

Imprints for political parties – England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, there are rules about putting imprints on printed election material. 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 at certain elections.

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 political parties. They apply whenever you produce printed material promoting your party. This factsheet explains the rules you must follow.

Different imprint rules apply to political parties campaigning at Scottish Parliamentary elections and council elections in Scotland. Please see [Imprints for political parties – Scottish Parliamentary elections and council elections in Scotland](#) for more details.

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

What is election material?

Election material is published material such as leaflets and adverts that promote the party, its candidates or its policies, or criticise other parties, at an election.

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. You can use 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, but the name and address of the printer of the newspaper must appear on the first or last page of the newspaper. 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

The promoter may be the party Treasurer, another officer of the party, or the party itself.

A standard imprint on party election material should look like this:

Printed by Armadillo Printing Ltd, 22 Thornfields Avenue, Glasgow.

Promoted by the Yellow Party, 110 High Street, Airdrie.

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 or individual on whose behalf it has been published.

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 you are using a crowdfunding website, you should ensure that it is clear on the web page who the money is being donated to. We recommend that you should put an imprint on the web page. You can find out more information on 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 on to 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.

Online discussion forums

As good practice, we suggest that if you use online discussion forums you should make your identity clear where possible.

Where you can find more information

In addition to the rules about imprints, there are also rules on fundraising and spending that political parties must follow in the run-up to elections. We publish a suite of guidance for political parties that explains these rules, which you can find on our [website](#).

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

- England:
pef@electoralcommission.org.uk
0333 103 1928
- Wales:
infowales@electoralcommission.org.uk
0333 103 1929
- Northern Ireland:
infonorthernireland@electoralcommission.org.uk
0333 103 1928

Translations and other formats

For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version please contact the Electoral Commission:

- publications@electoralcommission.org.uk
020 7271 0500