Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Review of Electoral Registration and Conduct

Executive Summary

This report sets out the findings of the Review of Electoral Registration and Conduct, carried out between October 2024 and March 2025. The Review focused on practical reforms to improve the delivery of elections and the experience of voters. It covered electoral conduct, registration, and resourcing, with input from working groups across the sector. Recommendations include simplifying registration for overseas electors, improving postal vote processes, clarifying legal responsibilities, and ensuring Returning Officers have access to necessary resources. The proposals aim to deliver short-term improvements while laying the groundwork for longer-term reform.

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Introduction to the Review

1. In recent years, delivering elections has become increasingly challenging for both Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers. These pressures have been driven by unscheduled General Elections, a rise in postal voting, pressures on supply chains, and frequent changes to electoral law. Together, these factors have added complexity to an already demanding system. Despite this, elections have continued to run smoothly, thanks to the dedication and professionalism of electoral teams across the country. However, it is clear that further support and reform are needed to help ensure future resilience.

2. In response, Ministers commissioned the Review of Electoral Conduct and Registration ('the Review'). This short-term project ran from October 2024 to March 2025. It involved a series of working group meetings with electoral administrators, the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), the Electoral Commission, and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). These groups provided feedback on key issues, which the Review team used to develop recommendations. These were then reviewed by a Steering Group made up of senior stakeholders, including Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) and Returning Officers (RO), and senior representatives from the EC, AEA, SOLACE, and the Electoral Management Boards for Scotland and Wales.

3. The Review was guided by three main aims: to reduce risks to election delivery, to streamline electoral administration and registration, and to improve the experience for electors. While these goals shaped the recommendations, the Review also considered how primary legislation could support the Government's wider electoral priorities. The resulting proposals are designed to deliver meaningful change in the short term whilst recognising that there is more work to do in the long term to support the delivery of elections.

Scope of the Review

4. The Review was structured around three workstreams, each led by a dedicated working group:

- **Electoral Conduct Working Group**
  This group focused on the key stages of election delivery, including nominations, absent voting, polling day, the count, and the overall electoral timetable.

- **Electoral Registration Working Group**
  The scope for registration was more limited, as other departmental workstreams were already addressing broader voter registration reforms. This group concentrated on overseas elector registration, event-led registration, and the annual canvass.

- **Electoral Resourcing Working Group**
  While routine electoral funding is managed by an existing group, this workstream explored specific issues such as the role and remuneration of Returning Officers, the use of council resources, and the provision of candidate and election literature.

5. Some areas were explicitly excluded from the Review. These included Votes at 16 and wider voter registration reforms, which are being addressed through separate projects. Digital developments were also out of scope, except where they could help resolve existing delivery challenges.

Methodology

6. To identify key issues and develop practical solutions, the Review team—working with policy colleagues in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) —prepared discussion papers for each topic. These papers were informed by existing knowledge within the Department, as well as reports from a range of organisations including the Electoral Commission, the Law Commission, the AEA and SOLACE. These papers guided the working group meetings but also allowed space for members to raise additional concerns.

7. Following each meeting, the Review team developed draft recommendations, which were then reviewed and refined by a Steering Group. This process ensured that proposals were informed by operational experience and sector-wide input.

8. A Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) approach was used to evaluate and prioritise recommendations. This method provided the flexibility needed to shape proposals that could be included in future legislation, including a potential elections Bill.

Part I – Electoral Conduct

Introduction

9. The Electoral Conduct Working Group focused on the practical delivery of elections, covering key areas such as the electoral timetable, nominations, absent voting, polling day processes, and the count. The aim was to identify changes that could reduce pressure on administrators, improve the experience for voters, and strengthen the overall resilience of the system. The Group considered both legislative and non-legislative options, drawing on operational experience to shape realistic and effective recommendations.

The Electoral Timetable

10. The Review began by examining the electoral timetable. Although individual deadlines—such as the nomination deadline—could be addressed under separate topics, we considered it more effective to review the timetable as a whole. This allowed us to consider how different elements interact, while recognising some overlap with other areas of the Review.

11. From the outset, we made clear that a full extension of the electoral timetable was outside the scope of this work. While we acknowledge the potential benefits of a longer timetable, concerns remain about the implications of a prolonged period without a sitting Parliament. These would need to be addressed before any such change could be considered.

Nominations Deadline

12. The Group initially reviewed the deadline for nominations. It was clear that any movement to later in the timetable would have a negative impact on the delivery of postal voting as it would delay the printing of postal ballot papers and, therefore, was not considered viable. The consensus was that the current date worked well, though some members suggested moving it a day earlier to 20 working days before the poll. We have not recommended this change, as it may be too restrictive for candidates and political parties in the event of a snap poll.

13. In terms of the timing for submitting nominations, the Group noted that the current restriction of accepting nominations only between 10am and 4pm at UK Parliamentary, Combined Authority Mayoral and Police and Crime Commissioner elections was outdated. There was a general agreement that allowing nominations to be submitted between 9am and 5pm, except on the final day, would be more beneficial for these polls (local elections can require more flexibility where parishes are involved, and this is already permitted in law). This would provide more time for elections teams to manage their already demanding schedules and give more flexibility for candidates and parties.

14. On the final day of nominations, however, the Group proposed moving the 4pm submission deadline to an earlier time in the day, and midday was suggested (keeping the deadline for objections at one hour past the deadline for nominations). This change would allow Returning Officers more time to proof the ballot papers with the printer(s) and begin issuing postal votes.

15. In combination, the changes increase the overall number of hours available for the delivery of nominations at UK Parliamentary, Combined Authority Mayoral and Police and Crime Commissioner elections. Although moving the deadline earlier in the day seems a small change, it will allow a greater number of postal ballot papers to be proofed and sent to print on the same day.

16. The Review is making the following recommendations in relation to the nominations period and deadline:

Recommendation 1

Allow nomination papers to be submitted between 9am and 5pm, in place of the current arrangement that they can only be submitted between 10am and 4pm.

Recommendation 2

Set the final deadline for delivery of nomination papers at midday, instead of 4pm, on the close of nominations date for UK Parliamentary elections.

Registration Deadline

17. The Conduct Working Group considered the registration deadline and reached a consensus that there was no compelling reason to change the date of the deadline itself. Moving it to a date earlier in time would reduce the window for people to register to vote ahead of a poll, and the Group did not consider there to be sufficient reason to recommend this. However, members did propose shifting the registration deadline from midnight to 5pm on the 12th working day before the poll. This change received broad support, as it would align the time of the registration deadline with other key application deadlines, such as those for postal votes, proxy votes, and Voter Authority Certificates.

18. The Group felt that setting the deadline at 5pm would ensure a clear and consistent time for the cutoff and would allow any issues or queries from electors to be addressed within the working day. This adjustment was seen as sensible for the effective administration of electoral registration, particularly at a crucial point in the electoral timetable. It would also help streamline the process by bringing the registration deadline in line with the other application deadlines.

19. Furthermore, there is no clear registration deadline in legislation for UK Parliamentary elections; instead it is calculated by adding the number of days permitted for an objection to a registration application to the deadline for the final publication of registers ahead of a poll. This results in it being the current deadline of the 12th working day before the poll and, in the absence of a clear time, the deadline is taken to be midnight at the end of the day. The Review recommended that, when moving the deadline to 5pm, the opportunity should also be taken to clarify the legislation and make clear that the deadline is the 12th working day before the poll.

Recommendation 3

To move the register to vote deadline from midnight to 5pm on the 12th working day before the poll.

Postal Vote Application Deadline

20. The Group was broadly supportive of moving the postal vote application deadline earlier in the timetable, with several members noting that the benefits of this change would depend largely on the capacity of electoral printers. The proposed new dates for the postal vote application deadline were 14 or 16 working days before the poll, with electoral administrators generally favouring the 16-working-day option. However, there was an understanding that the capacity of printers would play a crucial role in determining whether this change would be effective.

21. The main benefits of an earlier postal vote application deadline included allowing EROs to process the bulk of applications received during the election timetable at an earlier time, enabling them to provide data to printers sooner. This, in turn, could facilitate the earlier dispatch of the second run of postal votes - provided printers had the capacity to process and print them more quickly. This would enable more time for delivery, completion and return of postal votes, reducing the risk that electors are not able to return their votes before the close of poll. It would also provide more time for dealing with the

issues that arise with production and delivery with an exercise of this magnitude.

22. While the Group was supportive of the proposal, there was caution about the potential drawbacks, particularly the risk of reducing the time available for electors to apply for a postal vote. Group members advised that clear and effective messaging would be crucial to ensure that electors understand the implications of the postal deadline being earlier than the registration deadline.

23. Nonetheless, there was a compelling case for the change, especially given the increasing demand for postal voting, which is a critical and growing risk area in election delivery. The experience of the 2024 UK General Election also highlighted the need for an earlier deadline, to allow more time for the final tranche of postal votes to be dispatched, completed and returned before the close of poll. The shift to online applications has allowed individuals to apply up until the last minute, creating a compressed timeline for processing the second round of postal votes. Additionally, the introduction of the requirement for applicants to provide a National Insurance number, which is automatically checked against DWP records, has improved integrity but added complexity to the process. If the check fails, applicants can submit documentary evidence after the deadline, which could be better facilitated by moving the deadline earlier.

24. Consultations with electoral print suppliers (large, medium and small in terms of client bases) revealed varying perspectives on the impact of an earlier deadline. Some suppliers indicated that it would put an expectation on them to print the second batch earlier, which they could not currently commit to doing. Some said it would assist to have the deadline 14 working days before the poll in order to receive the data for the second tranche earlier, whilst another printer suggested a deadline 16 working days before the poll may allow them to combine the first and second run of postal votes for some clients where the first batch was still to be printed. The overall position was that there was general gain from a 14-working day deadline but a clear view from all but one printer that a deadline 16 working days before the poll would be unhelpful as they would be busy processing and printing the first round of postal votes.

25. Overall, an earlier deadline of 14 working days would allow election teams to process most applications sooner, providing printers with more time to handle the second batch. This additional time would introduce more contingency into the system, helping mitigate potential production or delivery issues and reducing the overall risk to the postal vote process and the effective delivery of the election.

Recommendation 4

To move the postal vote application deadline earlier in time to 5pm on the 14th working day before the poll.

Voter Authority Certificate and Proxy Vote Application Deadline

26. The Group expressed no desire to move these deadlines. It was felt that the current timings were manageable and provided balance in terms of supporting electors and allowing effective administration. This is borne out by the experience of recent polls.

Nominations Process and Potential Reforms

27. The Conduct Working Group reviewed the nominations process and considered potential reforms to enhance its efficiency. Initially, the Group examined the forms that candidates and agents are required to complete. While the forms were generally deemed straightforward, feedback on their quality was mixed, with reports of errors in significant numbers of submitted forms. The Group felt that people completing the forms commonly did so without due care as they knew they would be checked and errors corrected or relayed back by administrators. The Group felt that further simplification or rationalisation of the forms would be beneficial to reduce errors on completion. We have therefore recommended that this be addressed as part of the forms rationalisation and review work stemming from the Review. Due to capacity constraints, an in-depth review of all nominations forms was not possible as part of this Review.

Online Submission of Nominations Forms

28. The Group also discussed the possibility of allowing online submission of nominations forms. Concerns were raised about the potential for errors and the loss of the vital service provided by administrators who currently proof and correct forms upon submission. Allowing nominations forms to be submitted via email was considered by members of the group to be too risky, as it might lead to forms being overlooked in inboxes or not submitted on time by agents and candidates. The Group concluded that effective online submission would require a centralised platform, likely to be created by the Government, with built-in checks and safeguards to replicate the security of the current in-person service. This would be a significant undertaking and would require careful consideration and, ultimately, more fundamental reforms to the nominations process which would require supporting evidence and need to be carried out in slower time.

Proof of Identity for Candidates

29. The Group considered requiring candidates to provide proof of identity when submitting their nomination form. While there was sufficient policy logic for such a change, it quickly became apparent that an in person identity check would not work effectively with the current system. Nominations forms are mostly submitted by agents rather than the candidates themselves, and it may not be feasible for candidates to travel to the elections office to present identification, particularly if they live outside the constituency in which they are standing. Additionally, although there are requirements to live within the electoral area at local and parish elections, there may be thousands of candidates, which would present issues in terms of managing the process if they all had to present themselves in person. Furthermore, any additional requirement for Returning Officers to vet candidates would be a significant departure from current process and would require significant further consideration.

30. We do, however, think that more consideration should be given to the rules around sham or misleading nominations and how they can be deterred. As such, at the conclusion of the Review we recommended that further work be undertaken to consider what improvements might be made. Since then, we have explored options in this area and intend to implement a requirement that a copy of a suitable form of ID be submitted with a candidate's nomination papers. This is a proportionate solution that will help to deter spurious nominations whilst remaining manageable for candidates and electoral administrators. In addition, we intend to create a new declaration form that candidates must sign as part of the nomination process, that confirms they are aware that it is an offence to knowingly lie to the Returning Officer. In combination, these proposals will begin to address the recommendations set out below by deterring sham or misleading nominations.

Subscriber Signatures

31. The Group discussed removing the requirement for electors to sign as subscribers in support of candidates' nominations. Subscriber signatures were seen as a significant administrative burden and no longer fit for purpose. It was also noted that the requirement has been removed in devolved elections without apparent issues. However, we believe there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the original policy, which requires supporting signatures to demonstrate candidacy support, is no longer valid. Any changes to the subscriber signature requirement would need to be taken as part of a wider assessment of the factors impacting candidates standing for election, which we suggest could be considered as part of the ongoing work looking at sham/misleading nominations, recommended below. Therefore, we do not suggest removing the subscriber signature requirement at this time but note the Working Group's comments for future consideration.

Retention of Nominations Forms

32. Finally, the Group highlighted that there is no requirement to retain nominations forms for an incumbent's term of office. If the form is the only proof of eligibility (e.g. residency in the area for a certain period), the elections team may have no means of confirming a person's ongoing eligibility to hold office if they move address during their term. The Group recommended revising these rules and requiring an appropriate officer at the local authority to retain relevant nominations forms for the duration of a person's term of office.

Recommendation 5

Amend the law to require that nominations forms of elected persons are retained for the duration of the term of office.

Recommendation 6

As part of the forms workstream, carry out work to simplify and rationalise nominations forms.

Recommendation 7

Further consider the rules around sham/misleading nominations.

Absent Voting

33. The electoral conduct Working Group considered issues related to absent voting. As noted earlier, pressures associated with absent voting, particularly postal votes, present some of the key risks to the effective delivery of elections. The intention of the discussions was to identify changes to reduce pressure on the system and support electors in voting. The Review acknowledged the broader pressures on postal vote delivery and supply chains and that further work should be undertaken to continue to consider these issues. As a result, the Review has recommended further work to assess the supplier market.

34. Recent elections have shown a growing gap between what voters expect and what the postal voting system can deliver. In an age of next-day and same-day delivery, many electors assume similar speed and reliability for postal votes. However, current production and delivery processes are not designed to meet

these expectations, increasing the risk that postal votes may not be returned in time to be counted.

35. We recognise the sector's concerns and share the view that the underlying issues around the electoral timetable and supplier capacity are significant. However, resolving them would require major intervention, and even then, success is not guaranteed. The proposals that follow should be considered in this context. The Review therefore focused on supporting electors and Returning Officers to manage the risks of late application and delivery in the context of the current system of postal voting on-demand.

Recommendation 8

Carry out a review of electoral print and delivery supplier market.

Issuing Replacement Postal Votes

36. The Electoral Conduct Working Group discussed a range of ideas to support electors requiring an absent vote close to polling day. The Group discussed the issue of replacement postal votes. Currently, a Returning Officer can only issue replacement postal votes where an initial postal vote is deemed to be lost or not received from the fourth working day before the poll. This rule was originally introduced to reduce pressure on elections teams to reissue postal votes earlier in scenarios where the postal vote simply had not yet arrived. We have received feedback from last year's General Election that, with increasing numbers of postal voters, this deadline is now too late in the electoral timetable and does not allow Returning Officers sufficient flexibility to support voters. This was also reflected in the Electoral Commission's report[1] on the polls and the AEA's recently published blueprint.[2]

37. The Working Group agreed with the idea that this deadline should be moved earlier in time, however also highlighted the benefits of a specific deadline to help avoid elector confusion and ensure consistency in practice across the country. As such we recommend moving the date at which postal vote replacements can be issued from the fourth day before the poll to any time after the postal vote application deadline. This will provide plenty of additional time

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[1] https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/research-reports-and-data/our-reports-and-data-past-elections-and-referendums/report-2024-uk-parliamentary-general-election-and-may-2024-elections
[2] https://www.aea-elections.co.uk/blueprint2025/

for lost postal votes to be reissued, whilst also providing clarity and consistency in the rules.

38. The proposed change would broadly reflect the current legislation allowing reissue of postal votes from the fourth working day before the poll. However, we are proposing to add additional discretion to the Returning Officer that they are satisfied that the postal vote will not arrive in time to be used. This change aims to cover scenarios where postal votes are in transit and potentially not due to arrive until later, but still in time to be completed and returned. This way, Returning Officers are not forced to issue replacement postal votes solely because the original has not yet arrived.

39. The Review recognised that there have been calls to allow discretion for Returning Officers to issue replacement postal votes at any point after the original postal vote has been issued, however, we have concluded that providing a set date in law will help ensure consistency across the country.

Recommendation 9

Allow Returning Officers to issue replacement postal votes from after the postal vote application deadline if they are satisfied that the original postal vote is lost or not received and will not arrive in time for them to cast their vote. This is in place of the current restriction that they must wait until the fourth working day before the poll.

Emergency Proxy Voting and Late Cancellation of Postal Votes

40. The Group also discussed extending the scenarios in which an elector can appoint an emergency proxy.

41. There were mixed opinions from the Working Group regarding the administrative burden of issuing emergency proxy votes. It was felt that clear rules set out in legislation would help electoral administrators during busy periods and ensure consistency. Questions were also raised about the risk of increased administrative burden, and the risk that changes might increase rather than reduce burden for electoral administrators.

42. The risk of supply chain strain or even failure was raised throughout the discussions and there was a clear desire to be able to support postal voters. As

such, we have recommended two proposals that would allow postal voters to change their voting method close to polling day.

43. As noted earlier, current postal vote production and delivery processes no longer always meet reasonable expectations. At a snap General Election—or similar poll—there is a realistic scenario where an elector applies for a postal vote four and a half weeks before polling day, just after the first batch of data is sent to printers. If they miss the cut-off for the first tranche, their vote will be included in the second tranche, which is issued after the postal vote application deadline. As a result, they may not receive their postal vote until less than a week before polling day.

44. We recognise that someone who had applied so early might expect to receive their postal vote sooner than a week before the poll. We have considered several options to allow people with a postal vote to vote where that arrangement becomes no longer viable after the postal voting deadline, in addition to the option of providing a replacement postal vote.

45. One option is allowing postal voters to cancel their postal vote and either vote in person or appoint an emergency proxy if the Returning Officer is satisfied that their postal vote has not and will not arrive in time for them to cast their vote. We have considered either allowing postal voters to cancel their postal vote in this scenario at any point after the postal vote deadline, or only allowing it closer to the poll, after 5pm on the 6th working day before the poll.

46. Whilst we recognise that postal votes can be cancelled and those cancelled postal votes can be identified if returned, our view is that we would want to keep postal vote cancellations to a minimum. However, we also do not want to create a 'limbo' where it is not possible to assist an elector with a legitimate need until later in the electoral timetable. As such, we are proposing to allow the cancellation of postal votes after the application deadline, where the elector has met a number of tests and the ERO is satisfied that the elector will not be able to vote unless they cancel their postal vote. The change is not intended to remove the existing certainty around the postal vote deadline but instead provide an option for postal voters who are unable to vote through no fault of their own.

Recommendation 10

Allow a postal voter to cancel their postal vote and vote in person or appoint an emergency proxy after the postal vote application deadline on the basis that the Electoral Registration

Officer is satisfied that their postal vote has not and will not arrive in time for them to cast their vote.

47. In combination with the recommendation to allow earlier reissue of postal votes, this would allow postal voters to either obtain a replacement postal vote, vote in person, or appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf if it is determined that the original postal vote is no longer viable. We recognise that practices may vary across different areas. However, existing legislation did not anticipate the current pressures of postal voting, and we believe changes are necessary to ensure electors can cast their votes. We acknowledge that these changes add to an imperfect system and that broader reforms are needed. However, further changes will take time, and we believe these interim reforms are appropriate.

Fixing Absent Voting Legislation

48. The Electoral Conduct Working Group discussed several issues related to absent voting legislation, focusing on areas where the legislation could benefit from clarification.

Postal Vote Determination Deadline

49. The Working Group discussed the final deadline for the determination of postal vote applications ahead of a poll and agreed that it would be beneficial to have clarity and consistency around this deadline. We therefore proposed to set a clear deadline after which supporting evidence for postal votes cannot be accepted. We considered a number of dates at which we could set the definitive determination deadline. The intention is that this date should provide sufficient time for the applicant to provide additional information in support of their application but also that there should be sufficient time for a postal vote to be sent out, completed and returned before the poll. Two possible options considered were the 8th or the 6th working day before the poll. A deadline on the 6th working day would be in line with current rules around the production of absent voter lists and would provide the applicant with at least 8 working days to provide the necessary information (if the postal vote application deadline is moved to the 14th working day before the poll). A deadline on the 8th working day before the poll would provide two fewer days for the applicant to provide additional information, however there would be two more days for the postal vote to be sent out, completed and returned.

50. Following further consideration and discussion with the Steering Group, we have proposed to set the final determination deadline at 5pm on the 6th working day before the poll, in line with the current rules for the point after which absent voter lists should be produced.

Recommendation 11

Establish a definitive postal vote determination deadline in legislation at 5pm on the 6th working day before the poll.

Issuing Postal Votes During the Objections Period

51. Currently, when someone registers to vote and applies for a postal vote shortly afterwards, the law requires that their registration be confirmed after a five-day objection period before the postal vote can be processed. In practice, many Returning Officers issue the postal vote immediately, relying on the ability to cancel it later in their electoral management system if the registration is unsuccessful. This has become common practice and is seen as a practical way to ensure voters receive their postal vote in good time.

52. We believe this approach is sensible and supports timely delivery. We have therefore recommended amending legislation to formally allow postal votes to be issued during the objection period.

Recommendation 12

Update legislation to enable postal votes to be issued during the objections period.

Cancellation of Postal Votes When an Elector Is Removed from the Register

53. Additionally, while current rules allow for the cancellation of postal votes in certain situations, they do not explicitly cover cases where an elector is removed from the register. In practice, Returning Officers cancel the postal vote in such cases, and we recommend that this approach be formally set out in law.

Recommendation 13

Clarifying provisions for cancellation of postal votes where an elector is removed from the register.

Postal Votes Where Registration or Arrangements Expire During the Timetable

54. There is also a lack of clarity around whether a postal vote should be issued when an elector's registration or postal vote arrangement ends or expires during the electoral timetable.

55. **Registration Ends or Expires**: If an elector's registration is due to expire before the fifth working day before the poll, a postal vote should still be issued, on the assumption that the elector may re-register. If they do not, the vote should be cancelled. If the registration expires after the fifth working day, the postal vote should be issued and counted, even if the elector does not re-register. This ensures consistency with in-person voters, who remain eligible to vote under the same circumstances.

56. **Postal Vote Arrangement Expires**: The same principle should apply. If the arrangement is due to expire before the fifth working day before the poll, a postal vote should be issued, assuming the elector may reapply. If they do not, the vote should be cancelled. If the arrangement expires after the fifth working day, the postal vote should be issued and counted, even if the elector does not renew it. This approach ensures fairness and consistency with how in-person voters are treated and avoids penalising electors due to administrative timing.

Recommendation 14

Clarify existing legislation for scenarios where an elector's registration or postal vote arrangement expires during the electoral timetable.

Supporting the Delivery of Postal Voting

Messaging to applicants

57. The Working Group also looked at non-legislative ways to improve how postal votes are delivered. This included how better communication could help voters decide whether a postal vote is the right option for them.

58. One idea was to give applicants more tailored information during the application process—such as when they can expect to receive their postal vote. Many local authorities already provide this on their websites, but the Group saw value in offering this information more consistently at a national level. The

Electoral Commission supported this idea in its post-poll report, and the AEA backed it in its recent Blueprint.

59. As mentioned earlier, voters' expectations about when their postal vote will arrive do not always match reality. More personalised messaging could help manage these expectations and support voters in choosing the most suitable voting method. This could also reduce the need for the contingency measures discussed earlier in the paper.

60. However, any changes would need to be tested with users and carefully considered to avoid unintended consequences—especially if delivery dates change. The Review therefore recommended further work to explore how messaging for postal vote applicants could be improved and tailored to help them make informed choices.

Recommendation 15

Consider options for more customised messaging to postal vote applicants.

Postal vote quality assurance

61. The Working Group also considered how postal voting packs are checked for quality before being sent out. In most cases, elections teams carry out checks after printing and before despatch to make sure the packs are accurate and meet the required standards. These checks can take place at the printer's premises, at local authority offices, or at third-party sites.

62. Some local authorities ask their printer to send an inspection box containing sample packs for review before the full batch is despatched. The Group noted that approaches vary between local authorities. However, Returning Officers are ultimately responsible and must be confident in the quality of the packs before they are issued. At the same time, these checks should not cause unnecessary delays.

63. The Electoral Commission provides guidance to support quality assurance checks. The Group agreed that this guidance could be reviewed to ensure it remains proportionate and reflects current good practice.

Recommendation 16

Electoral Commission to review guidance on postal vote quality assurance checks.

Polling Day and the Count

Technology in Polling Stations

64. The Working Group discussed the use of technology—such as tablets—to manage polling station registers. While few members had direct experience, some shared feedback from neighbouring authorities who had seen benefits, including reduced paperwork and real-time updates during polling day.

65. However, the Group agreed that the current costs can be prohibitively high. Members also raised concerns about the risk of technical failures, damage, or loss. They stressed the need for paper backups, which they felt reduced the benefits and added to the workload.

66. Despite this, the Group recognised that a significant minority of local authorities are already using technology. As such, it may be necessary to consider whether legislative changes are needed to support its future use. Further work is needed to understand the wider implications—such as security measures—that local authorities would need to manage both now and in the future.

Processes and Paperwork in Polling Stations

67. The Working Group discussed the workload placed on polling station staff, especially Presiding Officers. Staff are responsible for a wide range of tasks and paperwork, which members reported is often completed poorly. The Group noted that staff can struggle with the number and complexity of forms—an issue made worse by the recent requirement to complete a form when someone hands in a postal vote at a polling station.

68. These challenges are more noticeable in areas where elections are not held every year. In such cases, staff may only carry out these duties once every four or five years, often with limited training. This issue is becoming more significant with the move towards all-out elections, which may increase due to proposed local government reorganisation.

69. The Group recognised that polling station staff face many responsibilities—some required by law, others by process or good practice. While each task may be justified on its own, taken together they risk overloading staff and increasing the chance of errors.

70. Although the Group did not have time to review all polling station duties in detail, it recommended further work with the sector to reduce burdens and simplify processes. In addition, any future work on electoral conduct forms should consider the impact on polling station staff and explore whether this can be reduced. This may involve amending existing forms, even if it is not possible to reduce their overall number.

Polling Station Staffing

71. The Working Group also discussed staffing at polling stations, which has been highlighted as a concern in recent surveys by MHCLG and the Electoral Commission. Members noted a shift away from viewing polling station work as a civic duty. They also reported increasing difficulty in recruiting council staff, particularly since the pandemic and the rise in home working. While this is not a new issue, the Group felt that more should be done by central bodies to explore how people could be encouraged or incentivised to take on these roles.

72. No specific concerns were raised about the count. However, some members expressed interest in broader reforms—such as voting hubs—which fall outside the scope of this Review.

Recommendation 17

Carry out further work to review and risk assess the use of technology to manage registers in polling stations.

Recommendation 18

Consider whether legislative provisions are needed to enable the effective use of this technology in the future.

Recommendation 19

Carry out review of responsibilities of polling station staff, with a view to simplifying and streamlining processes.

Recommendation 20

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Government, Electoral Commission, AEA and SOLACE to consider how to incentivise people to work as polling station staff.

Election Information

73. As part of the Review, we considered how information about elections and candidates could be provided to electors in a more accessible and effective way. This work was informed by findings from the parallel Elections Lifecycle Review, which highlighted that electors would benefit from clearer, centralised sources of information about the electoral process.

74. In relation to candidate information, the Review acknowledged the challenges around assigning responsibility for the accuracy and content of material submitted by candidates. These concerns are significant and would require further consideration before any changes could be proposed.

75. However, these issues do not apply to general factual information—such as polling times, locations, and lists of candidates standing in a given area. The Review agreed with the Elections Lifecycle Review's conclusion that there is scope to improve how this type of information is provided to electors. In particular, there is potential to build on existing resources to deliver more consistent and personalised information that supports participation.

76. To enable this, we propose taking a legislative power to allow secondary legislation to require Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers to provide relevant data to the Government and/or the Electoral Commission. This data could then be used to support the development of improved elector information services. Further work will be needed to determine the most appropriate format and delivery mechanism, but taking a power now would preserve flexibility for future implementation.

Recommendation 21

Take a legislative power to require Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers to provide election information to Government and/or the Electoral Commission to support the development of elector information services.

Part II - Electoral Registration

Introduction

77. The Electoral Registration Working Group focused on targeted improvements to the registration process, recognising that broader reforms are being addressed through separate Government projects. The Group concentrated on areas where practical changes could reduce administrative burden and improve the experience for electors—particularly overseas electors and those registering close to an election. Discussions also explored how better use of data, clearer communication, and modest legislative changes could support more efficient and resilient registration processes.

Overseas Electors

78. The Review explored a range of issues relating to the registration and participation of overseas electors (OEs). While further consideration is ongoing as to whether changes will be brought forward at this stage, the discussions highlighted several areas where improvements could be considered in the longer term to simplify processes, reduce administrative burden, and improve the experience for overseas voters.

Eligibility and Applications

79. Currently, OEs can register using one of two routes: the previously registered route or the previously resident route. Under the Elections Act 2022, applicants must use the previously registered route if they have ever been registered to vote in the UK. Only those who have never been registered may apply using their last UK residence. The Review heard that this distinction can be difficult to administer and confusing for applicants. In particular, it can be difficult for Electoral Registration Officers to confirm whether an applicant is using the correct route.

80. It was suggested that the legislation be amended to give applicants more choice in how they register, and to allow Electoral Registration Officers to switch between the two routes where appropriate. Standardising declaration requirements could also help simplify the process. However, this approach carries legal and administrative risks. If Electoral Registration Officers are allowed to switch an applicant's registration route, they may end up approving an application based on a declaration that is no longer accurate. This could undermine the integrity of the process and still would not fully resolve the risk of incorrect registrations. One potential solution could be to remove the requirement for applicants to register based on previous registration. Instead, all OEs could be eligible to register at the address where they were last resident in the UK. This would not give applicants more choice in how to register but

would make it easier for them to provide the correct information in their application.

Renewals and New Applications

81. Following the Elections Act 2022, OE registrations now operate on a three-year cycle with fixed-point renewals. This system prevents OEs from submitting new applications while they are already registered. The aim is to encourage OEs to remain on the register between elections and to maintain a valid absent voting arrangement.

82. The Registration Working Group considered whether allowing repeat applications could help address some practical issues. In particular, this change could make it easier for OEs to update their contact details and reduce the number of applications rejected unnecessarily. Simplifying the eligibility criteria, as set out above, would allow overseas electors to submit a new application to renew their three-year registration or update their details. This would help address a key source of confusion and improve the overall experience for electors.

Recommendation 22

Simplify the OE eligibility conditions in primary legislation by removing the previous registration condition and basing their eligibility on the place they were last resident.

Supporting EROs to make determinations

83. The Review explored how Electoral Registration Officers could be better supported in verifying OE applications. One suggestion was to work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide Electoral Registration Officers with additional address data, helping them confirm an applicant's previous UK residence.

84. This would streamline the process for both administrators and applicants, and better support overseas electors. To achieve this, updates would be needed to the ERO Portal, along with close collaboration with DWP to expand the data available to Electoral Registration Officers.

85. The user journey could also be usefully reviewed to ensure applicants are made aware of the necessary requirements for registration. This could also help encourage the provision of email addresses by applicants, as email is the most

effective way for Electoral Registration Officers to communicate with OEs. On balance, we believe these improvements can be achieved through non-legislative means. By increasing access to data and improving guidance, we can better support both administrators and electors while maintaining the integrity of the existing legal framework.

Recommendation 23

Give administrators better access to evidence provided by data from Department for Work and Pensions to support overseas elector applicants using the registration/residency routes effectively.

Recommendation 24

Review overarching language of the application process to ensure overseas electors are better educated on the process, and to encourage provision of email addresses.

Combining Registration and Absent Voting Applications

86. As with domestic electors, OEs are not required to declare their voting method when registering. Unless they plan to return to the UK to vote in person, they must submit a separate application for an absent vote. Despite efforts to improve this process, many OEs remain unaware that they need to apply for an absent vote in addition to registering.

87. At the last UK General Election, 48.7% of OEs were issued with a postal vote, but only half of these were returned by the close of poll. Return rates are significantly higher when postal votes are included in the first batch sent out. One local authority reported a return rate of 70% for postal votes issued 34 days before the poll, compared to just 9% for those issued 15 days' before.

88. The Working Group discussed whether asking OEs to indicate their preferred voting method during registration might help. This was previously required, but many applicants mistakenly believed that stating a preference would automatically set up their absent vote arrangement.

89. The Review concluded that the most effective way to improve postal vote return rates is to ensure arrangements are in place before an election is called. One potential way to achieve this could be to combine the absent vote application with the registration process – while still allowing electors to opt out. This could

help make sure OEs have an absent vote arrangement in place when a General Election is called.

Recommendation 25

Integrate an absent vote application into the OE registration application, with an option to opt out.

Overseas Electors – Other Issues

90. The Working Group also identified several smaller issues that could be addressed in the longer term to improve the OE registration process.

91. One concern relates to the "conclusive evidence" requirement for verifying an OE's address. Under current rules, Electoral Registration Officers must accept documentary evidence that includes the applicant's name and qualifying address—even if the document was not sent to that address. This can lead to situations where, for example, a landlord provides a council tax letter for an empty property as evidence of residence, even though they were not actually living there.

92. The Group also noted that the definitions of an OE's "present address" and "correspondence address" are unclear. This can cause confusion for both electors and administrators. Clarifying these definitions and updating registration requirements would help ensure that OEs can provide the correct address details for their circumstances.

93. In addition, the Group suggested reviewing the List of Overseas Electors. Currently, the list must include an OE's present address, even if they have provided a separate correspondence address. If the purpose of the list is to enable communication with electors, it would be more appropriate to include the correspondence address where one has been provided.

Recommendation 26

Consider a "conclusive evidence" requirement for overseas elector address verification documentary evidence.

Recommendation 27

Clarify the requirements for overseas electors' addresses.

Recommendation 28

Consider the role of the List of Overseas Electors.

Recommendation 29

Work on an online overseas electors' renewals service is ongoing. Depending on the design of that system, we may wish to amend legislation to provide better digital solutions.

Next Steps

94. The proposals discussed in this section reflect feedback from the sector and highlight areas where further improvements could be made to support overseas electors. These recommendations remain under active consideration and may inform future policy development, subject to wider priorities.

Annual Canvass

95. The Registration Working Group considered the role of the annual canvass and explored opportunities to improve its effectiveness. As noted at the outset of the Review, the Government has no current plans to abolish or significantly reform the canvass, given its continued importance in maintaining accurate and complete electoral registers.

96. While members acknowledged that the timing of the canvass does not always align well with the electoral cycle—particularly in the context of rolling registration—there was broad agreement that the canvass continues to play a valuable role in supporting overall registration levels.

97. The Group discussed the requirement for a personal contact as part of the canvass process. Views were mixed: some members raised concerns about the suitability of this requirement in certain areas, while others emphasised its importance in reaching under-registered groups. On balance, the Review concluded that personal contact remains a key component of the canvass and should be retained, given its role in supporting democratic inclusion.

98. The Group also identified a number of challenges with the design of canvass forms, which are prescribed in legislation. These included the complexity and

length of the forms, as well as confusion between canvass communications and Invitation to Register (ITR) forms. This confusion can lead to electors believing they have received duplicate forms or misunderstanding the two-stage nature of the process. In contrast, Household Notification Letters (HNLs)—which are not prescribed—were seen as clearer, more concise, and more effective in prompting responses.

99. The Review therefore recommends that the legislative requirements for canvass communications and ITR forms be reviewed, with a view to simplifying the forms and improving their clarity. This work should be undertaken in collaboration with the Electoral Commission and should also consider the needs of younger electors, particularly in the context of the Votes at 16 project.

Recommendation 30

Review the legislative requirements for canvass communications and Invitation to Register forms, with a view to simplifying their design and improving clarity.

Event-Led Registration

100. Since the introduction of individual electoral registration (IER) and online registration in 2014, there has been a significant increase in registration activity in the lead-up to elections. While this has helped more people register to vote, it has also placed additional pressure on administrators—particularly when identity checks are required, such as when a National Insurance number (NINO) is missing or does not match DWP records.

101. Duplicate applications are a related issue. Around a third of applications before an election are from people who are already correctly registered. These unnecessary applications increase the workload for Electoral Registration Officers, especially during the busiest period of the electoral timetable. The burden varies depending on the electoral management system (EMS) used, but all Electoral Registration Officers are affected.

102. Duplicate applications generally fall into two categories:

    i. People submitting identical applications within a short period—something the Register to Vote website now flags with a warning.

    ii. People who are already registered but apply again because they are unsure of their status or mistakenly believe they need to re-register for each election. This second group causes the most additional work.

103. Ahead of the 2024 General Election, 39% of applications were duplicates—up from around a third in 2019. Some steps have already been taken to reduce this burden. These include alerts on the Register to Vote website and local register checkers developed by some Electoral Registration Officers. However, further action is needed to make a meaningful difference.

104. The Working Group discussed improving communication with already registered electors, including sending poll card information by email as well as by post. Some Electoral Registration Officers already do this and reported that it helps reduce duplicate applications. While incorrect email addresses can create additional work, this tends to decrease over time as databases improve. There were also concerns about email addresses being submitted by family members rather than the electors themselves.

105. For snap elections, emailing poll cards can be harder to organise, but it may still reduce queries and duplicate applications later on. Some authorities are also exploring other digital tools, such as mobile apps, to support future modernisation.

106. The Review recognises the significant resources required to manage duplicate applications and elector enquiries. Improved early messaging—particularly via email—could help reduce this burden. As a result, we recommend that Returning Officers be encouraged to send election information by email, with support from the Electoral Commission.

Recommendation 31

Encourage ROs to send election information via email, with guidance from the Electoral Commission.

Reducing Duplicate Applications

107. The Working Group considered the potential benefits of a central registration look-up tool, either integrated into the registration journey or offered as a

separate service. Such a tool would allow applicants to check if they are already registered before submitting a new application. However, the absence of a central electoral register presents a major challenge. While some systems allow live checks, this functionality is inconsistent and difficult to implement securely—particularly when relying on name and address searches.

108. Electoral Registration Officers also reported varying levels of difficulty in identifying and managing duplicate applications, depending on their EMS. This raises two key questions: how efficient EMS systems are at handling duplicates, and whether there are barriers preventing Electoral Registration Officers from using these features to their full potential.

109. Currently, the Register to Vote service alerts applicants if they attempt to register with the same details within a 14-day period. The Working Group discussed extending this window—potentially to cover the full six-week election period—to further reduce duplicate applications. While some members supported the idea of a central look-up tool similar to the one used in Northern Ireland, they acknowledged that there are challenges with the current model of locally held data.

110. There was broad agreement that extending the duplicate alert period could help reduce unnecessary applications and ease pressure on administrators. Moreover, the Review acknowledged that duplicate applications continue to place a burden on electoral administrators. Further work is needed to explore and implement solutions that can reduce this pressure and improve the efficiency of the registration process.

Recommendation 32

Extend period of automatic messaging on Register to Vote when an exact duplicate application is identified (currently applies if an exact duplicate application is made within a 14-day period).

Recommendation 33

Continue work to reduce burden of duplicate applications.

Electronic Submission of Documents

111. The Review explored the potential benefits of allowing domestic electors to submit supporting documents—such as proof of identity—electronically at the point of application. This functionality already exists for overseas electors and could help reduce delays and unnecessary back-and-forth between applicants and administrators, particularly in cases where a NINO is not provided.

112. The benefits of this change would be enhanced by switching the Register to Vote service from overnight batch matching of NINOs to real-time checks using the Department for Work and Pensions' Citizens' API (CAPI), as is already used for online absent vote applications. This would allow applicants whose NINO does not match to upload alternative evidence immediately, improving the user experience and reducing administrative burden.

113. The Working Group supported both proposals. Members agreed that enabling electronic document submission would help applicants complete their registration correctly the first time. They also felt that real-time NINO checks would be a valuable improvement.

114. Further work will be needed to determine how best to deliver these changes—whether through updates to the existing IER Digital Service and EMS systems or via the ERO Portal. However, the Review considered these reforms to be positive steps and will continue to consider how best to implement them.

Recommendation 34

Explore enabling electronic submission of documents at the point of application for domestic registration applications.

Recommendation 35

Explore switching Register to Vote from the current overnight batch matching of NINOs to real time matching using the DWP's Citizens' API (CAPI) service, as used for OAVA.

Part III – Electoral Resourcing

Introduction

115. The Resourcing Working Group focused on the people, places, and support needed to deliver elections effectively. Discussions covered the role and status of Returning Officers, access to council-owned buildings and staff, and the wider infrastructure required to run elections. The aim was to identify practical steps to strengthen resilience, clarify responsibilities, and ensure that those delivering elections have the authority and resources they need. This workstream did not address 'business-as-usual' electoral funding, as this is covered by existing workstreams in the Department.

Returning Officer Status

116. As part of the funding workstream, we engaged with the Working Group and held separate discussions with Returning Officers. A key topic was the role of the Returning Officer in elections. We explored whether this role should be legally required to be held by senior officers, such as Chief Executives, to strengthen resilience in the electoral system.

117. The independence of the Returning Officer is vital. During elections, Returning Officers act separately from their usual roles within local authorities. This independence helps protect them from political influence. The role also requires enough authority to direct council resources and ensure a coordinated response when needed.

118. In recent years, some councils have appointed less senior officers—such as Electoral Services Managers—as Returning Officers. These individuals may not always have the authority or experience needed to manage elections effectively, especially in a high-pressure environment.

119. There was broad agreement among those we spoke to that the Returning Officer should be a senior officer with the authority and experience to engage with political parties and uphold the independence of the role. While most Returning Officers are already Chief Executives or similarly senior officers, we believe this should be set out in law. We are considering options such as limiting the role to Chief Executives, Managing Directors, Directors, statutory officers, or their deputies.

120. We also looked at whether Returning Officers should receive a separate fee for their work. Given the additional responsibilities and legal risks involved, there was consensus that a fee is appropriate. However, we recommend reviewing how this fee is calculated and considering a cap for those overseeing multiple constituencies.

Recommendation 36

Amend existing legislation to mandate that the Returning Officer role be held by a significant senior official within the local authority, such as the Chief Executive or a member of the executive team (Director level).

Recommendation 37

Retain the existing legislative provisions for Returning Officer fees, but revise guidance on the calculation methodology, including a potential cap for those overseeing multiple constituencies.

Use of Council Resources

Rooms and Buildings

121. Councils now own fewer buildings and often lease properties to third parties. These third parties may be unwilling to make buildings available for elections, especially if this is not included in lease agreements. Some buildings receive public funding and are therefore covered by existing legislation that supports Returning Officers in securing venues for elections.

122. Schools are specifically mentioned in legislation as suitable venues for polling. However, some schools raise concerns about safeguarding and disruption to learning, which can lead to full school closures on polling day.

123. There is a clear tension between electoral law, which allows schools to be used for elections, and the reluctance of schools to provide space. In some cases, this reluctance stems from the impact on pupils and staff. This has made it harder for Returning Officers to secure suitable venues, increasing both the risk to election delivery and the cost to councils, who may need to hire private venues for polling stations or count centres.

124. We have also considered whether current legislation allows these buildings to be used only on polling day or for other parts of the election process. We are not planning to take any action in this area in the upcoming Bill, as we feel it needs further consideration, however we propose to do further work to consider how best to make clear in law that such buildings can be used not only for polling but also for activities such as postal vote opening and the count.

Staffing

125. It is vital that Returning Officers have access to the resources they need to deliver elections successfully. While electoral law allows for the use of buildings for polling, it is less clear when it comes to other resources—particularly council staff.

126. Some legislation explicitly requires local authorities to make staff available to the Returning Officer, but other laws do not mention this. Those we spoke to agreed that Returning Officers must have access to council resources. They also noted that, where good practice is followed, statutory powers should not be needed to secure this support.

127. However, given the critical nature of elections and the need to avoid failure, we believe it would be sensible to clarify the law. In particular, we recommend making it clear that Returning Officers can call on council staff to support the delivery of elections.

Recommendation 38

Amend legislation to ensure consistency across Great Britain and different polls in the provisions governing the use of local authority staff by Returning Officers.

33

Conclusion

128. The Review considered a wide range of issues affecting the delivery of elections and electoral registration. From the start, we worked closely with those responsible for running elections to focus on the most important challenges.

129. We used a structure of working group meetings to explore key issues and steering group meetings to provide strategic oversight and refine the resulting recommendations. This approach allowed for thorough scrutiny and practical input throughout the process. In developing our recommendations, we focused on changes that could be delivered in the short term. While we recognise that some areas may benefit from more substantial reform, our aim was to propose actions that could lead to real improvements through legislation and other available tools.

130. That said, we also looked to the longer term. The Review acknowledged that some challenges remain and will require ongoing attention. The Government remains committed to supporting the delivery of elections and will continue to work with the sector to address these issues.

131. One of the key risks identified was postal voting. The number of postal voters continues to grow, placing pressure on administrators and supply chains. Changes to the electoral timetable will provide more time for postal votes to be issued and returned. Updates to absent voting rules will also support good practice and give Electoral Registration and Returning Officers more flexibility—for example, by allowing earlier reissue of lost postal votes and easier cancellation where needed. Our resourcing proposals aim to ensure that Returning Officers and elections teams can access the council resources they need, recognising elections as critical 'no fail' events.

132. Looking ahead, the Review highlighted the need for better communication with electors and made several recommendations in this area. We also addressed the challenges of recruiting and supporting polling station staff, and the pressures on supply chains that are vital to the smooth running of elections and registration. Although the scope for registration reform was more limited—due to wider Government work in this area—we made recommendations to reduce the burden of event-led registration, particularly the issue of duplicate applications.

133. We recognise that more work is needed. However, the Review's recommendations—developed in close consultation with those delivering elections—represent meaningful and practical steps to support the system and help ensure that everyone who is eligible can cast their vote.

Annex – Full List of Recommendations

The Electoral Timetable

Recommendation 1

Allow nomination papers to be submitted between 9am and 5pm, in place of the current arrangement that they can only be submitted between 10am and 4pm.

Recommendation 2

Set the final deadline for delivery of nomination papers at midday, instead of 4pm, on the close of nominations date for UK Parliamentary elections.

Recommendation 3

To move the register to vote deadline from midnight to 5pm on the 12th working day before the poll .

Recommendation 4

To move the postal vote application deadline earlier in time to 5pm on the 14th working day before the poll.

Nominations

Recommendation 5

Amend the law to require that nominations forms of elected persons are retained for the duration of the term of office.

Recommendation 6

As part of the forms workstream, carry out work to simplify and rationalise nominations forms.

Recommendation 7

Further consider the rules around sham/misleading nominations.

Absent Voting

Recommendation 8

Carry out a review of electoral print and delivery supplier market.

Recommendation 9

Allow Returning Officers to issue replacement postal votes from after the postal vote application deadline if they are satisfied that the original postal vote is lost or not received and will not arrive in time for them to cast their vote. This is in place of the current restriction that they must wait until the fourth working day before the poll.

Recommendation 10

Allow a postal voter to cancel their postal vote and vote in person or appoint an emergency proxy after the postal vote application deadline on the basis that the Electoral Registration Officer is satisfied that their postal vote has not and will not arrive in time for them to cast their vote.

Recommendation 11

Establish a definitive postal vote determination deadline in legislation at 5pm on the 6th working day before the poll.

Recommendation 12

Update legislation to enable postal votes to be issued during the objections period.

Recommendation 13

Clarifying provisions for cancellation of postal votes where an elector is removed from the register

Recommendation 14

Clarify existing legislation for scenarios where an elector's registration or postal vote arrangement expires during the electoral timetable.

Recommendation 15

Consider options for more customised messaging to postal vote applicants.

Recommendation 16

Electoral Commission to review guidance on postal vote quality assurance checks

Polling Day

Recommendation 17

Carry out further work to review and risk assess the use of technology to manage registers in polling stations.

Recommendation 18

Consider whether legislative provisions are needed to enable the effective use of this technology in the future.

Recommendation 19

Carry out review of responsibilities of polling station staff, with a view to simplifying and streamlining processes.

Recommendation 20

Government, Electoral Commission, AEA and SOLACE to consider how to incentivise people to work as polling station staff.

Recommendation 21
Take a legislative power to require Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers to provide election information to Government and/or the Electoral Commission to support the development of elector information services.

Overseas Electors

Recommendation 22

Simplify the OE eligibility conditions in primary legislation by removing the previous registration condition and basing their eligibility on the place they were last resident.

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Recommendation 29

Work on an online overseas electors' renewals service is ongoing. Depending on the design of that system, we may wish to amend legislation to provide better digital solutions.

Electoral Registration

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Review the legislative requirements for canvass communications and Invitation to Register forms, with a view to simplifying their design and improving clarity.

Recommendation 31

Encourage Returning Officers to send election information via email, with guidance from the Electoral Commission.

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Electoral Resourcing

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