

[REDACTED]

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**From:** FOI  
**Sent:** 24 March 2022 10:26  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FOI 022-22 - Response

Dear [REDACTED],

**Our Ref: FOI-022-22**

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated 8 March 2022.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and has done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days.

Your request is shown below followed by our response.

*My request is for a breakdown of spending on physical marketing materials (leaflets, banners, flyers, signs) by UK political party from the last local election (2021). If possible, I would like this broken down by type of printed material.*

**Our response is as follows:**

We do not hold the information you have requested.

The Electoral Commission is responsible for regulating political funding and spending at relevant elections and referendums held under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA). As local elections are not relevant elections for the purposes of the Act, we do not have a role in regulating them. As such, there is no requirement for parties to submit a spending return for these elections. You can view spending by political parties at relevant elections on our public search site [here](#).

Local elections fall under the scope of the Representation of the People Act (1983). All candidates contesting local government elections must submit a spending return to the Returning Officer at the relevant local authority after the election. Spending returns and declarations can be inspected by any person after they have been submitted. Copies can also be made for a fee of 20p per side. Spending returns and declarations are kept for a period of two years before being destroyed. We do not hold copies of the returns for the May 2021 local elections.

You may therefore wish to make arrangements with the relevant Returning Officers if you wish to inspect the candidate spending returns for the 2021 local elections. I should point out however that there is no legal requirement for candidates to report spending by type of printed material. The categories include 'Advertising' and 'Unsolicited material' which are likely to account for most printed material, but unless a candidate has chosen to do so, the spending is unlikely to be broken down to the extent you have indicated.

The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority. If you are not satisfied with this response, please note that the Commission operates a review procedure, details of which can be found on the Commission website at: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/freedom-information/make-a-freedom-information-request>.

Please also note that if you have exhausted all internal Commission review procedures and you are still not satisfied you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Details of this procedure can be found on the ICO website: <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Information Officer

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**The Electoral Commission**

[electoralcommission.org.uk](http://electoralcommission.org.uk)