GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

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<td>Notice of election to be published</td>
<td>Thursday 24 March 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery of nomination papers</td>
<td>Between the hours of 10 am and 4 pm on any working day after publication of notice of election</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day for delivery of nomination papers</td>
<td>Not later than 4pm on 7 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day for withdrawal of candidature</td>
<td>Not later than 4pm on 7 April 2016</td>
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<td>Last day for notice of appointment of election agents</td>
<td>Not later than 4pm on 7 April 2016</td>
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<td>Deadline for submission of electoral addresses to PARO</td>
<td>12 noon 7 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of first interim election notice of alteration</td>
<td>7 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publish Statement of Persons nominated</td>
<td>Not later than 4pm on 8 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day for applications to be included on register of electors in order to vote in the election</td>
<td>18 April 2016</td>
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<td>Last day for requests for a new postal vote or to change or cancel an existing postal vote or proxy appointment</td>
<td>Not later than 5pm on 19 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day for new applications to vote by proxy (not postal proxy) except for medical emergencies</td>
<td>Not later than 5pm on 26 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publish Notice of Poll</td>
<td>Not later than 26 April 2016</td>
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<td>Last day for notice of appointment of polling and counting agents and sub agents</td>
<td>Not later than 27 April 2016</td>
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<td>Publication of final ‘Election’ notice of alteration (registration)</td>
<td>27 April 2016</td>
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<td>First day to issue replacement postal ballot packs in response to requests to replace lost postal ballot papers</td>
<td>28 April 2016</td>
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<td>Polling day</td>
<td>7 am – 10 pm 5 May 2016</td>
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<td>Last day to issue replacement for spoilt or lost postal ballot papers</td>
<td>Not later than 5pm on Polling day</td>
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<td>Last day for new applications to vote by proxy on grounds of a medical emergency</td>
<td>Not later than 5pm on Polling day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to make alterations to the register to correct a clerical error or to implement a court (registration appeal) decision</td>
<td>Not later than 9pm on Polling day</td>
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<td>Last day for return of election expenses and agents declaration to PARO</td>
<td>If result declared 6 May – 15 July 2016</td>
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Candidates Addresses

- Each candidate is entitled to have an election address included on a website, maintained by the Secretary of State.
- No election address may be included unless approved by the PARO.
- Any costs incurred by the candidate relating to the submission are not to be treated as an election expense.
- The deadline for submissions to the PARO is NOON on 7 April 2016
- The candidate may determine the content of the address subject to requirements imposed on him/her.
- It must
  - be prepared by the agent on the prescribed form.
  - be submitted electronically
  - be capable of being produced in hard copy
  - contain a statement to the effect that it has been prepared by the election agent and give the name and address of the election agent.
  - specify the candidate’s name and matters relating only to the PCC election.
  - comply with any requirements re formatting and permitted number of words as may be specified by the Secretary of State.
- It must not
  - contain any advertising material
  - contain any material referring to another candidate
  - be indecent, offensive or obscene
  - contain material with a view to commercial gain
- Any photograph included must not show any other person
- The photograph also must not
  - contain any advertising material
  - contain any material referring to another candidate
  - be indecent, offensive or obscene
  - contain material with a view to commercial gain
- An election address may include the registered party emblem but the candidate must have authorisation do so by way of a certificate issued by or on behalf of the registered nominating officer and received by the PARO before the last time for delivery of nomination papers.
- The PARO may make minor amendments but if it does not comply, it must be returned with an explanation.
- Once PARO satisfied it complies, it is sent to S of S with a statement to say PARO so satisfied no later than midnight on the 18th calendar day before the poll.
- PARO notifies candidate of date on which it was sent to S of S and of any minor corrections made.
- Secretary of State sends copy of election address as it will look on website.
- PARO sends to relevant election agent inviting comments or corrections
- PARO makes changes and returns it to Secretary of State
- S of S publishes the candidates addresses for each police area in alphabetical order
- Any requests received for a hard copy must be forwarded from the PARO to the Secretary of State
- The S of S may make available hard copies and also make them available in braille, audio or large print
- The S of S may make available copies for the each local authority and public libraries in each police force area.
Code of conduct for campaigners: electoral registration, postal voting, proxy voting and polling stations

Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, and their right to put their arguments to voters should be supported and protected. It is equally important, however, to ensure that the activities of campaigners do not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.

This Code provides a guide for campaigners, electoral administrators and police forces to what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community during the lead-up to polling day.

As a guiding principle, if there is any doubt about a particular activity, campaigners should ask themselves “What would a reasonable observer think?”

More detailed guidance about electoral offences can be found in the guidance for candidates and agents, which is available at:

The Code has been sent to all registered political parties in Great Britain, and Returning Officers will draw it to the attention of all candidates and parties contesting elections.

Some Returning Officers may identify the need to develop and seek agreement to specific local provisions which supplement the terms of this Code, in order to address identified local risks. Returning Officers must consult with local campaigners and the relevant national Nominating Officers as well as police forces to secure appropriate local agreement to such provisions, and should ensure that they are communicated and well-understood by campaigners locally.
Scope of this code

This code covers all those actively involved in campaigning in elections or referendums in Great Britain. All references to campaigners in this code include:

- Candidates standing at an election, their agents and their staff and supporters
- Political party officers, members and supporters campaigning at an election
- Other people and organisations campaigning for or against a candidate, a group of candidates or a party at an election
- People and organisations campaigning for or against a particular outcome at a referendum

Compliance with this code

Any concerns that this code has been breached should be raised first with the candidate, political party or campaigner in question.

Any further concerns should be drawn to the attention of the Electoral Commission. The Commission will raise them with the relevant party or campaigner if appropriate, and will agree appropriate actions to remedy or prevent a reoccurrence of any breach.

1 Electoral registration and absent vote applications

1.1 Campaigners should be free to encourage voters to register to vote and apply to vote by post or appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf, if that is the most convenient way for them to vote.

Campaigners can help to inform voters about how to participate in elections, and Electoral Registration Officers should support you by providing you with a reasonable number of registration and absent vote application forms on request. Voters can also register online at:

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

1.2 Campaigners should ensure that any electoral registration forms and postal or proxy voting application forms conform fully to the requirements of electoral law, including all the necessary questions and the options open to electors.
You can download electoral registration forms from www.gov.uk/register-to-vote and absent vote application forms from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

1.3 Campaigners should ensure that the local Electoral Registration Officer’s address is clearly provided as the preferred address for the return of registration and absent vote application forms.

To ensure voters can make their own choice about how to return registration or absent vote application forms, you should always clearly provide the relevant Electoral Registration Officer’s address as the preferred return address, even if an alternative address is also given. This will also minimise the risk of suspicion that completed applications could be altered or inadvertently lost or destroyed.

1.4 Campaigners should send on unaltered any completed registration or absent vote application forms given to them to the relevant Electoral Registration Officer’s address within two working days of receipt.

To minimise the risk of absent vote applications being refused because completed forms arrive with the Electoral Registration Officer after the statutory deadline before a poll, you must ensure that there is no unnecessary delay in forwarding on application forms which you receive directly.

1.5 Campaigners should always explain to electors the implications of applying to vote by post or appointing a proxy.

It is important that electors understand that they will not be able to vote in person on polling day if they or their proxy apply for and are granted a postal vote, and will not be able to vote in person if their appointed proxy has already voted on their behalf. To avoid duplication and unnecessary administrative pressures for Electoral Registration Officers, campaigners should try to ensure that electors who are included in current postal or proxy voter lists, or have already applied for a postal or proxy vote for a particular poll, do not submit an additional application.

**Postal vote applications**

1.6 Campaigners should never encourage electors to have their postal ballot pack redirected to anywhere other than the address where they are registered to vote.
Electors should take care to protect their ballot paper and postal ballot pack, and they will be best able to do so at their home address unless there are compelling reasons why receiving the postal ballot pack at the address where they are registered to vote would be impractical. Electors must state on the application form the reason why they need their postal ballot pack sent to another address.

Proxy vote applications

1.7 Electors should be encouraged to explore other options for people to act as a proxy – including relatives or neighbours, for example – before a campaigner agrees to be appointed as a proxy.

To minimise the risk of suspicions that campaigners may be seeking to place undue pressure on electors, electors should not be encouraged to appoint a campaigner as their proxy.

2 Postal voting ballot papers

2.1 Campaigners should never touch or handle anyone else’s ballot paper.

If you are asked for assistance in completing a ballot paper, you should always refer the voter to the Returning Officer’s staff at the elections office who may be able to arrange a home visit if necessary. Assistance will also be available for electors at polling stations.

2.2 Campaigners should never observe voters completing their ballot paper. If you are with a voter when they complete their ballot paper, remember they should always complete it in secret.

You should ensure that the voter seals both envelopes personally and immediately after completing their ballot paper and postal voting statement. If you are asked to give advice, it is acceptable and often helpful to explain the voting process, but do not offer to help anyone to complete their ballot paper.

2.3 Campaigners should never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot packs from voters.

Wherever practical, you should encourage voters to post or deliver the completed postal ballot pack themselves. If you are approached or asked for help by a voter who is unable to post their completed postal ballot pack or make any other arrangements for it to be returned in time, you should contact the Returning Officer to ask them to arrange for it to be collected. The Returning Officer may agree that it would be in the voter’s best interest for you to deliver the completed postal ballot pack to the relevant office or polling station, if there are no feasible alternative options.
3 Campaigning outside polling places

3.1 Campaigners should be allowed to put their messages to voters on polling day, including in public spaces outside polling places.

Polling station staff and police officers should not seek to discourage or remove campaigners who are otherwise peacefully communicating with voters, as long as they are not within or impeding access to the grounds of the polling place. You should be careful, however, to ensure that your approach is proportionate and should recognise that groups of supporters may be perceived as intimidating by voters.

3.2 Campaigners should keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.

The Presiding Officer is responsible for maintaining order in the polling place, and you may be asked to move by polling station staff or police officers if you are impeding access by voters to a polling place.

4 Complaints and allegations about electoral fraud

4.1 Campaigners should be prepared to give the police a statement and substantiate any allegations of electoral fraud they make.

The police will investigate allegations where someone is prepared to provide evidence or a statement in support of the complaint, but unsubstantiated claims about electoral fraud have the potential to damage confidence in the integrity of the electoral process. You should ensure you are confident that evidence can be provided to the police before considering whether it is appropriate to publicise any specific allegation.

4.2 Campaigners who are concerned or think that electoral fraud may have taken place should raise the matter with their election agent or local party, or with the relevant Electoral Registration Officer or Returning Officer for the area.

They may be able to explain whether or not an election-related crime has been committed, and refer it to the police if appropriate or provide details of the police contact for the relevant area so that campaigners can report their allegation. Concerns about breaches of the political finance rules should be raised directly with the Electoral Commission.
4.3 Any campaigner who has actual evidence that an electoral offence has been committed should report it directly and without delay to the police.

If appropriate, the police will investigate the matter. Every police force has designated a Single Point of Contact (known as a SPOC) to lead on election matters and who will deal directly with the matter or give advice to local police officers. The Electoral Commission can help provide contact details for local police force SPOCs.

Agreed and effective from [December 2014]
Tellers do’s and don’ts

Tellers are usually volunteers for candidates. They stand outside polling places and record the electoral number of electors who have voted. By identifying electors who have not voted and relaying this information to the candidate or their supporters, tellers play an important role in elections and referendums. The candidate or their supporters may then contact the voters who have not yet been to vote during polling day and persuade them to vote, which may help to increase turnout.

There should be no more than one teller at a polling station for each candidate at any time. Where a polling place contains more than one polling station with separate entrances, it may be appropriate for there to be tellers at each entrance, but no more than one per candidate.

Tellers have no legal status and voters have the right to refuse to give them any information.

Tellers must:  
(a) Always remain outside the polling station/place.  
(b) Only enter the polling station to cast their own vote, to vote as a proxy or to assist a voter with disabilities.  
(c) Always comply with the instructions of the Returning Officer.

Tellers must not:  
(a) Be able to see or hear what is happening inside the polling station.  
(b) Impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling station/place.  
(c) Demand any information relating to a voter’s elector number, name or address.  
(d) Ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their elector number.  
(e) Have discussions with voters that may give rise to allegations of undue influence (e.g. voting intentions or party affiliations).  
(f) Display any campaign material in support of or against any particular political party or candidate other than a rosette.

Tellers may:  
(a) Approach voters for information as they enter/leave the polling station/place.  
(b) Display a coloured rosette displaying the name of the candidate or party. While the rosette must not be oversized, it may carry a description or emblem.
**Election Process and Local Arrangements**

- **Notice of Election** will be posted on **24 March 2016**
- **Nominations** close **4 pm 7 April 2016**
- A copy of the Register of Electors for each voting area may be requested no earlier than the 24 March 2016 on the form provided within the nomination pack. The request needs to be submitted to the Local Returning Officers for the voting areas that you require the register for.
- Copies of the Absent Voter list may be requested on the form provided within the nomination pack. The request needs to be submitted to the Local Returning Officers for the voting areas that you require the Absent Voter list for.
- If there is only one validly nominated candidate they will be elected uncontested.
- If there is more than one validly nominated candidate an election will be held on **Thursday 5 May 2016**
- If the election is held with only two candidates, the successful candidate will be elected using the ‘first past the post’ system.
- If the election is held with three or more candidates, the successful candidate will be elected using the ‘supplementary voting’ system.
- The verification of the ballot boxes will take place locally i.e. each Local Returning Officer will verify the ballot boxes for their voting area at their chosen venue.
- Each Local Returning Officer will liaise direct with candidates and their agents giving the date, time and place of their local verification, count and if required second count.
- The counting of the votes will take place locally i.e. within each voting area with each Local Returning Officer communicating their results at each stage to the Police Area Returning Officer.
- The counting of the votes will commence at 1.00 pm on Friday 6 May 2016 in each voting area (formal notification will be given by each Local Returning Officer).
- Each Local Returning Officer will notify candidates and their agents of the number of counting agents permitted to attend the verification and count within their respective voting area (formula for number of permitted counting agents is obtained by dividing the number of counting assistants by the number of candidates) after the date for withdrawals.
- Each Local Returning Officer will notify candidates and their agents of the dates, times and place of the opening of postal votes.