

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 305 (Wales) – 14 July 2021

Publication of the UK Government's Elections Bill

Last week, the UK Government published its [Elections Bill](#). The Bill proposes significant changes to the rules for elections in the UK, and will affect electoral administrators, voters and campaigners. The Bill seeks to tackle a range of issues relating to the security, accessibility and transparency of elections and campaigning.

Its measures include a requirement for voters at polling stations to show photo ID before they receive their ballot paper; extending imprint rules to digital material; and removing the 15 year limit on voting rights for British citizens living overseas.

In Wales, the changes in the Bill would apply to UK Parliament and Police and Crime Commissioner elections.

We will provide independent advice to parliamentarians on the contents of the Bill, based on published evidence and our expertise. [You can read a summary of our view on each of the Bill's measures on our website.](#)

The Bill represents a strong commitment from the UK Government to modernising our electoral system and addressing areas that need improvement.

However the laws around elections are already complex and fragmented, more so when also considering the differing rules in place for devolved elections, and so introducing new requirements can add additional risk. Changes will need to be well planned, with implementation phased and properly funded, to ensure that electoral administrators, and others involved in elections, can deliver the changes as intended.

We will work with electoral administrators, parties, campaigners and voters to prepare in good time for the new rules, and to ensure all those involved understand any differences in approach between the UK's governments.

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Information on and a link to template press releases and social media resources for EROs to use to promote the canvass in their area.

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.

If there is a new RO/ERO appointment in your authority, please contact the team in Wales by e-mailing infowales@electoralcommission.org.uk

We are sending you this newsletter as it contains important information about the Electoral Commission's work which is relevant to you. The

Committee on Standards in Public Life report on regulating election finance

The Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) last week published its [report on regulating election finance](#). The report makes a number of recommendations to address modern campaign practices, deliver greater transparency and provide stronger safeguards around the source of money being donated.

The report is the culmination of an important and valuable review by the Committee, which finds that the current regulatory framework works well overall, but the rules should reflect modern practices. We agree with the Committee that it is essential the regulatory system remains transparent, coherent and proportionate.

Many of the Committee's recommendations are consistent with changes the Commission has proposed, such as tighter donation controls, greater transparency of digital campaign spending and reforms to the candidate finance regime. We look forward to seeing the UK Government's response in due course and to discussing how changes can be taken forward.

We will carefully consider the Committee's other recommendations and observations, and any steps we can take to improve the way we work and our support of the regulatory regime. We value the Committee's input and scrutiny, and particularly their recognition of the importance of preserving the Commission's independence.

2021 canvass resources

To support your work in delivering the annual canvass, we have again produced a suite of [template press releases and social media resources](#).

The resources can be used to promote the canvass in your area and encourage residents to look out for messages from you on electoral registration. The resources explain what the canvass is, how it is being carried out this year and what residents need to do.

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