

electoral administration bulletin

The
Electoral
Commission



Issue 245 (England) – 17 April 2019

May 2019 local elections: public awareness update – reminder of available resources

Our resources are a great way to engage with voters ahead of polling day. We have a wide-range of resources available, ranging from posters and web banners to social media images and template messaging, all of which can be downloaded from our website.

You can use these resources to share information about:

- when the elections are happening
- finding the locations of polling stations
- getting help at the polling station
- tellers outside polling stations

We've also developed a new ['how to vote' video](#), which includes a visual representation of a ballot paper and how to mark it.

Other information to help voters

The postcode lookup tool on our [Your Vote Matters website](#) will soon have information on:

- elections taking place
- candidates standing for election
- polling station locations
- voter ID requirements (where appropriate)

This is enabled by Democracy Club, who we've been working in partnership with since 2015.

Accredited observers: a reminder of changes to the scheme

Updates to the scheme and badge design

Following the review of the electoral observer scheme last year, which we updated you on in [Bulletin 235](#), we thought it would be helpful to remind you of the key changes we've made to the

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A reminder of information about changes to Facebook

scheme:

- Applications to become an accredited observer can now be made [online](#).
- We have [updated the electoral observer ID badges](#). These are reflected in the polling station handbooks we have made available for the elections, and we would encourage you to draw the attention of staff working at polling stations and count venues to the updated badges.
- We have produced new [guidance for electoral observers](#) at local elections in England that should assist them when they are observing electoral processes. We will also be producing guidance for electoral observers at the European Parliamentary election, and this will be accessible from our [website](#).
- We've introduced a [voluntary feedback mechanism](#) for electoral observers for the local elections on 2 May. There will also be an opportunity for observers to [provide feedback](#) at other polls, including the European Parliamentary election on 23 May.

Lists of accredited observers

We publish the names of all accredited individual observers and organisations on [our website](#).

Our [Code of Practice](#) highlights to observers that providing advance notification of where they intend to observe can assist them in making more effective observations. However, electoral observers are not required to give advance notice of where they intend to observe and are free to make unannounced visits.

European Parliamentary election: public awareness update

Ahead of the European Parliamentary election, we will be running a voter registration campaign to encourage applications before the deadline of Tuesday 7 May.

The campaign will launch during the week of 22 April with digital advertising, up-weighted to those areas not holding local elections in May – particularly Scotland, Wales and London. This activity will also target known under-registered groups (including students, recent movers and some BME communities), as well as overseas citizens.

TV advertising will launch in the week leading up to the registration deadline, targeting a broad adult audience across the UK to maximise awareness.

This will all be supported by information published on our website and social media channels, PR activity, and our work with partners.

More information will be provided in future Bulletins, and updates on our public awareness campaign will also be made available through our Roll Call newsletter. If you haven't already subscribed, you can do so [here](#).

rules, including details of their 'ad authorisation' process.

[Canvass reform: Cabinet Office contact details survey](#)

Information on and a link to a Cabinet Office survey.

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

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

European Parliamentary election: out-of-hours advice during the election period

We are continuing to provide an out-of-hours telephone advice service to deal with urgent electoral administration queries in the run up to and immediately following the May 2019 European Parliamentary election, and we thought it would be helpful to remind you of how you can contact us.

Contacting us during normal office hours

Our local teams will continue to be available between the hours of 08:30 and 17:30 throughout the election period to support you as usual.

If you are contacting us during normal office hours, please use our **Advice and Guidance Line: 0333 103 1928**.

Alternatively, you can email us at infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk.

Contacting us outside of normal working hours

Our out-of-hours advice service includes weekends and Good Friday (19 April), Easter Monday (22 April) and the Early May Bank Holiday (Monday 6 May).

Additionally, there will be 24-hour cover available on polling day, and throughout the weekend of Saturday 25 May and Sunday 26 May.

We can be contacted out-of-hours by calling: 0207 271 0613.

Public awareness update: running ads or 'boosting' your posts on Facebook – a reminder of Facebook's political advertising verification process

As set out in [Bulletin 239](#), Facebook have made some changes around running ads 'related to politics or issues of national importance'. This definition includes ads which relate to 'any election, referendum or ballot initiative, including election information campaigns'.

This means that the new Facebook rules also apply to posts to promote awareness of polls taking place in your area. You should therefore make sure that anyone running ads or boosting posts on your behalf completes the Facebook 'ad authorisation' process.

How do you do this?

Facebook has put together [a step by step guide](#) for you to follow. The process is simple, and once done, your ad will carry a 'paid for by' digital imprint showing those who see it that you funded the ad.

What does the imprint look like?

The new 'imprint' is an important part of digital campaigning transparency. We've gone through the process and all of [our Facebook ads](#) now carry the imprint 'Paid for by The Electoral Commission'. The digital imprint doesn't display any details of the person who has been individually verified to run that ad.

Canvass reform: Cabinet Office contact details survey

Cabinet Office recently issued a [survey](#) to collect the correct contact details for your authority so they can communicate with you about canvass reform.

If you have not already completed the survey, Cabinet Office have asked that you do so by **Friday 19 April**.

The survey asks for the following:

- Primary contact for canvass reform (Name, e-mail and telephone number)
- Secondary contact for canvass reform (Name, e-mail and telephone number)
- IT contact for canvass reform (Name, e-mail and telephone number)

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