

# electoral administration bulletin

The  
Electoral  
Commission



Issue 302 (England) – 17 February 2021

## May 2021 elections: guidance update

Further to [Bulletin 301](#), we can now confirm our approach to updating our guidance and resources to reflect the proposed legislative changes to the nominations process. Whilst we do not yet have a fixed date for when the legislation will come into force, we nevertheless want to ensure that the necessary changes are completed and clear as early as possible, to support you with your preparations and to help those who want to stand for election.

The core guidance for Returning Officers and candidates and agents will be updated to reflect the proposed legislative changes by Monday 22 February, and a summary of the changes will be included on the change log for each document as usual. We also intend to publish the updated template briefing for candidates and agents to the same timescale. At this stage, all changes will be caveated to reflect that they are based on the assumption that the relevant legislation will be made in time for the elections.

All supporting resources, including the relevant nomination forms, will be updated by not later than 1 March. We will confirm in a future Bulletin when this work has been completed, and will also provide updates on the progress of the legislation.

### Supplementary guidance and resources

To help ensure that you can easily access the supplementary guidance on the Covid-specific aspects of preparations for the May 2021 polls, we have added a link to where you can find this from the [front page of our website](#). We will continue to keep these documents under review and will highlight any amendments or additions to these in the change log at the front of each document.

We have now published the updated template training slides for staff to include additional information on the public health measures that will be in place due to coronavirus. The slides are available for [local government elections](#), [Police and Crime Commissioner elections](#) and for [combined Police and Crime Commissioner and local government elections](#). The slides also include new sample polling station layouts which reflect the additional public health

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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

requirements. These sample layouts are also included in the updated polling station handbooks, all of which will be available on our website by the end of the week, with hard copies delivered to those who have ordered them in March as usual.

As always, if you have any questions or require any further assistance, please do contact your [local Commission Team](#).

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### May 2021 elections: public awareness update

We have created a range of digital and print resources to help you raise public awareness of the upcoming elections, registration deadlines and different ways to vote. These include social media images, posters, template press releases, template messages and more.

#### **Voter registration**

Ahead of the May polls, we are once again running our 'Got 5?' registration campaign. The [voter registration resources](#) promote the registration deadline of 19 April and use the 'Got 5?' concept to help raise awareness.

#### **Voter information**

Our [voter information resources](#) include messaging on: different ways to vote, how to cast a vote, finding the polling station and getting help at the polling station. This year we have also developed further COVID-19 related messaging to reassure voters on what measures to expect inside polling stations and how to help keep others safe when voting in person.

In addition, we have developed [a template letter on voting at the May elections that you can use to communicate with clinically extremely vulnerable people](#). The template is designed to inform voters of the different ways they can choose to cast their vote, including postal and proxy voting, and the safety measures in place at polling stations, in order to support them in making the right decision for them.

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### May 2021 elections: call for polling station data

This year we're once again running the [polling station finder](#), in partnership with Democracy Club, to help make sure voters have access to accurate and timely information about how and where they can vote.

We need your updated polling station information to make sure voters head to the right polling station. By having this information easily available online, it should help to reduce the number of calls you'll get from voters looking for this information.

Providing your data is straightforward. You can export the data from your EMS, and email it to [pollingstations@democracyclub.org.uk](mailto:pollingstations@democracyclub.org.uk).

[Detailed instructions are available for each supplier](#), if you need them.

To make sure we have time to change the information, we ask that you send your polling station data as soon as possible, and by Friday 9 April.

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.

## **Still linking to [yourvotematters.co.uk](https://www.yourvotematters.co.uk)?**

As part of our website redevelopment work, we decommissioned the Your Vote Matters website in September 2019. We ask that you change any references to that URL to:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter>.

While there is currently a redirect in place, we plan to fully decommission the Your Vote Matters URL in the near future.

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## **May 2021 elections: post-election data collection**

As at each set of elections, the Commission will once again be collecting key administrative data from Returning Officers. This data provides important evidence to support our work in reporting on elections in the UK.

### **What data we are going to collect**

We wanted to give you early warning of the data that we are planning to collect, so have developed a [list setting out what we will be asking you to report to us following the May 2021 elections](#). We will once again be collecting some ward/division level data for local/county elections in England. For all other elections we will be collecting data at a local authority level.

### **How we will be collecting data**

We intend to collect the data via the portal that we used for the 2019 UK general election. We are currently working with the Electoral Management Software suppliers to develop a facility to allow for an export/direct upload for ward data to help make the process as straightforward as possible.

We will update you in a future Bulletin when the data collection portal is open and will let you know the deadlines for submission at that time.

If you have any questions about the data collection, please contact [research@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:research@electoralcommission.org.uk).

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