
Factsheet for non-party campaigners: Election material and imprints – Great Britain

Election material is published material that can reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against a political party or a category of candidates.

Under the Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act 2000, there are rules about putting imprints on election material. These rules apply at all times. We regulate compliance with those rules.

Whenever election material is produced, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an 'imprint') to show who is responsible for the production of the material. This helps to ensure there is transparency about who is campaigning.

The rules on imprints apply to all non-party campaigners, whether or not you are registered with the Electoral Commission. This factsheet explains the rules you must follow.

What is a non-party campaigner?

Non-party campaigners are individuals or organisations that campaign at elections, but are not standing as political parties or candidates.

In electoral law, these individuals or organisations are called 'third parties'. Where non-party campaigners have registered with the Electoral Commission they are called 'recognised third parties'; in our guidance, we call recognised third parties 'registered non-party campaigners'.

What is election material?

Election material is published material such as leaflets, adverts and websites that:

- can reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against political parties or categories of candidates, including political parties or categories of candidates who support or oppose particular policies or issues, and
- is aimed at the public or a section of the public

There are general rules on election material, and other campaign activity, undertaken by non-party campaigners in the run-up to certain elections that may also apply to you. These rules cover spending limits, donations and reporting. You can read more in our [Guidance for non-party campaigners](#).

What is an imprint?

An imprint is added to election material to show who is responsible for its production. It helps to ensure that there is transparency about who is campaigning.

What must you include?

On printed material such as leaflets and posters, you must include the name and address of:

- the printer, and
- the promoter

The promoter is the person who has authorised the material to be printed. If you are registered with us as a non-party campaigner, this may be the person notified to us as the 'responsible person', or someone authorised by them to incur spending.

If the promoter is acting on behalf of a group or organisation, you must also include the group or organisation's name and address.

You can use either home or office addresses.

If you are putting an advert in a newspaper, your advert does not need to include the printer's name and address.

It is an offence not to include an imprint on printed election material.

Example of an imprint

A standard imprint should look like this:

Printed by Armadillo Printing Ltd,
20 Barry Avenue, Leeds.
Promoted by J Smith on behalf of
the Campaign Group,
both of 110 High Street, Stafford.

Where do you put the imprint?

If your material is a single-sided document – such as a window poster – or where most of the information is on one side, you must put the imprint on the face of the document.

If it is a multi-sided document, you must put it on the first or last page.

Websites and other electronic material

As good practice, we recommend that you should put an imprint on electronic material, such as websites and emails. The imprint should include the name and address of the promoter and the organisation on whose behalf it has been produced. You should include an imprint unless the size or format of the election material would mean that the imprint is not legible.

Where it is impractical to place the full imprint on the election material you should consider how to provide some other means for the material to be associated with you.

Tweeting and posting on social media sites

You should display your full imprint details prominently on your profile.

You can include a shortened link to your imprint in your tweet or post.

Images and cartoons

If it is impractical to place a full imprint on to an image, you should include the text of a link, or a hyperlinked logo or emblem that leads to your full imprint.

Sometimes campaigners have emblems or logos that voters will readily associate with an individual or organisation. If you are confident this is the case, these emblems or logos can be used as a substitute if it is not practicable to place the full imprint on material.

Comments

Individual comments posted onto discussion forums are unlikely to be covered by the rules on imprints or the rules on non-party campaigning.

But as good practice, we suggest that if you use these forums you make your identity clear where possible.

Where you can find more information

We publish a suite of guidance for non-party campaigners which can be found at

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/party-or-campaigner/non-party-campaigners>.

We also offer an advice service and you can contact us on one of the phone numbers or email addresses below.

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