

Imprints for non-party campaigners – England and Wales

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.

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

Whenever election material is produced, it must contain certain details (which we refer to as an ‘imprint’) to show who is responsible for 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.

Different imprint rules apply for campaigners at Scottish Parliamentary elections and council elections in Scotland. Please see [Imprints for non-party campaigners – Scottish Parliamentary elections and council election in Scotland](#) for more details.

This factsheet explains the rules you must follow when campaigning in any other election.

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?

There are two types of non-party campaigns: local campaigns and general campaigns.

For local campaigns, election material is published material such as leaflets and adverts that can be reasonably regarded as intended to promote or procure the election of a candidate at an election.

For general campaigns, 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:

- one or more political parties
- political parties or candidates that support or do not support particular policies
- other categories of candidates, for example, candidates who went to a state school, or independent candidates (who are

not standing in the name of a political party)

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 must you include?

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

- the printer
- the promoter
- any person on behalf of whom the material is being published (and who is not the promoter)

The promoter is whoever has caused the material to be published. You must use an address where you can be contacted. It can be a home address or an office or business address. You can also use a PO Box address or other mailbox service.

If you are putting an advert in a print newspaper, your advert does not need to include the printer's name and address. The advert must include the other details as usual.

If you are being paid to publish election material, the material must include an imprint which includes the details of whoever is paying you. This is because either they are the promoter, or you are publishing the material on their behalf.

In all cases, you must make sure that the imprint lists all the organisations involved in publishing and promoting the material.

It is an offence for a printer or promoter to publish printed election material without an imprint.

Example of an imprint

If you are registered with us as a non-party campaigner, the promoter may be the person notified to us as the 'responsible person', or someone authorised by them to incur spending, or the organisation itself.

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.

If the material is digital there is no printer, so a digital imprint on campaign material should look like this:

Promoted by the Campaign Group, 110 High Street, Stafford.

Where do you put the imprint?

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

If it is a multi-sided printed 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 social media posts. The imprint should include the name and address of the promoter and any organisation on whose behalf it has been produced.

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.

Social media

We recommend that you include the imprint in the post itself. You can also include it somewhere closely and clearly linked.

For example, on Twitter your imprint can be included prominently on your profile. For paid adverts on Facebook, you can include the imprint in the disclaimer text which accompanies the advert.

Crowdfunding

If your crowdfunding page contains election material as well as asking for donations, it must contain an imprint. Whether or not this is the case, you should ensure that it is clear on the page who the money is being donated to.

You can find out more information in our [crowdfunding factsheet](#).

Images and cartoons

We recommend that you include the imprint in the image itself.

If it is posted on social media, you can include the imprint in the same

way as you would for any social media post.

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

Videos

We recommend that you include the imprint in the video itself. The imprint should be legible and appear for long enough for voters to read it.

If the video is posted on social media, you can include the imprint in the same way as you would for any social media post.

Posters for downloading

Any posters that are available for download from a website should carry the full imprint. If the posters are printed out and displayed as printed material, they must carry a full imprint including the printer's details. If you intend people to do this, you should leave a space for them to include their details as the printer.

Comments

Individual comments posted onto discussion forums are unlikely to be covered by the rules on election material and 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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0333103 1928
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Translations and other formats

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