

Communications

Key considerations

- The main objective of your public engagement activity is to get residents to take action
- Carefully considered communications that provide information in the way the audience prefers to receive it is more likely to have greater impact
- There are a range of communication methods available – you should establish who your target audience is for your activity to determine how best to engage them to take action
- Consider the timing of your activity and where your audience may be at that time, e.g. students starting university in September
- Determining how you will evaluate the communications activity in the planning phase will help you to demonstrate its impact - you could use the [GCS Evaluation Framework](#).

Options

- You could include a link to the gov.uk/register-to-vote website as part of your email signature. You could include the Commission's "Your vote matters, don't lose it" [logo](#) and embed the link there
- We produce resources and messaging for you to share to encourage registration in your area ahead of elections. Sign up to our [Roll Call newsletter](#) to be notified when these resources are available
- Maximise your social media presence. Follow [@ElectoralCommUK](#) and [@YourVote UK](#) and retweet our registration messages
- Partner with local organisations that reach the communities you are trying to target – the audience will be much more receptive to messages from a source they already know
- Make use of public spaces that you own. You can put up our registration posters in spaces such as public council buildings, libraries and community centres
- Talk to your digital team to determine the most widely visited pages on your website and include messages on those pages that are relevant to the audience




Experiences of others

Publicising registration on Twitter



In advance of the May 2016 polls, the City of Lincoln Council issued a series of tweets using the hashtag #regafriend to promote registration and got partner organisations to do likewise:

 **Lincoln Council** @lincolncouncil - 14 Apr 2016
Time is running out - you only have until 18 April to #RegAFriend for the 5 May elections: gov.uk/register-to-vo...



 **Siren FM 107.3** @SirenFM - 18 Apr 2016
Listen now: @lincolncouncil encouraging young people to #RegAFriend in upcoming elections - sirenonline.co.uk/archives/14277



Mole Valley District Council and Oldham Borough Council utilised the loss avoidance theme of the Commission's own messaging to promote registration:



MoleValleyDC @MoleValleyDC · 8 Apr 2016

Politicians are making big decisions without you. #RegAFriend & change that. [socsi.in/QffY4](https://www.socsi.in/QffY4)



Oldham Council @OldhamCouncil · 2 Apr 2016

Big decisions could be made without you. #RegAFriend and change that [gov.uk/register-to-vo...](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)



London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames

The **London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames** have set up an automatic response message on their generic email address so that whenever they are emailed, a response providing FAQs is sent automatically. This covers common queries such as how to register, how to remove people from the register who no longer live at the address, changing opt-out status, etc. This can be expanded upon at election time to provide key election deadline dates.

Challenges

- Understanding your registration area – for example, what are the demographics, what proportion are not English speakers, and which communication methods work best?
- Any activity that encourages registration will likely lead to increased engagement from the public, including applications from people who are already registered (duplicates) – you will need to be prepared to respond to this.



Have you thought about encouraging an application to register before you issue an ITR?

When you become aware of the name of a potential elector, you have a legal duty to issue an invitation to register within 28 calendar days. This gives you a 28-day window in which you can informally encourage an application, and if successful, you won't need to go to the expense of completing the ITR process.

For example, if you have an email address for the potential elector, you could send them a link to the online application form and information about the available channels for registration.

We provide further guidance on encouraging an application to be made in Chapter 2 of [Part 4: Maintaining the register throughout the year](#).

Resources



Our [example tactics sheets for reaching target audiences](#) contain ideas for targeting and communicating with typically under-registered groups, such as young people, BME groups and private renters.

You can draw on our [resources and templates](#) for your communications. These have been designed with impact and accessibility in mind.

The Cabinet Office has also made available a range of [democratic engagement resources](#) for different groups of people and settings. They have been developed in collaboration with a number of national organisations.

Detailed guidance on reviewing and updating your [public engagement strategy](#) and [registration plan](#) is contained in [Part 1: Planning for the delivery of electoral registration activity](#).

Get in touch

We would very much like to hear about your experiences so please get in touch with your [local Commission team](#). Alternatively if you would like speak directly to any of the authorities referenced in this resource, please let us know and we will be happy to help with this.