

electoral administration bulletin



Issue 338 (England) – 5 September 2022

Accessibility: consultation on draft guidance for Returning Officers

We have today (5 September 2022) launched a [consultation on draft guidance for Returning Officers on assistance with voting for persons with disabilities](#).

The Elections Act includes provisions relating to assisting disabled people to vote, and introduces a duty on the Commission to provide guidance for Returning Officers (ROs) on the requirement to provide reasonable equipment to assist voters with disabilities in polling stations. ROs must have regard to this guidance.

The changes made by the Act have provided a timely opportunity to review our existing guidance to help ensure everyone can vote independently and confidently. There should be no barriers to voting for disabled people, and everyone should have the right to vote on their own and in secret.

During the development of the draft guidance, we have engaged with a range of civil society, charity and third-sector organisations across the whole of the UK. These represent people with physical and learning disabilities, mental health conditions, and invisible disabilities. We asked them about the barriers disabled voters experience and possible solutions to make voting more accessible.

We also shared information, via DLUHC officials, with members of their Access to Elections working group, and discussed the changes introduced by the Act with representatives of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (Solace) and members of the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG), which includes the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), electoral administrators and government officials.

We want the updated guidance to help ROs and their teams to understand the barriers to voting faced by those with disabilities and

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Information on and a link to the Commission's consultation, which closes on 17 October 2022.

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Information on our next accuracy and completeness study, including notification of a forthcoming request for the December 2022 electoral registers.

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 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

make informed decisions on what they can do to help make voting accessible for all.

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-notice>

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, you may [unsubscribe](#) at any time.

How to respond

This phase of the consultation will run until 17 October 2022. You can respond by filling in [the form](#), emailing your views to EAConsultation@electoralcommission.org.uk or writing to us at: Electoral Administration Guidance Team, The Electoral Commission, 3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ.

Your feedback will inform the further development of the guidance in advance of our formal statutory consultation, which will start once the relevant legislative provisions have been commenced. We expect this to run from 28 November 2022 until 10 January 2023.

If you have any questions or require any help to be able to respond, please get in touch on 0333 103 1928.

Electoral registration: accuracy and completeness study

The Electoral Commission periodically carries out a study of the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers. The [last study](#) was carried out on the December 2018 electoral registers.

This research involves cross-referencing a sample of register entries against the results of a large-scale, face-to-face survey of several thousand households across the UK.

In order to create the sample of register entries that we will use for the study, we will be asking a selection of EROs to provide us with a copy of the December 2022 revised electoral register for their area. We will be e-mailing those EROs in November to request a copy of their register.

The results of our accuracy and completeness studies identify those groups that are most likely to be under-registered, which helps to inform our public awareness activity and our guidance to EROs. We are grateful for your continuing support to enable us to carry out this important work.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact research@electoralcommission.org.uk

The Electoral Commission
3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ
Tel England: 0333 103 1928

infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

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