring that robust plans to prevent and detect fraud are in place lies with the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer(s) for each constituency. They must work closely with their local police force.

[Guidance](#) has been published to support police officers and SPOCs as they put in place plans to prevent and detect electoral fraud in England & Wales. This guidance, which builds on work previously carried out by the Electoral Commission and the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC), now forms part of the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice for police forces in England and Wales. Guidance for Scotland can be [found here](#).

The Commission has also produced guidance for Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers.

6.6 What is the Electoral Commission doing to prevent fraud in these elections?

The Commission is working particularly closely with Returning Officers and the London Metropolitan Police in areas where there have been allegations of electoral fraud at previous elections, and where additional measures may therefore need to be put in place. We're confident that Returning Officers and the police are building on their individual and collective experience to put robust plans in place, and we're supporting them by sharing information and examples of good practice to help strengthen their plans up to and beyond the May elections.

We have focused on their:

- plans for dealing with registration and absent voting applications (for example, ensuring properties where large numbers of people have applied to be on the electoral register are checked)

- arrangements with the Metropolitan police for identifying and responding to potential electoral fraud are in place
- training for polling station staff on the risk of personation

In addition, the Commission has contacted candidates intending to stand in the election for Mayor of London asking them to commit to the Code; those who have responded can be viewed on the Commission's [website](#).

To view the Code of Conduct for Campaigners and for more information see the Commission's website [here](#)

The Commission has previously identified 18 areas of the UK which are at higher risk of electoral fraud. More information and the Commission's reports are available on the Commission's website [here](#).

6.7 The Electoral Commission published a report examining fraud in some South Asian communities. What's being done ahead of these elections to make sure fraud doesn't take place in those communities?

The [Commission's report](#) identified a combination of factors that meant that some electors from the South Asian community were vulnerable to fraud including:

- strong community networks vulnerable to abuse by unscrupulous campaigners
- low levels of awareness about what's acceptable campaigning activity and low awareness about how to report electoral fraud
- reduced activity by political parties in some areas that may have exacerbated vulnerabilities by allowing community networks to mediate between campaigners and voters.

The Commission has developed a range of resources for Returning Officers and police forces to use to raise awareness of what's acceptable behaviour at election time. Materials have also been translated to help people for whom English is not their first language.

The Commission is also working with Crime Stoppers to make sure people can report concerns about electoral fraud anonymously by calling 0800 555 111. This includes being able to provide information in another language via a translation service.

The Electoral Commission has produced detailed guidance to help all (Acting) Returning Officers across England, Scotland and Wales put in place plans to

prevent and detect electoral fraud. **But equally importantly, candidates and political parties must ensure that their supporters don't cross the line between robust and lively campaigns and electoral fraud.**

7 Campaign spending limits and rules on accepting donations

7.1 How much can candidates spend on their election campaigns?

The spending limits for the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections are below

Election	Spending limit
Mayor of London	£420,000
Assembly – Constituency Member	£35,000
Assembly – London-wide Member (independent candidate)	£330,000
Assembly – London-wide Member (party list candidates)	£330,000 (this is a single limit for the whole party list. It includes spending promoting any or all of the candidates on the list, or the party generally)

7.2 What activities count towards the spending limit?

The rules on candidate spending apply to spending on certain activities to promote an individual's candidacy (or criticise other candidates) during the regulated period (see 7.3)

These activities include:

- Advertising of any kind. For example, posters, newspaper adverts, websites or YouTube videos

- Unsolicited material sent to voters. For example, letters or leaflets
- Transport costs
- Public meetings
- Staff costs. For example, the salary of an agent or other staff
- Accommodation. For example, a campaign office
- Administrative costs. For example, telephone bills, stationery and photocopying

For more information on what activities count towards the spending limits, see Electoral Commission Guidance for candidates and agents [here](#)

7.3 What is the regulated period?

The regulated period is the period during which the spending limits apply to the activities listed in section 7.2. The limits also apply to spending that took place before the regulated period on things (such as leaflets) which are then used during the period.

The date the regulated period starts for Mayoral, Constituency Member and independent London-wide Member candidates depends on the date an individual officially becomes a candidate. If the candidate has announced their intention to stand before Monday 21 March 2016, they will officially become a candidate on that date, and their regulated period will start on Tuesday 22 March 2016.

If a particular candidate has not declared their intention to stand before Monday 21 March 2016, their regulated period will start on the date they announce their candidacy, or the date on which they submit their nomination papers, whichever is earlier.

Regardless of when they start, the regulated periods for all candidates end at close of poll on Thursday 5 May 2016.

The regulated period for party-list London-wide Member candidates begins on the date that the list is submitted to the Greater London Returning Officer, which must happen between Monday 21 March and Thursday 31 March 2016.

7.4 Are candidates allowed to spend money on their election bid before the regulated period begins?

Yes. However, items or services bought before the regulated period begins, but used during it will count towards the spending limit.

7.5 How do hustings fit under the spending limits?

Hustings can be organised by anyone, and are events designed to give the public an opportunity to hear from the candidates standing for election in their area.

There is no legal requirement for the person or body organising a hustings to invite all candidates or parties standing in an area. However, if the organiser only invites some candidates or parties, the cost of hosting the event may count towards the organiser's spending limit under the local non-party campaigning rules for the GLA Elections.

The Electoral Commission and London Elects cannot provide candidate details to those organising hustings beyond those that are published in the Statements of Persons Nominated.

The Electoral Commission has produced guidance for parties, candidates, agents and hustings organisers which is available [here](#)

7.6 Is there a limit on donations a candidate can accept in the Mayor of London or London Assembly elections?

No. However, candidates can only accept donations of money; items or services worth more than £50 towards their campaign spending from permissible sources (see section 7.7). These donations must be included in the candidate's spending return.

Candidates do not need to declare donations with a value of £50 or less.

7.7 Who can make donations to candidates?

Candidates must ensure they only accept donations from a permissible source, or return it within 30 days. After that, the donation may be forfeited.

Permissible donors in the UK are defined as:

- An individual registered on a UK electoral register (including overseas electors)
- A GB registered political party
- A UK registered company which is incorporated within the EU and carries on business in the UK
- A UK registered trade union
- A UK registered building society
- A UK registered limited liability partnership
- A UK registered friendly/building society
- A UK based unincorporated association

For an overview of the rules and more detail on what counts as a donation and accepting donations see Electoral Commission Guidance for candidates and agents [here](#)

7.8 Do candidates have to report donations they receive?

Any donations received towards spending on campaign activities during the regulated period must be reported in the candidate spending return which is submitted to the relevant Returning Officer.

7.9 Who do candidates report their regulated spending to and when?

London Assembly constituency candidates must submit their campaign spending returns to the Constituency Returning Officer **within 35 calendar days of the declaration of the result.**

Mayor of London and London-wide Assembly Member candidates must submit their campaign spending returns to the Greater London Returning Officer **within 70 calendar days of the declaration of the result.**

As well as their campaign spending, candidates must report donations of money, items or services worth more than £50 that funded their spending.

If no spending is incurred, a nil return must be submitted by the agent.

To find out when candidates in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections campaign spending returns will be open to public inspection, contact London Elects.

7.10 What happens if a candidate exceeds their spending limit?

Candidates' spending limits are set out in the Greater London Authority Elections (Expenses) Order 2000.

Breaching the spending limits is a criminal offence, and the Electoral Commission has no investigative or sanctioning role in relation to potential breaches. Decisions on the investigation and prosecution of offences relating to the candidate rules are a matter for the police and CPS.

The Electoral Commission has an established procedure for handling allegations of breaches of the spending limits.

For more information on the Electoral Commission's procedure for handling allegations, visit the website [here](#)

SECTION B – Campaigning by political parties

8 Campaign spending rules for political parties

8.1 When do the rules on campaign spending apply to political parties at these elections?

There is no separate regulated period for political parties campaigning in the Greater London Authority elections in 2016. Any campaigning that takes place on behalf of a candidate will be counted against the candidate spending limit.

Any spending which promotes the party in general in the GLA elections counts towards the spending total for the party list candidates.

8.2 To what extent can political parties fund their candidates at these elections?

Some political parties run a 'fighting fund' for their candidates. Donations to that fund are made to the party, rather than to the candidate, and so are reported by the party. Any donations made from the fighting fund to a particular candidate will constitute a donation from the party to the candidate.

This applies unless it is clear that the donation is personal to the individual candidate. In this situation, the candidate would have to report the donation(s) as part of their campaign spending return if it came during the regulated period.

To search donations made to political parties, visit the Electoral Commission's online database [here](#)

8.3 What donations do political parties need to report?

Political parties must report donations and loans over £7,500 if accepted by their Central Office and over £1,500 if accepted by a local accounting unit.

Political parties have to submit their quarterly donation and borrowing returns to the Electoral Commission one month after the end of a quarter.

For information on non-party campaigning at these elections see the Commission's factsheet [here](#)

SECTION C – Voters and voting

9 Registering to vote

9.1 Who can register to vote at the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections?

A person can register to vote if they are:

- 16 years old or over (though they can't vote until they are 18), and
- A British citizen, or
- An Irish, EU or qualifying Commonwealth citizen

A person can vote in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections if they are registered and:

- resident in London,
- aged 18 or over on polling day
- A British, qualifying Commonwealth or EU citizen

More information on eligibility can be found on www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

9.2 How can someone register to vote?

People can go online and apply to register to vote at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Alternatively, they can fill in and return a paper application form. They can contact their local electoral registration office for forms or they can download them [here](#).

9.3 What is the deadline to register to vote?

The deadline to apply to register is **midnight on Monday 18 April 2016** in order to be able to vote on Thursday 5 May 2016. However, we are encouraging everyone to register as soon as possible rather than wait for the deadline.

9.4 What support is offered to people with a learning disability to help them to register to vote?

The Electoral Commission has produced an easy read version of the registration form. We have also worked in partnership with Mencap to produce an [easy read guide](#) to registering and to voting.

People with a disability can receive assistance from someone else to complete an application – whether that be a paper form or online – but the person who wants to register to vote has to make the declaration. A person with the relevant power of attorney can also make this declaration.

9.5 How do members of the armed services register?

Service personnel and their spouses or civil partners, serving in the UK or overseas, can register either at their London address or barracks in the usual way, or as a 'service voter'. Service voters fill out an armed services declaration so they can be registered when away from their home address on duty.

For more information on registering as a service voter [see here](#).

9.6 Can someone register at two different addresses?

Yes. A person can register to vote at more than one address, as long as they are resident at each address. However, they can only vote once in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections. For example, students can register if they wish at both their home and their term time addresses.

9.7 Can prisoners register?

Remand prisoners (those who have not been convicted and sentenced) can register. Convicted prisoners detained because of their sentence cannot.

9.8 What impact has the move to the new registration system had on the electoral registers?

Individual Electoral Registration (IER) was introduced in Wales, England and Scotland in 2014 and the vast majority of electors were automatically transferred to the new registration system. The move to IER was due to end with the publication of the electoral registers on 1 December 2016.

In October 2015, a Government Order to bring forward the end to the move to IER to 1 December 2015 was passed in the House of Lords. The Commission had recommended that the end to the move remain 1 December 2016 as was originally legislated for.

The Commission has recently published its report on the electoral registers as they stood on 1 December 2015. You can view the [press release here](#)

Between 1 December 2015 and 22 February 2016 (inclusive) 1.3 million applications to register to vote were made, following the significant registration activity that continues to take place across the UK in advance of the important elections in May 2016.

9.9 What is being done to encourage anyone who may have come off the 1 December 2015 registers to re-register?

Electoral Registration Officers have been encouraged to send a Household Notification Letter to all households in their area. This will help identify anyone living at a property not currently registered to vote.

Previous Electoral Commission analysis of the transition to IER has identified that students and home movers in particular have been less likely to be moved to the new registration system. The Electoral Commission will be running a campaign to target these groups ahead of the May 2016 elections in addition to its main public awareness campaign which will launch on 14 March.

The Electoral Commission is also running a national public awareness campaign supported by a [range of partners](#), ahead of the 18 April registration deadline. This includes TV, radio and digital advertising.

The campaign will reach all adults, with a focus on groups that the Commission's research has identified as being less likely to be registered to vote, such as students, young people, those who have recently moved home, people who rent their home, and people from some black and minority ethnic communities.

More information about the Electoral Commission's public awareness campaign can be found in Section 17 of this handbook.

The Electoral Commission's aim is to make sure everyone who is eligible and wants to vote is able to do so. The registration deadline is **Monday 18 April 2016**. Anyone who is not registered should visit www.gov.uk/register-to-vote to apply as soon as possible. It's quick and easy.

It would be helpful for any relevant stories you run to highlight this deadline and a link to the online registration website.

10 Voting

10.1 When are the elections?

The elections are held on **Thursday 5 May 2016**.

10.2 What different ways are there for Londoners to vote?

Londoners can choose to vote in one of three ways in the Mayoral and London Assembly elections on Thursday 5 May 2016: in person, by post or by proxy.

10.3 In person

- Registered voters can visit their local **polling station** between 7am and 10pm on 5 May to cast their votes. Before polling day, voters will be sent a 'poll card' which includes details of where their polling station is
- Voters can only vote at their allocated polling station as stated on this card
- Polling station staff will be on hand to explain the ballot papers and how to vote
- Voters do not need to take their poll card with them to the polling station but doing so will speed up the process. If voters have lost their poll card, nearer to the election they can use the London Elects online polling station finder to check where to go

10.4 What happens if someone is still queuing to vote at a polling station at 10pm?

- Any voter who arrives at the polling station before 10pm and is still waiting to vote at 10pm **will be able to vote**.
-
- Legislation was changed by the UK Government in 2013 to allow this to happen following a recommendation by the Electoral Commission.

10.5 By post

If voters do not wish to - 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.

To vote by **post** electors need to register as a postal voter by 5pm on **Tuesday 19 April 2016**.

- Postal ballot papers will be sent directly to voters about a week before polling day
- Voters should complete their ballot papers and send them back straight away, so that it arrives before 10pm on Thursday 5 May 2016
- Votes arriving after 10pm on Thursday 5 May 2016 will not be counted
- If voters don't leave enough time to post their vote, they may take it by hand to a polling station in their constituency from 7am to 10pm on polling day
- Voters must also remember to complete the security declaration – with their signature and date of birth

10.6 By proxy

Voters can also register for a '**proxy vote**'. This means they ask someone they trust to vote on their behalf for the candidates and/or party they wish them to vote for. They need to complete and sign a form and return it to their local electoral registration office by 5pm on **26 April 2016**.

10.7 What is the deadline for applying for a postal or a proxy vote?

Registered voters may apply for a postal or a proxy vote.

The deadline for applying for a postal vote is **5pm, Tuesday 19 April 2016**.

The deadline for applying for a proxy vote (except in medical emergencies) is **5pm, Tuesday 26 April 2016**.

The deadline for applying for an emergency proxy vote as a result of a medical emergency or for work/service reasons is **5pm, Thursday 5 May 2016**.

11 How to complete the ballot papers

In the 2016 elections for the Mayor of London and the London Assembly, voters will have three votes. One is for the Mayor of London and two are for the London Assembly.

Voters will be given three ballot papers. Nearer the election London Elects will have example ballot papers on their website, so that voters know what they look like before they vote.

11.1 How do you vote for the Mayor of London?

The image shows a pink ballot paper titled "Election of the Mayor of London". It contains a dark grey box with the following text: "Vote once [X] in column A for your first choice, and Vote once [X] in column B for your second choice". Below this, there is a list of 15 candidates, each represented by a grey horizontal bar and a unique symbol. To the right of each candidate are two columns of boxes: "Column A 1st choice" and "Column B 2nd choice".

	Column A 1st choice	Column B 2nd choice
●	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
◆	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▲	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
●	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
★	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▼	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
◆	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
○	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- This is the **PINK** coloured ballot paper
- This is for the person voters would like to be the Mayor of London
- Voters can cast a first and second choice from the list of candidates who will either be part of a political party or standing as an independent candidate
- Voters vote for their first choice candidate by marking a cross (X) in column A
- Voters vote for their second choice candidate by marking a cross (X) column B

- If voters only mark the first choice column, their vote will still be counted – voters can choose not to mark the second choice column
- If voters only mark a second choice and not a first choice, their vote will not be counted
- If voters give the same candidate their first and second choice, only their first choice will be counted
- By marking a second choice, voters will not reduce the chances of their first choice being successful
- Only one choice is counted towards the final result, so voters still only have one vote

11.2 How do you vote for your London Assembly Constituency Member?

Election of the London Assembly constituency member
for the constituency of Barnet & Camden

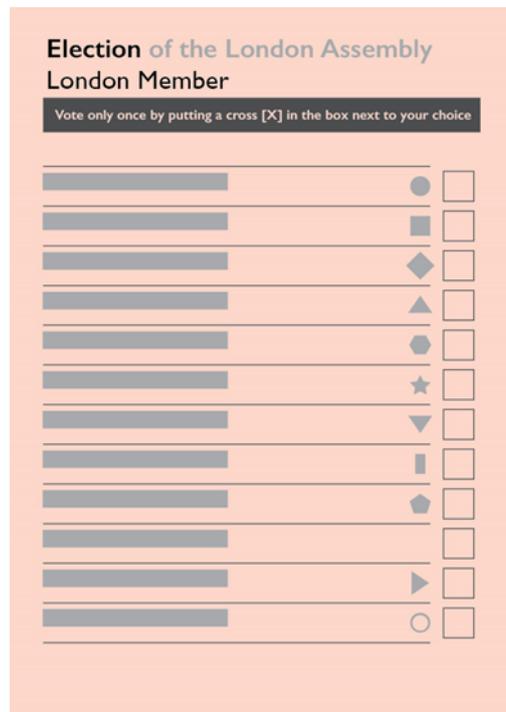
Vote for only one candidate by putting a cross [X] next to your choice

_____	●	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	◆	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	▲	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	★	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	▼	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	◆	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	○	<input type="checkbox"/>

- This is the **YELLOW** coloured ballot paper
- This is for the person voters would like to represent their local constituency
- Voters can cast one vote for a candidate

- Voters should mark one cross (X) in the box next to the candidate they wish to vote for
- Candidates and political parties will vary between each constituency, but voters can only cast a vote for the constituency in which they are registered

11.3 How do you vote for your London-wide Assembly Member?



- This is the **ORANGE** coloured ballot paper
- This is for the party or independent candidate that voters would like to become a London-wide Assembly Member
- Voters should mark one cross (X) in the box next to the party or candidate they wish to vote for

11.4 Can anyone take 'selfies' or photographs from inside a polling station?

The law relating to obtaining information in polling stations and disclosing such information is complex. Given the risk that someone taking a photo inside a polling station may be in breach of the law, whether intentionally or not, our advice is against taking any photos inside polling stations.

11.5 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, compared to 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 be advised to report the matter to the police.

12 What voting systems are used

12.1 The Mayor of London is elected by Supplementary Vote.

If a candidate receives more than half of all the first choice votes they are elected.

If this does not happen, the two candidates with the most first choice votes go through to a second round. All other candidates are eliminated, but the second choice votes on the eliminated ballot papers are taken into account. Second choice votes for either of the top two candidates are added to the totals for those two candidates from the first round. The candidate with the highest combined total of first and second choice votes will be elected as Mayor of London.

12.2 The 14 Constituency Assembly Members are elected using the First Past the Post system.

This means that the candidate in each constituency with the most votes is elected as a London Assembly Constituency Member.

12.3 The 11 London-wide Assembly Members are elected using a form of proportional representation.

Votes from across London for the London-wide Assembly Members are added together. The 11 seats are then allocated based upon a mathematical formula – the **Modified d'Hondt Formula**. This takes into account the total votes cast in the London-wide ballot together with the number of Constituency Assembly Member seats that each political party has already won.

Eleven rounds of calculations take place to fill the 11 vacant Assembly Member seats, and the party or independent candidate with the highest result at each round is allocated the seat. Seats won by parties are allocated to party candidates in the order they appear on the relevant party's list of candidates.

<p>For further information on the voting systems used in the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections visit the London Elects website at: https://londonelects.org.uk/im-voter/counting-votes</p>

13 Counting the votes

13.1 When does the count start?

The count will start at 8am on Friday 6 May.

After the polls have closed, elections staff will take ballot boxes from all the polling stations in London to the relevant count centre.

All ballot boxes have tamper proof security seals, and will be stored securely until the counting begins.

Please note: The count is overseen by the GLRO and any questions should be directed to London Elects.

13.2 Where does the count take place?

Constituency Returning Officers will count the votes from the 14 constituencies in one of three count centres across London.

The Greater London Returning Officer will be at City Hall. No physical counting of ballot papers will take place at City Hall, but this is where the GLRO will collate results coming in from around London to give a Mayoral result, and to work out the allocation of London-wide Assembly Member seats.

Votes from the 14 constituencies will be counted at the following venues:

Count centre	Constituency
Alexandra Palace	North East Enfield & Haringey Brent & Harrow Barnet & Camden
Excel	Greenwich & Lewisham Havering & Redbridge Lambeth & Southwark Bexley & Bromley City & East
Olympia	Croydon & Sutton South West Ealing & Hillingdon Merton & Wandsworth

13.3 How are the votes counted?

As in the previous Mayor of London and London Assembly elections, count staff will use electronic counting (or 'e-counting') machines to count the votes. This process has a number of stages, analogous to those in a manual count, to ensure that all votes are counted and the result accurately reflects Londoners' intention.

The scale and complexity of the elections – with three ballot papers and using three voting systems – means that counting the votes by hand would take days. E-counting means that Londoners can know who their Mayor and Assembly Members are in good time.

The 14 Constituency Returning Officers (CROs) across London are responsible for counting all the votes cast in their constituency.

The Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO) is responsible for collating the votes from across London for the Mayor of London and 11 London-wide Assembly members.

For more information on e-counting visit the London Elects website and download the e-counting factsheet: <https://londonelects.org.uk/im-voter/counting-votes>

13.4 How are the results announced?

Once all the votes in a contest have been counted, the e-counting software will calculate the results. These calculations will be checked by the CRO or GLRO as appropriate.

The relevant CRO will share the provisional results for the Constituency Assembly Member election with the candidates and their election agents. They will then announce the final result for the Constituency Assembly Member and the local totals of the Mayor of London and London-wide Assembly Member elections at the count centre.

The CRO will then send the number of votes cast in their constituency for the Mayoral candidates and London-wide Assembly seats to City Hall. At City Hall, the Greater London Returning Officer will collate all these results to give the final totals for all of London.

The GLRO will share the provisional results with the candidates and their election agents. The GLRO will then declare the result for the Mayor of London in the Chamber at City Hall.

The distribution of London-wide Assembly seats is calculated using the 'D'Hondt formula'. The GLRO will use e-counting software to make this calculation, but will also check the calculations himself.

A live feed of vote progress will be on the London Elects website. All results will also be made available on the London Elects website as soon as possible after they are available: <https://londonelects.org.uk/im-voter/results-past-elections>

13.5 How does the opening of postal votes fit into the process?

Several postal vote opening sessions will take place before polling day as well as on polling day itself.

The CRO must give candidates at least 48 hours' notice of when and where the sessions will take place. At each opening session, the CRO will decide whether or not the date of birth and signature provided by electors on their postal voting statements match the signature and date of birth previously provided and held on record. If the CRO is not satisfied that they match, the vote is rejected.

Candidates can observe the process or appoint a postal voting agent to do so. Anyone attending an opening session must not attempt to look at any identifying marks or numbers on ballot papers, disclose how any particular ballot paper has been marked or pass on any such information gained from the session.

All valid ballot papers are placed into ballot boxes and stored securely before being delivered to the count venue for counting after the close of poll.

13.6 Can candidates 'tally' votes at postal vote openings?

It is the Commission's view that the legislation prohibits the tallying of votes by those attending postal vote opening sessions.

This is because, at a postal vote opening, it is not permissible to 'attempt to ascertain the candidate for whom any vote is given in any particular ballot paper or communicate any information with respect thereto obtained at those proceedings (Section 66(4)(d) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended)).

In addition, anyone attending a postal vote opening must not attempt to look at identifying marks or numbers on ballot papers, disclose how any particular ballot paper has been marked or pass on any such information gained from the session.

13.7 Can candidates request a recount?

Any candidate or election agent present when the counting of votes is completed will be given the opportunity to request a recount of the votes. However the CRO may refuse this request if they feel it is unreasonable.

One counting agent per Mayoral candidate, Constituency candidate and individual London-wide Assembly Member candidate may also be authorised to request a recount. The election agent of a party list may also authorise one counting agent to request a recount. In each case, this must be specified when they are appointed as a counting agent.

For all three contests, recounts may only be requested at the constituency level. In respect of the Constituency Assembly Member contest, the request may only be made before the constituency result is announced. In respect of the Mayor of London and the London-wide Assembly Member contests, the request may only be made before the local totals have been announced. A London-wide recount is not permissible.

14 Media coverage of the election and count

14.1 Are there rules on impartiality for media?

News reports, features and editorials in print or online media are not subject to electoral law, and the law does not require them to be impartial.

Paid for advertising (including free advertising that would normally be paid for) promoting a candidate or party should be included in a candidates election expenses, and subject to the normal rules surrounding campaign materials. See section A, part 5.4.

Political impartiality in broadcast media is covered by the editorial guidelines relevant to that particular broadcaster:

- The BBC's editorial guidelines on broadcasting during an election can be found at www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidelines
- Commercial broadcasters are subject to the Ofcom Broadcasting Code, which can be found at <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/broadcasting/broadcast-codes/broadcast-code>

14.2 Will there be media briefings for journalists?

London Elects will hold media briefings in early 2016. These will provide background on all aspects of the elections, and information on the London Elects public awareness campaign.

Representatives from the Electoral Commission will also be in attendance.

Please contact the London Elects Media Relations team if you wish to know more; Media@londonelects.org.uk

14.3 Can media attend the counts?

Can the media attend the count centres?

Members of the media can normally attend the three count centres, provided they have applied for accreditation.

No one will be able to enter any of these buildings on count day unless they are accredited.

Media attending any of the three count centres will be provided with information about the process as well as a copy of the secrecy requirements and must respect the confidentiality of the ballot. All attendees at the count must follow the directions of the CRO at all times.

It is up to the discretion of the CRO to allow any member of the press into the count (unless they are also a candidate, agent, counting agent or accredited observer).

Can the media attend the declaration of results at City Hall?

Yes. Members of the media can normally attend, provided they have applied for accreditation.

No one will be able to enter unless they are accredited.

Media attending City Hall will be provided with information about the process as well as a copy of the secrecy requirements and must respect the confidentiality of the ballot. All attendees at the count must follow the directions of the GLRO at all times.

It is up to the discretion of the GLRO to allow any member of the press into (unless they are also a candidate, agent, counting agent or accredited observer).

Anyone wishing to attend the three count centres or City Hall must first apply for accreditation. Visit the London Elects website to apply for accreditation here; <https://londonelects.org.uk/news-centre/media-accreditation-application-form>

14.4 How will journalists be told the results?

The CROs will announce constituency results and local totals for the Mayoral and London-wide Assembly Member elections in the relevant count centre. The GLRO will announce the final Mayoral and London-wide results at City Hall. London Elects and CRO staff will give media advance warning when a result is due. Only candidates and their agents will be told the results shortly before they are announced publicly.

14.5 Can media film inside polling stations?

No. No filming or interviews are allowed to take place in the polling station. If media wish to film or conduct interviews outside the polling place, they must ensure that voters are not hindered or harassed on their way to vote and that the entrance to the polling place is not obstructed.

Media Accreditation applications are now open on the London Elects website. Applications must be received by Friday 15 April 2016.

All accreditations are subject to security checks and approval of the GLRO. Anyone wishing to film or record audio in the count venues should contact the London Elects Media Relations team.

15 Challenging the result

15.1 How does someone challenge the result following the election?

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.

Petitioners must present the petition within 21 days of the declaration of the result. Where the petition relates to election expenses or corrupt or illegal practices involving the payment of money after the election, further time may be allowed.

For more information on how a candidate could challenge the result of an election, see our [Guidance for candidates and agents here](#)

16. Public awareness

Raising awareness of voter registration

16.1 What are Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) doing to encourage people to register to vote?

EROs are legally responsible for maintaining the electoral register for their local authority area and are at the forefront of efforts to get as many people as possible onto the registers.

EROs will have detailed plans in place to raise awareness of voter registration in their areas. These plans will also set out how EROs will encourage groups who are less likely to be registered to vote to do so before the registration deadline.

EROs will use a range of advertising methods to reach their local residents, including sending letters to households encouraging people to register to vote and many have developed partnerships with local schools and colleges to encourage young people to register to vote.

16.2 What is the Electoral Commission doing to encourage people to register to vote?

The Commission supported National Voter Registration Drive, which took place from 1-7 February on social media and through other activities.

The Electoral Commission launched its online campaign to get people registered on 1 February and will launch its main public information campaign on Monday 14 March and that will include TV and additional online advertising. This includes activity and channels specifically targeted at under registered groups.

The Commission is doing a series of briefings for Parliamentarians updating them on its public awareness activity, which you will be able to [find here](#) as they are published.

16.3 How can other organisations help encourage people to register to vote?

The Electoral Commission will be working with a range of partner organisations – from the corporate, public and voluntary sectors – to try and reach traditionally under-registered voters and encourages them to register to vote.

The Electoral Commission has produced a range of free resources and toolkits, which provide practical suggestions for organisations that want to run their own registration drives or other activity ahead of this year's polls. These are all available on the website [here](#).

London Elects Public awareness campaign

The 2016 London Elects campaign seeks to engage London's 5.7m registered voters and promote the elections for the Mayor of London and the London Assembly on Thursday 5th May 2016.

For 2016 we are running separate campaigns, with the Electoral Commission focusing on registration and London Elects focusing on raising awareness of the elections and providing the necessary voter information.

16.4 What will the London Elects campaign cover?

The London Elects campaign will cover:

- What the Mayor of London and London Assembly do
- When and where to vote
- How to fill in the three ballot papers
- Looking out for the Mayoral booklet
- How to find your polling station

16.5 Advertising campaign

London Elects have developed a wide – reaching advertising campaign which will launch in March 2016. The campaign will raise awareness of the elections and highlight the aspects of London life which are directly affected by the Mayor and Assembly.

It will also focus on where to vote, when to vote and how to fill in the ballot paper.

The campaign will be displayed across radio, print, online and outdoor.

16.6 Digital marketing

A key tool throughout the campaign will be the London Elects website. By navigating the site according to audience category (voter, candidate, journalist or electoral administrator) the site seeks to direct users to the most relevant information according to their needs.

London Elects are also making use of social media platforms and the site is fully integrated with social media activity which includes Facebook and Twitter.

16.7 Mayoral booklet

London Elects are responsible for the production of the statutory Mayoral address booklet, which contains ‘mini-manifestos’ written by Mayoral candidates, the names of London Assembly candidates, and information on how to vote. This will, as required by law, be sent to every registered elector in London.

16.8 PR campaign

London Elects will support the advertising and digital campaigns with a PR campaign that will secure coverage in print and broadcast media across London.

This will include briefings for journalists, media interviews, press releases and other PR activity that will help raise awareness of the elections and give voters information on when and how to take part.

16.9 Working with stakeholders

For many marginalised or hard to reach groups, the person delivering the message is often as important as the message itself. For that reason, London Elects are producing material in 17 different languages as well as Braille and large print.

Appendix A

2012 results

Here are the 2012 election results for the Mayor of London and the London Assembly. This was held on 3rd May 2012. Detailed results from 2012 and from earlier elections and technical spreadsheets can be downloaded from the [London Elects website](#).

Turnout: 38%

Mayor of London: Boris Johnson, Conservative Party

London Assembly Constituency Members results

Constituency	Candidate	Party
Barnet and Camden	Andrew Dismore	Labour Party
Bexley and Bromley	James Cleverly	Conservative Party
Brent and Harrow	Navin Shah	Labour Party
City and East	John Biggs	Labour Party
Croydon and Sutton	Stephen O'Connell	Conservative Party
Ealing and Hillingdon	Onkar Sahota	Labour Party
Enfield and Haringey	Joanne McCartney	Labour Party
Greenwich and Lewisham	Len Duvall	Labour Party
Havering and Redbridge	Roger Evans	Conservative Party
Lambeth and Southwark	Valerie Shawcross	Labour Party
Merton and Wandsworth	Richard Tracey	Conservative Party
North East	Jennette Arnold	Labour Party
South West	Tony Arbour	Conservative Party
West Central	Kit Malthouse	Conservative Party

London Assembly London-wide Members results

Party	Candidate
Conservative Party	Gareth Bacon
	Andrew Boff
	Victoria Borwick
Liberal Democrats	Stephen Knight
	Caroline Pidgeon
Green Party	Darren Johnson
	Jenny Jones
Labour Party	Nicky Gavron
	Murad Qureshi
	Fiona Twycross
	Tom Copley

Appendix B

Mayor of London and London Assembly constituency map

