

# electoral administration bulletin

The  
Electoral  
Commission



Issue 255 (Scotland) – 8 April 2020

## Coronavirus: update

The [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) received Royal Assent on 25 March. The Act postpones the scheduled May 2020 elections in England and Wales to May 2021; and it also includes provisions relating to the postponement of by-elections in Scotland.

We are continuing to work closely with the Scottish Government on matters relating to the impact of the pandemic on the management of by-elections, and will provide further updates as appropriate.

We are also continuing to engage with the Cabinet Office, Scottish Government and others across the electoral community about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the annual canvass and year round registration activity.

Cabinet Office have confirmed that they are currently reviewing a number of options, in consultation with the Scottish and Welsh Governments, in relation to the management of electoral registration. In terms of the canvass, they have stated that they do not expect the options to include reverting to the pre-reform canvass and that EROs should therefore continue to prepare for the reformed annual canvass as best they can given the circumstances.

A further update will be provided by the Cabinet Office and the Scottish Government in May, and we will provide you with more information on this as soon as it's available.

We will update you on our work to support the annual canvass, including the publication of our canvass guidance, in next week's Bulletin.

In the meantime, we have been receiving a number of queries relating to issues that administrators are facing in managing the delivery of year-round electoral registration work, such as the publication of monthly updates, during the current pandemic.

While the statutory requirements around registration have not (to

## Contents

### Coronavirus: update

Information and guidance for electoral administrators.  
.....

EA Bulletins are issued on a regular basis. They are one of our key channels for communicating with Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers and their staff. Past issues of Bulletins for England, Scotland and Wales are available [here](#). You can also [subscribe to the EA Bulletins](#).

Please [keep us informed](#) of any staff changes within your team. This will help us to keep our mailing lists up-to-date.

We are sending you this newsletter as it contains important information about the Electoral Commission's work which is relevant to you. The newsletter forms part of the Electoral Commission's public task which has its basis in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. We will manage your personal information and contact details in line with the General Data Protection Regulation and UK data protection legislation as outlined in our privacy notice (<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-notice>)

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you may [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

this point) changed, we recognise that the practical delivery of these may well be impacted, particularly given the UK's governments' wider guidelines around coronavirus. We therefore recommend that you should:

- Take all appropriate steps that you can to meet the legislative requirements wherever possible
- Ensure that any activity that was not carried out in line with the timescales provided for in legislation is carried out as soon as practicable afterwards
- Keep a clear audit trail of your decision making, and the reasons for the decisions you have made
- Consider what communications may be needed with your stakeholders, such as recipients of the register, to inform them of your approach to managing your work as a result of the pandemic

If you have any queries or concerns, or require any further support, please contact [infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk) and we will be happy to help in any way we can.

.....

The Electoral Commission  
City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh,  
EH1 1YJ  
Tel: 0333 103 1928  
Textphone: 18001 020 7271 0500  
[infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk)  
[www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)

© The Electoral Commission 2020