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1 About this guidance

1.1 This is the first part of the comprehensive guidance we are producing to support Electoral Registration Officers in preparing for and delivering the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER). The following parts, covering all aspects of delivering the transition, will be published in September 2013:

- Part 2: Registration framework
- Part 3: June to December 2014
- Part 4: Maintaining the register throughout the year
- Part 5: Absent voting

1.2 As with the guidance previously produced by the Commission for EROs, this guidance is designed to provide an end-to-end guide on managing electoral registration services during this period.

1.3 This guidance has been developed in close consultation with members of the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), the UK Electoral Advisory Board (EAB) and the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG). It reflects what we, SOLACE, the AEA, the EAB and the ERRWG believe that EROs should expect of their staff in preparing for and delivering a successful transition to IER.

1.4 The key to a successful transition to IER is going to be good local engagement strategies and implementation plans, designed to support targeted local activity; effective partnership work across and beyond the local authority; and a continued focus on progress and results so that adjustments can be made if necessary. Our guidance, tools and templates, along with support provided by our teams across England, Scotland and Wales, will assist you with engaging with residents throughout the transition to IER, including to encourage people to take the necessary action to remain on the register or to get registered. The tools and templates we will be providing are highlighted in break-out boxes throughout the guidance. Alongside this document, we have published the following tools and templates:

- a template public engagement strategy
- a template implementation plan
- a template risk and issues register
- example tactics for reaching target audiences
- a contract development and management checklist
- a factsheet on producing accessible communications
- a glossary of terms
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We have also published a list of public engagement resources we will be providing, including information on when these will be made available.

Additionally, we have amended our existing canvass resources, where necessary, to make them relevant to the 2013 postponed canvass.

We provide guidance and resources which give EROs and their staff the support that we believe they need to enable them to plan, prepare for and implement IER successfully. We are keen to avoid being prescriptive about the ways in which things should be done, unless there is a very clear rationale for doing something in a particular way in the interests of voters.

We are aware of the challenges facing local government in general and EROs and their teams in particular in the current financial environment. As an example of this, the supporting tools and templates we are providing are intended to make it easier for you to deliver IER locally, and avoid the need for each ERO to produce their own resources for the same purpose. In developing our guidance and resources we have sought to recognise that there are different challenges facing EROs across England, Scotland and Wales and that there may be different approaches that could be taken to address those challenges.

You will already have received an IER grant allocation from the Cabinet Office for the 2013/2014 financial year. If this allocation is not fully reflective of your local circumstances, there are additional funds that could be provided on production of the necessary evidence in support of your local needs. Cabinet Office have provided guidance on how to bid for more funding if your initial grant allocation was insufficient. A copy is available on the web portal: https://ertp.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/. For any questions on funding, contact the Cabinet Office at: IERfunding@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

All of the resources referenced in this part will be linked directly from this document for ease of access. Further templates and tools will be published throughout the transition and we will notify you of their publication through our Bulletins and include direct links to these in this document as they are published.

Joint working between the Cabinet Office and the Commission to support the delivery of IER

Our guidance will not cover the technical IT preparations and processes required for the roll-out of IER. This guidance is being provided separately by the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office have provided a preparation plan covering key tasks related to the roll-out of the IT and the confirmation dry-run, which is being updated monthly. You can find the latest version on the Cabinet Office’s readiness monitoring portal, which also includes other news and updates: https://ertp.cabinetoffice.gov.uk. You should have received login details and
instructions for the portal but if you haven’t, contact erodelivery@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk.

1.10 Both the Cabinet Office and the Commission are committed to ensuring that we work effectively together to deliver the information and support that you need, while avoiding a duplication of effort and overburdening EROs with requests for information. This means that we will include the formal guidance from the Secretary of State to EROs issued under sections 10ZC and 10ZD of the Representation of the People Act 1983 in this guidance. Wherever possible, we will also signpost to other guidance documents and resources issued by the Cabinet Office.

1.11 The Cabinet Office have put in place a regional structure to help them assess and monitor the readiness of EROs for the transition to IER. We have developed a joint protocol for working between the Cabinet Office’s Regional Delivery Managers (RDMs) and staff in your local Commission teams. This paper sets out the two organisations’ separate responsibilities, but also provides a practical framework for working together in Scotland, Wales and the regions of England, which will need to be implemented according to the structures and working relationships that already exist in particular areas.

1.12 We have also produced a short guide to help you best direct queries to either your RDM or your local Commission team, depending on the subject matter.

Performance standards

1.13 We will continue to apply our existing performance standards framework for the postponed 2013 canvass, and will continue to collect supporting data following publication of the revised register as in previous years. You can find references to these standards embedded throughout the chapter on the postponed canvass.

1.14 We will, however, revise the framework to support EROs in meeting the challenges inherent in delivering the transition to IER. We have been consulting on the new standards since May, and intend to publish the revised framework by the end of September 2013.

1.15 With our proposed standards we intend to focus on what you will need to do and know in order to effectively deliver the transition and what information you, the Commission and the Cabinet Office will need in order to determine whether these challenges are being met. While the new performance standards framework aims to ensure consistency in service for electors, we recognise that the individual challenges faced by each ERO will vary depending on the local circumstances in each area. Consequently, the new framework aims to be flexible, taking account of the differing circumstances across local authorities.
1.16 Although the new standards will not be published until September, we have embedded the standards as consulted on throughout this document, and have sought to highlight where we anticipate that information and data being prepared by EROs will form part of the new performance standards framework. We will keep these sections of the guidance under review and update these in September, if required.

The legislative framework

1.17 The following legislation provides for the introduction and implementation of IER, as well as electoral registration more generally. Some of the statutory instruments listed below are still in draft at the point of writing.

- Electoral Administration Act 2006
- European Parliamentary Elections (Franchise of Relevant Citizens of the Union) Regulations 2001
- European Parliamentary Elections Act 2002
- Government of Wales Act 2006
- Local Electoral Administration (Scotland) Act 2011
- Local Electoral Administration and Registration Services (Scotland) Act 2006
- National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007 (as amended, including by National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) (Amendment) Order 2010)
- Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
- Representation of the People (Absent Voting at Local Government Elections) (Scotland) Regulations 2007 (as amended)
- Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended)
- Representation of the People Act 1985
- Representation of the People Act 2000 (Schedule 4)
- The Electoral Registration (Disclosure of Electoral Registers) Regulations 2013
- The Electoral Registration (Postponement of 2013 Annual Canvass) Order 2013
- The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013
- The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (Transitional Provisions) Order 2013
- The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Amendment and Description of Electoral Registers) Regulations 2013
- The Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (as amended, including by The Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Amendment and Description of Electoral Registers) Regulations 2013)
- The Representation of the People (Scotland) (Amendment and Description of Electoral Registers) Regulations 2013
- The Representation of the People (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (as amended, including by The Representation of the People (Scotland) (Amendment and Description of Electoral Registers) Regulations 2013)
• The Scotland Act 1998
• The Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2010

1.18 In addition, you are also required to have regard to the public sector equality duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when carrying out your duties. EROs in Wales must also have regard to the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which require services in Wales to be delivered in the Welsh language.

1.19 This part of the guidance is based on draft secondary legislation shared with us by the Cabinet Office. We will keep the list above and our guidance under review, and any additions or amendments resulting from any changes to the draft legislation will be reflected here and we will notify you and your staff through one of our EA Bulletins if any changes have been made.
IER’s key challenges

2.1 A successful transition to IER means that up to and including the end of 2015 you have published IER registers that are as accurate and complete as possible. This will be enabled by having in place, a good public engagement strategy to target electors, supported by robust IT systems and effective administrative processes. Monitoring and evaluating your work will tell you whether or not you are reaching as many residents as you can, providing the prompt for them to take any required action, and will enable you to keep your plans under review and make any amendments necessary. You will want to be able to demonstrate that you have taken all appropriate steps to deliver the transition successfully.

2.2 The key challenges in the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER) will be:

1. Using all available information, including data from the confirmation dry-run, to understand the key challenges in your local area.
2. Ensuring that you engage residents to raise their awareness and encourage them to take the correct action to join or remain on the IER register
3. Effectively delivering your IER implementation plan, ensuring it remains appropriate and adjusting it where needed, using available data to monitor progress and keep it under review
4. Timely publication and supply of the revised register to those entitled to receive it
5. Maintaining the integrity of registration and absent vote applications

2.3 In order to meet challenge 1, you will need to carry out a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the results of the confirmation dry-run and any other available data and use this to inform planning for the transition, including how you will best target residents who will not be confirmed. You will also need to consider whether local data matching is appropriate and, where it is to be undertaken, assess the robustness of the available data sources and the standard of match to be applied.

2.4 To meet challenge 2, you will need to ensure you develop a strategy for engaging all residents, including as a priority those who are most at risk of being absent from the register and those who would be unable to continue to vote by post or by proxy.

1 While the legislation says that transition will be complete in 2016, Ministers can lay an Order before the UK Parliament to provide for the transition to be completed by the end of 2015. The UK Government has made it clear that its intent is to complete the transition in 2015. Therefore, while the legislation provides for the removal of electors that have not provided personal identifiers in 2016, it is our view that EROs should plan on the basis that they will have to be ready for the point of removal to be 2015.
2.5 You will need to analyse and assess the results of the confirmation process, as well as review how these compare to the dry-run results, to meet challenge 3. You will also need to target residents who have not been confirmed to get them registered individually and monitor progress, send household enquiry forms to relevant properties, carry out all the necessary steps as set out in Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983, identify and target under-registered groups and carry out registration activity in early 2015.

2.6 For the purposes of meeting challenge 4, you will need to publish and supply the revised register to those entitled to receive it in a timely manner.\(^2\)

2.7 In order to meet challenge 5, you will need to have in place processes to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate potential integrity problems, including what steps are to be taken to deal with any such problems.

**Working with partners to meet IER’s challenges**

2.8 EROs will not be able to meet these challenges by working in isolation. In order to meet these, you will need to work collaboratively, drawing on the expertise of others, both from within the local authority and externally.

2.9 Therefore, as ERO, one of the first things you will need to do is to establish an implementation group with responsibility for successfully delivering the transition to IER. For example, you should establish early contact with key departments/persons within the local authority (or providing the function on behalf of the authority), such as:

- the IT department
- the finance team
- data holders
- the data protection officer
- the call centre / reception manager
- the communications / media manager (if there is one)
- the HR manager

2.10 You should also establish early contact with departments/persons within the authority, and local organisations outside the authority, who work with under-registered groups.

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\(^2\) As set out in our report on the performance of EROs in 2012, we will be working in the summer of 2013 to clarify what an acceptable timeframe for supply is, consulting with EROs and recipients of the register, and it is this definition of ‘timely’ that the standard and our guidance to be published in September 2013 will reflect.
2.11 You will find guidance on working with partners embedded throughout the guidance.
3 Managing the postponed canvass 2013–2014

Why a comprehensive canvass and maintaining the register after publication is important

3.1 The postponement of the publication of the revised register is directly related to the transition to IER. The rationale behind the postponement is to ensure that the registers are as accurate and complete as possible ahead of the comparison of electors’ details with the details held on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) database from the second half of 2014. Where an existing elector’s details can be confirmed by the DWP, you can include that elector on the IER register without the need for them to provide any personal identifiers. If their details can be confirmed, you should add them to the IER register, unless you have a good reason to believe that they are not entitled to be included.

3.2 It will be important that you conduct a comprehensive canvass in 2013-2014 in order to achieve registers that are as accurate and complete as possible ahead of the scheduled 2014 polls and the transition to IER. It will help with the transition process, as an effective canvass will help to maximise the number of existing electors who are confirmed during the transition, which will in turn help to reduce the number of electors that you will need to follow up with and invite to register individually\(^3\) under the new process. Also, you should note that while the details of electors carried forward at the conclusion of the postponed canvass can be sent for data matching as part of the confirmation process, they may only be added to the IER register if they are also included on a returned household enquiry form (HEF)\(^\text{i}\) at the next canvass.

3.3 It is important that you continue to maintain the register after publication to ensure the register is as accurate as possible and to prevent significant deteriorations to the completeness of the register before the confirmation process. Our research has shown that, on average, the completeness of registers deteriorates roughly 1% per month.\(^4\) Pilots of the confirmation process have shown that, in general, the more accurate and complete the register, the greater the number of electors whose details will match.\(^5\)

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\(^3\) Throughout this guidance, we use the term ‘register individually’ to mean both being added to the IER register following the confirmation process and registering by providing personal identifiers under the new process.

\(^4\) The Electoral Commission, Great Britain’s electoral registers 2011, December 2011.

\(^5\) The Electoral Commission, Data matching pilot – confirmation process (Evaluation report), April 2013.
3.4 We will use the current standards to monitor performance in advance of the last household canvass in 2013, and will continue to collect supporting data following the publication of the revised register as in previous years.

3.5 This chapter sets out how to manage this particular canvass by supplementing the existing guidance contained in Part C of the Commission’s guidance manual for EROs, and it incorporates our canvass planning guidance issued in April 2013.

Scotland

3.6 The postponed canvass will also be the basis for the register to be used at the 2014 referendum on independence for Scotland. As part of the postponed canvass, EROs in Scotland will also undertake a canvass of young voters who will be eligible to vote in the referendum. We are providing additional guidance for EROs in Scotland on the provisions of the Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Act, which includes the franchise for the referendum, conducting the canvass of young voters as part of the postponed canvass and creating and updating the register of young voters.

Timing of the canvass

3.7 The Electoral Registration (Postponement of 2013 Annual Canvass) Order 2013 fixes the timing of the 2013 canvass and provides for the revised register to be published by 17 February 2014 in England and by 10 March 2014 in Scotland and Wales.

3.8 The legislation specifies that no canvassing activity may be undertaken before 1 October 2013, which means that you must not send out any canvass forms or make house to house enquiries in connection with the canvass before that date. You should, however, still make preparations before 1 October for the canvass including recruiting canvassers, entering into contracts for services in connection with the canvass and updating your property database. You should ensure that any data you use for deciding whether or not a particular property should be canvassed is as up-to-date as possible at the start of the canvass.

Planning for the canvass

3.9 Although the timing of the canvass has changed, the processes to be followed will be the same as in any other year.

3.10 EROs are still legally required to take all steps that are necessary for the purposes of maintaining the electoral register, including:

- sending more than once to any address the form to be used for the canvass
- making on one or more occasions house-to-house enquiries
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- making contact by such other means as the ERO thinks appropriate with persons who do not have an entry in the register
- inspecting any records held by any person which the ERO is permitted to inspect
- providing training to persons under their direction or control in connection with the carrying out of the duty

3.11 EROs should consider when and in what order these steps should be carried out for the postponed 2013 canvass to maximise response rates, bearing in mind that the changed timings may mean that the usual structure and scheduling of activities needs to change, whether in all or parts of the registration area. Particular consideration should be given to how the Christmas and New Year period might impact on canvassing, for example in terms of mail delivery, staff availability, and response rates (for example, determining when and how best to target any groups who are more or less likely to be in the area over the holiday period, such as students, to try to maximise response rates).

3.12 We are aware of the financial challenges faced by EROs and their teams and understand that EROs will need to make decisions based on the finances available to them. However, while we recognise the increasing budget pressures facing local authorities, which force them to make difficult choices between competing statutory services, a lack of resources does not exempt EROs from complying with the law.

3.13 As always, EROs will need to ensure that they have robust plans in place for the annual canvass process. We will continue to monitor the planning EROs are undertaking through our performance standards framework.

3.14 As a requirement to meet performance standard 9 – Planning for rolling registration and the annual canvass, the ERO must have in place formal, written plans for the annual canvass. These should include:

- Clearly defined objectives and success measures
- Risks – identification and mitigation
- Recruitment of temporary/permanent staff where needed
- Financial resources
- Evaluation plan recording the results of the activities undertaken

3.15 You should update your risk register with any new or different risks associated with the change to the timing of the canvass and identify any mitigating actions you will take. This might include, for example, risks associated with canvassing in bad weather or when there are fewer daylight hours, and how these can be addressed through canvasser training and supervision.

To demonstrate that you have met performance standard 9 you must provide the Commission with confirmation that you have the following in place:
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• a canvass plan
• a risk register
• required resources
• business continuity arrangements

3.16 As a requirement to meet performance standard 3 – House-to-house enquiries, the ERO must have a comprehensive written plan ensuring that properties which have not responded to the annual canvass, and where the ERO is not otherwise satisfied that eligible electors are resident, are subject to house-to-house enquiries on at least one or more occasions. In order to meet the standard, progress against the plan must also be monitored and any contact with residents made by canvassers recorded.

To demonstrate that you have met performance standard 3 you must provide the Commission with confirmation that you have, in addition to a canvass plan, canvass results records (i.e. records of contacts with residents by canvassers).

EROs can find our general planning tools, including template project plans and risk registers, and other resources for the postponed canvass on our website at:

Recruitment and training of staff

3.17 As with any other canvass, EROs will need to recruit and train staff to carry out the annual canvass.

3.18 It is important that EROs have provided appropriate training for all staff working on the canvass. As a requirement to meet performance standard 10 – Training, the ERO must provide relevant training to both permanent and temporary staff to ensure awareness and understanding of legislative requirements.

To demonstrate that EROs have met performance standard 10 they must provide the Commission with confirmation that they have produced a schedule of training activities.
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Resources to support the management and briefing of canvassers can be found on our website at: http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-electoral-administrators/electoral-registration

Canvassers

3.19 Part C of our guidance manual for EROs (paragraphs 2.33 – 2.54) provides general guidance on recruiting and training canvassers, but given the change to the timing of the canvass, there are additional points that EROs should be considering and reflecting in their plans and risk register as appropriate.

3.20 EROs may find it helpful to review the size of canvasser rounds taking account of the time at which canvassing will be carried out. These should be kept under review as the canvass progresses (including ensuring that canvassers can be allocated to cover all non-responding properties in the registration area as appropriate). Consideration should be given to reducing the number of properties each canvasser is allocated to help maximise response rates. A smaller canvass round means canvassers will be able to increase the number of times they visit a property to chase non-responding households.

3.21 Once decisions have been taken as to when and how the house-to-house enquiry part of their canvass will be carried out, EROs should establish how many canvassers will be needed and when, and put in place plans to ensure that sufficient staff can be recruited, trained and supervised to carry out house-to-house enquiries. EROs’ plans should also reflect how, when and on what basis canvassers will be paid.

3.22 EROs should bear in mind that existing or experienced canvassers may not be available for part or all of the revised canvass period or willing to work at the required times, and that they may therefore need to undertake additional recruitment exercises, targeting new or different groups. The timing of recruitment should be planned to take into account the likely increased demand for seasonal and temporary staff in other local businesses in the run-up to and during the holiday period.

3.23 You should assess and mitigate any risks that may result from canvassing during the winter months. You should have in place means of contacting canvassers and for canvassers to contact you should they encounter any problems. You may also consider putting in place check-in procedures, requiring canvassers to call or text you at set times, or require canvassers to work in pairs in certain areas. Your local police force should be able to give you specific safety tips and/or provide leaflets for you to hand out to your canvassers. Further guidance is provided in the chapter headed ‘Safety and risk’ in Part C of our guidance manual for EROs (paragraphs 2.85-2.88).
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The registration team

3.24  EROs should have plans in place to ensure the office is adequately staffed throughout the postponed canvass, including over the holiday period. Temporary staff are frequently used by electoral registration offices to assist with managing peaks of canvass activity. Given the time of year at which the postponed canvass will take place, consideration should be given at an early stage in the planning process to the availability of core staff throughout the canvass timetable, including how staffing over the holiday period will be managed. If it is identified that additional support staff will be required, steps should be taken to identify and secure the necessary funding, and consideration will need to be given to how these staff will be identified, recruited and trained in good time.

3.25  It may be that there will be a low number of authority staff working in the building over the holiday period. It is therefore particularly important that EROs ensure that all staff are aware of the authority’s lone working policy. You will also need to ensure that there are no issues with accessing the building during this time.

3.26  If EROs use the authority’s frontline call centre or an external call centre to deal with residents’ questions about registration they should check whether they will be available over the holiday period to answer queries from residents and make sure systems are put in place to ensure that any registration questions that come in during this period can be answered in a timely fashion. For further details on managing enquiries, see ‘Liaison with frontline call centre staff’ below.

Maintaining the property database

3.27  Asking canvassers employed during the postponed canvass to identify any new properties not on the current database can be useful. If new properties are identified, you should notify your Local Land and Property Gazetteer team (England and Wales) or Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG) team (Scotland), and obtain the relevant unique property reference numbers (UPRNs). For further details on maintaining the address database and UPRNs, see ‘Review your address database’ below.

Postal services

3.28  Any changes to existing canvass plans and the scheduling of activities are likely to affect mail delivery requirements in terms of the timing, frequency and volume of forms and reminder letters being sent out and returned. Also, the postponed canvass period extends over the Christmas period when there will be increased demand for postal services which are not related to the canvass. You should therefore engage with Royal Mail and any other postal service providers you use early in the planning process.
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Liaison with print suppliers and IT services

3.29 EROs should liaise with suppliers so that they are aware of the changed timings and printing requirements of the canvass and are able to supply EROs with the necessary forms at key stages of the canvass.

3.30 EROs should ensure that any other contracts with suppliers are revised as necessary to reflect any changes to canvass activities, and that any regular or repeat contractors are made aware of any planned changes as early as possible.

3.31 EROs should also put in place contingency arrangements to ensure that any IT problems that occur, particularly during the holiday period, can be dealt with in a timely manner.

Liaison with frontline call centre staff

3.32 Like canvassers, frontline staff may also be asked why the canvass is being carried out later than usual. Frontline staff should be able to tell electors that the canvass was moved by the UK Government to ensure that the registers are as accurate and complete as possible in the run-up to IER in the summer of 2014. Our FAQs for frontline staff provide some lines that you can use for this purpose.

Targeting electors

3.33 Depending on when you receive the results of the confirmation dry-run, you may be able to use the information you obtain from an analysis of the confirmation dry-run results to help you identify any particular areas / groups to focus on during the postponed canvass to maximise registration of those eligible to be registered. This may lead to a review of your resource allocation.

3.34 The results of the confirmation dry-run will be broken down by ward, and may be broken down into even smaller parts, as each individual will be assigned a match status. A low number of green matches within a ward (or smaller sub-part) will give you an indication of whether there are any areas that would benefit from any special attention, such as a greater emphasis on house-to-house enquiries. At the very least, it will give you an indication of whether your resource allocation in a particular area is likely to be adequate. For further information, see also ‘Low match rates and impact on resources and costs’ in Chapter 4.

Public engagement

3.35 As with any annual canvass, the ERO should consider how to proactively communicate with residents with a view to maximising response rates during the new timetable. It will be particularly important in the run-up to the canvass to
develop a strong understanding of under-registered groups in your area and the barriers they face to registering.

3.36 The canvass plan should include how under-registered groups can be targeted through local engagement, which should cover direct contact with electors, local advertising, and working with internal and external partners, including community groups, who could influence registration. You may also wish to collaborate with neighbouring authorities with similar challenges to avoid duplicating work and to pool resources.

The Commission will provide resources to support this public engagement work as we have done for previous canvasses, including things such as template press releases. These resources will be available on our website at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/participation-resources.

The Commission will also provide public engagement support for EROs in Scotland to encourage 15 and 16 year olds to register to vote ahead of the referendum in 2014. More details are included in our separate guidance for EROs in Scotland on the referendum franchise.

Removal of 15 October reference date

3.37 The Order postponing the canvass also removes the canvass reference date and provides that, where a returned canvass form is treated as an application for registration, it is treated as having been made on the date it was received by the ERO.

Attainers in England and Wales

3.38 An attainer is someone who turns 18 within twelve months following the 1 December after the ‘reference date’. However, for the postponed canvass the reference date is variable and, in some instances, someone may or may not be an attainer depending on when the form is received by the ERO.

3.39 Anyone who turns 18 between 1 December 2014 and 30 November 2015 can only be added to the register if their form is received after 1 December 2013. However, you will need to keep a separate list of those turning 18 within that period whose form you have received before 1 December 2013, as their details will also need to go through the confirmation process. For the purposes of confirmation, they will be deemed to have registered and can therefore go through data matching.

Attainers in Scotland
The same issue applies to Scotland, but EROs in Scotland will be in a different position to EROs in England and Wales. There will be no need for EROs in Scotland to maintain a separate list of those 16 year-olds who do not qualify to appear as attainers on the ordinary register because their names were included on a form that was returned before 1 December 2013. This is because the Scottish Government will allow anyone who is 16 or over to vote in the independence referendum on 18 September 2014 and there will be a Register of Young Voters capturing their details.

For further guidance on the Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Act, see our separate guidance for EROs in Scotland on the referendum franchise.

The canvass form

Consequential amendments have also been made to the wording of the canvass form to reflect the removal of the 15 October reference date. You should make sure you update your canvass form, as well as any other forms, letters or notices they may have that make reference to the 15 October. You should ensure that your stationery reflects the revised requirements and that you put in place processes to proof-check any forms, letters or notices before they are signed off for printing. You should also ensure that you have processes in place to carry out quality assurance checks on the printed stationery.

If you allow electors to confirm that their registration details are unchanged by telephone or through the internet, you will need to ensure that the revised wording is also read across to the relevant system.

In England and Wales, EROs must, by law, amend the prescribed wording on the canvass form as follows:

- replace “living at your address on 15 October [year]” with “currently living at your address”
- replace “If you will be 70 or over on 15 October [year]” with “If you will be 70 or over on 17 February 2014 (England)/10 March 2014 (Wales)”
- replace “Property empty on 15 October” with “Property currently empty”
- replace “We will publish the revised register on 1 December, or shortly before” with “We will publish the revised register by 17 February 2014 (England)/10 March 2014 (Wales)”
- replace “your details have changed since 15 October [year]” with “your details have changed since the date you completed this form”
• replace "Whether the person will be 70 or over on 15 October [year]" with "Whether the person will be 70 or over on 17 February 2014 (England)/10 March 2014 (Wales)".

3.43 EROs in Scotland must, by law, amend the prescribed wording on the canvass form as follows:

• replace “living at your address on 15 October [year]” with “currently living at your address”

• replace “Property empty on 15 October” with “Property currently empty”

• replace “We will publish the revised register on 1 December, or shortly before” with “We will publish the revised register by 10 March 2014”

• replace “your details have changed since 15 October [year]” with “your details have changed since the date you completed this form”.

Determination and application deadlines

3.44 Canvass forms need to be treated differently from rolling registration forms when it comes to adding and deleting electors from the revised register. Also, the deadline for receiving canvass forms in order for electors’ details to be reflected in the revised register will depend on whether the electors’ details have changed or not.

3.45 The general deadlines for publication of the revised register are set out in the timetable below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication date</td>
<td>By 17 February (England); by 10 March (Scotland and Wales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination deadline for canvass additions and deletions; deadline for receipt of canvass returns with ‘no changes’; deadline for receipt of canvass forms with deletions; deadline for receipt and determination of anonymous registration applications</td>
<td>Same as publication date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for receipt of canvass forms with additions</td>
<td>6 working days before the canvass determination deadline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Part 1: Preparing for Individual Electoral Registration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Scotland &amp; Wales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination deadline for rolling registration additions and non-canvass deletions; deadline for receipt of such deletions</td>
<td>14 calendar days before the date the latest notice of alteration would have been published</td>
<td>6 working days before the rolling registration determination deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for receipt of rolling registration additions</td>
<td>17 February</td>
<td>10 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination deadline for canvass additions and deletions; deadline for receipt of canvass returns with 'no changes'; deadline for receipt of canvass forms with deletions; deadline for receipt and determination of anonymous registration applications</td>
<td>17 February</td>
<td>10 March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for receipt of canvass forms with additions</td>
<td>7 February</td>
<td>28 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination deadline for rolling registration additions and non-canvass deletions; deadline for receipt of such deletions</td>
<td>20 January</td>
<td>17 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for receipt of rolling registration additions</td>
<td>10 January</td>
<td>7 February</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Elections during the canvass

3.46 Assuming a publication date of 17 February in England and 10 March in Scotland and Wales, the following deadlines will apply:

3.47 The elections during the canvass provisions that allow you to add electors on canvass forms to the register still apply during this canvass, although
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you cannot postpone the publication of the revised register if you have an election during the postponed canvass.

3.48 In some cases in England, even if a vacancy has arisen in this period, an election will not take place. This will happen, for example, where a local government seat that is up for election in May 2014 is vacated within six months of that day. In this case, the election will not be held during the canvass, but must be held on the day of the scheduled elections in May 2014. However, there may still be elections taking place within an ERO’s area during the postponed canvass, either because the local government seat vacated is not due for election in May 2013 or because the vacancy is not a local government one.

Our elections during the canvass guidance can be found in Chapter 5 of Part C – The annual canvass of our guidance manual for EROs.

Publication and supply of the revised register

3.49 EROs in England will need to publish their revised register by 17 February, while EROs in Scotland and Wales must publish the register by 10 March. You should make full use of your canvass period to ensure that your register is as accurate and complete as possible.

3.50 You should take steps to make local political parties and elected representatives aware of the changed register publication date at an early stage. As the publication dates are close to the scheduled elections, it is particularly important that the registers are supplied to those entitled to receive them as promptly as possible. Political parties and candidates need access to the electoral register to fulfil their statutory duties to check certain donations, as well as to use it to campaign for support.

We will work to clarify what an acceptable timeframe for supply is, consulting with EROs and recipients of the register over summer 2013, and will seek to confirm that supply is made within these agreed timeframes when making assessments of performance against this standard.

Detailed information on the publication of registers can be found in Chapter 6 of Part C – The annual canvass, of our guidance manual for EROs.

Guidance on access and supply of the full electoral register to candidates, registered political parties and others can be found in Chapter 4 of Part H - Access and supply, of our guidance manual for EROs.
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Maintaining the register after publication

3.51 To ensure that the quality of the registers does not deteriorate between the publication of the revised register, the scheduled 2014 polls and confirmation, it is important that you identify and target any unregistered residents, keep your register under review by processing any amendments to an elector’s registration, and remove electors who are no longer eligible through registration reviews.

3.52 There will be a short window before the scheduled 2014 polls for EROs to do this, as well as following the polls but ahead of confirmation. It will be important that the registration team is adequately resourced to ensure that all necessary steps have been carried out and that the registers are as accurate and complete as possible.

3.53 You should make full use of the records available to you to check register entries and identify and contact potentially new electors. Further information on sources of information EROs have access to can be found in Part E – Improving completeness and accuracy of our guidance manual for EROs.

3.54 You should also ensure that you are making full use of all the records available to you to verify entries on the register, taking steps to remove those electors who are no longer entitled to remain registered. Registration reviews form a vital part of ensuring the register is as accurate as possible and you can find further guidance on registration reviews in Chapter 6 of Part D – Monthly alterations to the register, of our guidance manual for EROs.

Funding for additional, targeted canvassing activity after the publication of the postponed register

3.55 The Cabinet Office have made funds available for EROs to conduct additional, targeted canvassing activities after the publication of the register and before the confirmation process. These funds are available on an opt-in basis and will be awarded to those EROs who put forward robust business proposals as to how they will specifically target groups who are under-registered in their area. Because the funds are limited, EROs will need to submit a compelling case for how their proposed targeted canvassing will lead to a more complete register.

3.56 Examples of ways that canvassing can be targeted include by areas with a high social housing tenure or student population. Information on the application process was sent to EROs in June 2013 by the Cabinet Office, with funds expected to be paid to successful EROs in January 2014 through an un-ring-fenced grant. Following the confirmation dry-run, you may wish to consider how you would make a case for using additional funds to target under-registered groups in your area through canvassing activities.
Opt-outs from the edited register

The 2013 canvass form

3.57 The opt-out tick on the canvass form should not be pre-printed on the basis of an elector having previously chosen to opt out of the edited register by ticking the box on the form.

3.58 The elector, by ticking the opt-out box on the form, has only expressed a wish not to be included in the edited register for the next 12 months.

3.59 However, under data protection legislation electors have the right to require you to exclude them from the edited register on a permanent basis (or until further notice). This is because Section 11 of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) gives individuals a right to issue a notice to data controllers requiring them to cease (or not to begin) processing their data for the purposes of direct marketing. When conducting the annual canvass and maintaining the electoral registers, EROs act as ‘data controllers’.

3.60 Where such notice has been received, the opt-out tick should be pre-printed on the canvass form. However, you cannot make the assumption that an elector has made a request under Section 11 of the DPA simply because they have ticked the opt-out box on a continuous basis for a number of years. If you receive a complaint from an elector about the opt-out box not having been pre-ticked on the form even though they had ticked the box last year, you should set out the reason why it had not been pre-ticked (i.e. that current electoral law requires you not to pre-tick the box even where it has been ticked in preceding years.)

3.61 You should ensure that whoever is printing your canvass forms is aware of the fact that there may be some opt-outs that need to be pre-printed on the form.

Requirements of a notice requiring EROs to exclude electors from the edited register on a permanent basis (or until further notice)

3.62 The notice given to you must, by law, be in writing. Making a request in writing includes making it via e-mail.

3.63 The request does not have to explicitly state that the elector wishes to opt out of the edited register; it may simply state that the elector does not want their details to be passed on to third parties or used for direct marketing purposes on a permanent basis or until further notice. There is also no need for the notice to refer to Section 11 of the DPA.
3.64 The ICO’s website contains information for the general public on how individuals can stop their personal information being used for any sort of direct marketing, which you may also find useful: 
www.ico.org.uk/for_the_public/topic_specific_guides.

3.65 The request has to come from the elector themselves. An elector cannot make the request on behalf of another person.

3.66 If you receive a request from a third party, such as a friend, family member or company alleging to be acting on the elector’s behalf, the request should not be treated as a valid request under Section 11 unless you are satisfied that the elector has authorised the third party to make a Section 11 request on their behalf.

3.67 If you are not satisfied, you should contact the third party and ask them to provide evidence that they have authorisation from the elector to make a request under Section 11 on their behalf. If this is not provided, you should make enquiries of the elector in question and should obtain the elector’s written confirmation of authorisation. Only once you are satisfied that the elector has authorised the third party to send the Section 11 notice can you treat the Section 11 notice request as valid.

3.68 Where you have received an annotated canvass form where it is not clear who has made the annotation or it has been annotated by only one person but appears to make the request on behalf of everyone listed on the form, you should write to all electors listed on the canvass form to enquire whether they would want to opt out of the edited register on a permanent basis or until further notice.

3.69 There may be circumstances where a returned canvass form has been marked in a way that does not make clear whether an elector wishes to opt out. For example, the opt-out box may not be ticked, but there may be some other mark on the form which could indicate that an elector wishes to opt out of the edited register, or may indicate they are attempting to make a request under Section 11 of the DPA.

3.70 In those circumstances, you should make the necessary enquiries of the electors in question. Under data protection legislation, you are under a legal duty to comply with a valid request made under Section 11 of the DPA. This does not affect the processing of the canvass form, which should proceed as usual.

**Section 11 requests received after the publication of the revised registers**

3.71 If a Section 11 request is received after the edited register has been published, you are under an obligation under the DPA to give effect to such a request within such period as is reasonable in the circumstances. Therefore, on
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receipt of a Section 11 notice, you should update your copy of the edited register and remove the names of any electors who have served such a notice. Anyone wishing to inspect or purchase a copy of the edited register from this point forward should be given the updated version.

Rolling registration in 2013

3.72 You are required to publish monthly notices of alteration during 2013. However, as the date of the publication of the revised register has moved, monthly updates will also need to be published on the first working day of October and November in England, and on the first working day of October, November and December in Scotland and Wales. We have revised our rolling registration timetable to reflect this.
4 Planning and resourcing the transition: the confirmation dry-run

4.1 The confirmation dry-run will not only enable you to test your IT systems but will also provide you with information to help you to understand the particular challenges in your local area. This information will help to inform the development of your local public engagement strategy.

What is the confirmation dry-run?

4.2 As part of the transition to IER, EROs will compare existing electors’ names and addresses on the electoral registers with records held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in order to confirm that they can be added onto the IER register. Where an existing elector’s details can be confirmed by the DWP, you can, unless you have a good reason not to, include that elector on the IER register without the need for them to provide any personal identifiers. However, there will be some electors, such as special category electors, who will not go through the confirmation process.

4.3 A dry-run of this confirmation process is planned to take place over the summer of 2013, with actual confirmation being planned for the summer of 2014. Guidance on the confirmation process will be contained in Part 3 – Summer/Autumn 2014.

4.4 Local data matching may be able to increase the numbers of electors who can be transferred onto the IER registers. Part 3 – Summer/Autumn 2014 of the guidance, which will be published in September, will include more details to support EROs in reaching decisions on whether and how local data matching should be undertaken, covering areas such as what capacity and capability would be needed to carry this out effectively, how the robustness of local data sources can be assessed and what standard of match should be applied.

To meet the challenge set out in proposed performance standard 1 - Understand the particular challenges in your registration area and develop a plan for engaging with residents which responds to these challenges, you will need to consider local data matching where appropriate and assess the robustness of the data source and standard of the match. Documented decisions on whether local data matching is appropriate, and where local data matching is to be undertaken, a list of the data sources to be used, how the robustness of the data has been assessed, and what standard of match is being applied will demonstrate how the challenge has been met.
Your dry-run results

**DWP match types**

4.5 Each elector will be assigned a ‘red’, ‘amber’ or ‘green’ status based on how well they could be matched with the DWP database. These statuses will be the starting point for any analysis of the results and will give you an indication of what action may be required at the actual confirmation in 2014. The Secretary of State will provide guidance on what action to take at the actual confirmation and this will be included in Part 3 – June to December 2014.

- **Green**: means that following a positive address match, the individual’s details were matched positively. At the actual confirmation, the elector could be transferred directly onto the IER register without the need for follow-up.
- **Amber**: means that following a positive address match, the individual’s details were only partially matched. At the actual confirmation, follow-up action would be required.
- **Red**: means that the address could not be matched or, following a positive address match, the individual’s details could not be matched at all. At the actual confirmation, follow-up action would be required.

**Red matches and addresses**

4.6 Although red matches may indicate that an individual’s details or their address could not be matched, a positive address match is a prerequisite for an overall ‘green’ match result. The results will indicate whether the red match was due to the address or the individual’s name not matching.

4.7 When reviewing your red matches, you should make sure that you identify those individuals who would not have been capable of being confirmed because their address did not match. Among these there could potentially be individuals whose names would be capable of being matched but who were given a ‘red’ rating because the address was not matched. In 2014 these individuals could not be added to the IER registers without any follow-up action.

**Reviewing your address database**

4.8 You should plan for and take steps to ensure your address database remains up-to-date. Taking steps to improve the address match rate by ensuring your property database is up-to-date could help to increase the number of electors who can be confirmed onto the IER registers without the need for any follow-up action.

4.9 While the address database should be maintained on an on-going basis, you should plan to review the addresses that could not be matched after the confirmation dry-run and in advance of the actual confirmation to help maximise the number of residents who can be added to the IER registers.
Each address should have a unique property reference number (UPRN). While UPRNs are not the only way for the DWP to establish whether or not there has been an address match, it can facilitate the matching process.

While there may be limited instances where the DWP database is out-of-date or does not have a UPRN, you will minimise the risk of red matches by keeping your database as up-to-date as possible. You should liaise with the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) team in England and Wales or the Corporate Address Gazetteer (CAG) team in Scotland to ensure that UPRNs are attached to each property in your area.

**Reports**

After the dry-run, the Cabinet Office will ask you to report to them setting out how many individuals on your register were rated red, amber and green. This information will be automatically generated by your software. There will also be a qualitative survey for you to feedback to us and the Cabinet Office your experiences and lessons learned. You will receive more details on this through your Cabinet Office Regional Delivery Manager.

**Analysing the confirmation dry-run results**

The confirmation dry-run will give you a good indication of what you might expect in the 2014 confirmation and the results should be used to inform the development of your public engagement strategy and overall implementation plan, including assessing the resource needs for each ward.6

The results will also help you to develop an estimate of the number of households that you will not need to canvass in 2014 because everyone living at that particular address has been confirmed and you are satisfied that they can be added to the IER register.

Confirmation means that in 2014 fewer households will need to be canvassed than in other years, but you should note that there may be 'split' households, where some individuals have been confirmed and others have not and so which may still need to be canvassed depending on the initial response to the write-out.

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6 In Wales, any references to ‘wards’ throughout this document, should be read as ‘electoral division’. Those unitary authorities in England that use ‘electoral division’ to refer to an electoral area should also read any references to ‘ward’ as ‘electoral division’. In Scotland, wards generally encompass large geographical areas and consideration should be given to breaking down the wards into smaller parts.
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4.16 Key points for you to consider as part of your assessment of the dry-run results are:

- what are the levels of red/amber/green matches?; how do the levels vary across the registration area?
- are red match results due to mismatched addresses or mismatched names?
- what do the results tell you about each ward (or sub-part of the ward, such as polling district), and how does this relate to the demographics (e.g. student populations, number of private renters)?; where will activities need to be targeted and how will this affect your resource requirements?; how will this feed into the public engagement strategy?
- how many ‘split’ households have some residents that could be confirmed and some that could not?; how many households do you have where you think there could be more electors that aren’t registered, in addition to those already confirmed at that address? These households will need to be sent an ‘Invitation to register’ or household enquiry form (HEF) as appropriate.
- how many confirmation letters, HEFs and ‘Invitations to register’ are you likely to need?; how will this affect printing costs?
- will extra staff be required?; which type of staff are needed – core, temporary, canvass?; will there be specific staff training requirements?; will the available transition funding be adequate to resource this?
- do the results reveal the need to work with particular internal/external partners to target those who haven’t been confirmed?; what are the costs of that work?; will the transition funding be adequate to resource this?; what are the lead times for that work?

Demographics and match rates

4.17 Research carried out by the Commission indicates that there is a correlation between low match rates and certain demographics.7

4.18 The research found that wards with a high population of young adults (ages 20-29), students or private renters are more likely to have lower match rates. This is because these groups have a high rate of population mobility, particularly in large urban areas, and this makes them less likely to have their address accurately recorded on the DWP database or register.

4.19 Variations in match rates across the registration area and/or low match rates in some of your wards could potentially point to high concentrations of these groups in those wards. Our research has also shown these groups to be less likely to be registered in the first place. EROs should use the local knowledge they have of their area together with the confirmation dry-run results

7 The Electoral Commission, Data matching pilot – confirmation process (Evaluation report), April 2013.
to build a picture of their area, identifying those parts where residents are less likely to be confirmed and the reasons why. This information can then be fed into the public engagement strategy.

Low match rates and impact on resources and costs

4.20 The fewer people that are confirmed, the more follow-up action the ERO will need to undertake and, consequently, the greater the impact on resources needed to target the unconfirmed.

4.21 For example, your dry-run results will highlight if you are likely to need a high number of ‘Invitations to register’ forms and how many letters you will need to send to residents who had an absent vote but could not be confirmed and who will therefore lose their absent vote entitlement unless they register individually. This will have printing implications and potentially also staffing implications to process the forms, which is why you should use this information to feed into your estimate of printing costs and staffing requirements.

4.22 You will need to identify the best method for engaging those who are unconfirmed (and those who were missing from the pre-IER registers) in order to maximise registration of those eligible to be registered, and make an assessment of the cost and staffing implications. How you are going to engage with these groups should be identified in your public engagement strategy and this will, in turn, allow you to estimate any related costs.

4.23 You can apply for funding to carry out targeted canvassing activities after the publication of the revised register in February/March 2014. Further details on this are provided under ‘Funding for additional, targeted canvassing activity after the publication of the postponed register’ in Chapter 3. For any questions on funding, contact the Cabinet Office at: IERfunding@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk.
5 Planning and resourcing the transition: drawing up a public engagement strategy

Why having a public engagement strategy is important

5.1 As ERO you have a general duty to promote participation in the electoral process in your area. Maximising the number of voters registered under IER will rely on an effective local public engagement strategy and robust processes behind this. A key challenge in the transition will be to encourage residents to take the required action to join or remain on the register, and to ensure that they can vote by post or by proxy, if that is their preferred method.

5.2 The introduction of IER means that you will need to continue to implement what works in your area, and at the same time take extra steps to engage everyone and get them to take the required action to remain on or join the electoral register.

5.3 The challenge of getting people to take action under an unfamiliar system takes place in the context of wider challenges for electoral registration, including general voter disengagement, transient populations and the other registration challenges that exist in your area. However, the new system opens new channels by which people can register, including the introduction of online registration. You will need to consider how you will promote these opportunities and should consider the potential benefits of online registration, including any cost savings it may enable, when developing your public engagement strategy.

5.4 Effective public engagement activity early in the transition period will help to reduce the reliance on follow-up activity and therefore help to reduce the need for additional resources.

5.5 Effective public engagement will involve input from across the local authority. At an early stage, you will need to build relationships with other teams including IT, communications and engagement professionals (where available) and other teams in the local authority who have contact with those residents less likely to be registered. You will also need to work with external partners as set out below.

As a requirement to meet the challenges set out in proposed performance standard 1 – Understand the particular challenges in your registration area, you will need to have a public engagement strategy that is informed by a comprehensive analysis of the confirmation dry-run results and any other local information you may have.
What is public engagement?

5.6 Public engagement includes:

- Any forms or letters you need to send directly to individuals or households.
- Phone calls, e-mails and direct face-to-face conversations with canvassers.
- Local activity with partner organisations who will spread the message on your behalf.
- Contact with organisations such as schools, universities, landlords, housing associations and hostels.
- Press releases and media work.
- Public awareness activity including local advertising and publicity directly aimed at residents.

Support from the Commission with public engagement

5.7 This guidance sets out approaches for identifying local challenges and the tactics available to you to reach residents in your area. You should record in your public engagement strategy what approaches and tactics you will be using.

Resources

5.8 The Commission will provide a range of resources to support your public engagement activity, including a public engagement strategy template. The resources to be provided are set out in the Public engagement resource list.

Direct support

5.9 Direct one-to-one support will also be available through our offices in Scotland and Wales and our English regional teams.

Public awareness campaign

5.10 We will also support local activity by undertaking public awareness activity in England, Scotland and Wales at key points during the transition. These campaigns – which will run across media such as television, radio, press and online – will help raise awareness so that people are more likely to respond to the activity you are undertaking.

5.11 Campaigns will take place around the write-out and in the run-up to the transition deadline. The write-out campaigns will be designed to increase response rates, which means that undertaking write-out activity during the specified period will be crucial. The more people who are motivated to take the required action at the outset by national advertising, the less resource-intensive local follow-up activity will be required. We will provide you with further details on the campaign timings and our media plans through EA bulletins.
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**National partnership marketing**

5.12 The Commission will also undertake ‘partnership marketing’ – working with national partner organisations who are best placed to reach certain groups directly to encourage them to join or remain on the register. This should complement your work in planning local partnerships. We will update you on our plans for national partnerships in September 2013, but you should still be able to carry out work on planning for local partnerships before this time.

**What the public engagement strategy should cover**

5.13 The strategy should map out who you need to engage, how you are going to target them and how you are going to work with internal and external partners to ensure you reach people.

5.14 The strategy should set out how you will approach public engagement activity. You will need to identify how you will use all the information available to you, including information obtained through the confirmation dry-run, to help build a picture of the demographics in your area and identify what the key challenges for engaging with residents will be. Once you have identified your priority areas and who you will need to specifically target in order to maximise registration of those eligible, you will need to develop a strategy for targeting these groups.

5.15 In respect of partners, for example, it should outline who the partners would reach and how they will be engaged to ensure that they are on board, have all the information they need, and understand the timings for the work.

5.16 You will also need to demonstrate how you will evaluate your public engagement activity.
5.17 Your strategy should cover the following:

**Step 1**

**Building a profile of your registration area**

- Using the data from the dry-run
- Identifying other sources of data
- Building a profile of the different groups in your area

**Step 2**

**Understanding the audience for public engagement**

- The categories local residents will fall into in relation to their likelihood to be registered under IER
- Identifying local target groups needing additional engagement
- Identifying local priorities

**Step 3**

**Understanding available channels for engaging residents**

3a. **Direct contact with residents**

- How you will conduct the write-out
- What will be done to follow up with those who have not been confirmed

3b. **Working with local partners to reach target audiences**

- Identifying potential partners and working with them to enable your messages to have greater reach
- Building relationships within the local authority
- Building links with other local authorities to deliver coordinated engagement and share resources where appropriate
3c. Raising awareness through advertising and media

- Mapping potential media channels and advertising locations available to you – if your local authority has a communications department, they may already have this information
- Identifying appropriate channels and implementing advertising
- Media relations planning

Step 4

Identifying tactics to reach your target audiences as part of the development of your strategy and identify actions which can be

Step 5

Evaluation

- Monitoring progress throughout the transition
- Evaluating public engagement activities
Step 1: Building a profile of your registration area

5.18 You will need to develop a strategy to engage every eligible elector in your area. In particular, your strategy will need to address how to engage those who are less likely to be confirmed by data-matching and who are less likely to be registered at all.

5.19 Through the confirmation dry-run results and other sources of local data, you will be able to build a profile of the residents that make up your area and understand the likelihood of their needing to take action to register under IER. When you have developed this profile, you will need to identify how you are going to engage the different groups within it and how you will target resources.

5.20 You should undertake an audit of available sources of data within the local authority which will help you to build a picture of the social make-up of your area in order to shape your public awareness strategy.

5.21 You should also the available sources of data to build a detailed profile of your area, such as data from the census. The local authority may have demographic information about residents as well as the sorts of activities they take part in, the services they use, their attitudes, their communication preferences and where geographically different social groups are clustered. All this information will give you insight into the opportunities available to target them, which should then feed into your public engagement strategy.

5.22 Some authorities make use of extensive consumer classification systems to identify the types of people in their area so that they can locate others that match their profile and then use resources effectively to target such groups with relevant information. You may have access to resources such as this within the local authority or your local authority may have existing relationships with companies who specialise in consumer data.

5.23 A key source of information on local residents will be the confirmation dry-run results, which will give you information that can be used alongside other data to identify what groups of people are likely to be unconfirmed in your area. The dry-run results will provide you with ward-level information. Some of your lower matched and under-registered groups will be distributed evenly across the authority, for example attainers, while others such as students or private renters may be concentrated in particular neighbourhoods.

Step 2: Identifying the audience for public engagement

5.24 Eligible electors in your area will fall into distinct groups in relation to registration under IER:
Residents who have been confirmed
5.25 Even residents who are confirmed will need information – they will need to be aware of the change to the registration system, read the confirmation letter you have sent them and know that they need to register individually under the new process if there is a change to their address.

5.26 Unconfirmed residents; Those electors whose entries have not been confirmed and added onto the IER register will be asked to register individually under the new process by providing personal identifiers: their National Insurance number and date of birth.

5.27 Any elector on the pre-confirmation registers whose details cannot be confirmed will not be removed immediately but will be asked to provide personal identifiers before December 2015 \(^8\) or they will be deleted from the register.

5.28 A significant proportion of the population will not be confirmed through data-matching and this will vary by and within areas. It’s critical that action is taken to ensure that as many people as possible are prevented from falling off the register at the end of the transition. This group need to be made aware that they must provide personal details ahead of the end of the transition to become registered under IER.

Absent voters
5.29 Anyone with an absent vote will need to be confirmed or make a successful new application with personal identifiers before the publication of the revised register in order to retain their absent vote entitlement. Any new absent vote applications after the transition starts in the summer of 2014 will need to be made by someone who has been confirmed or who has, or at the same time is applying to be, registered individually under the new arrangements.

5.30 When thinking about your public engagement strategy, a key priority will be to ensure absent voters are registered individually on the IER register. Absent voters who are not confirmed will need to be made aware that they must provide their personal identifiers before the publication of the revised register in order to retain their absent vote entitlement.

The unregistered / new electors
5.31 From the start of the transition, any new elector will need to make an individual registration application and provide their personal identifiers. You will

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\(^8\) While the legislation says that transition will be complete in 2016, Ministers can lay an Order before the UK Parliament to provide for the transition to be completed by the end of 2015. The UK Government has made it clear that its intent is to complete the transition in 2015. Therefore, while the legislation provides for the removal of electors that have not provided personal identifiers in 2016, it is our view that EROs should plan on the basis that they will have to be ready for the point of removal to be 2015.
need to verify the personal identifiers against the information held on the DWP database.

5.32 Those who were not on the final pre-IER register, including typically unregistered groups, remain a target for registration activity. The groups that are less likely to join the register and the barriers that stop them doing so will vary by area, creating unique local challenges. There is a challenge in identifying local issues and taking action in response to these to ensure that as many people are registered as possible.

5.33 Those who have been confirmed but subsequently move home will also need to make an individual registration application.

**Social groups needing additional engagement activity**

5.34 Although the audience for IER is all eligible residents, research has shown that certain groups are more likely to be unconfirmed (see ‘Demographics and match rates’ above) or absent from the register.

5.35 The reasons for particular groups being absent from the register are diverse – for example, they may be transient in where they live, they may be disengaged with politics, or they may be unaware of their rights. This means that these groups need to be reached in different ways, using different channels, and that they will be motivated by different messages.

5.36 From the profile data you have gathered, you will need to identify the specific social groups in your area that are less likely to join or be on the register, either because they are likely to be unconfirmed or because they are typically under-registered, or because they do not typically respond to the canvass. These will need additional targeted engagement activity to increase the likelihood that they will join the IER register. These groups may include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unconfirmed groups</th>
<th>Under-registered groups and those who may face barriers to registering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young adults (20-29)</td>
<td>Black and minority ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Communal residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private renters</td>
<td>UK resident for less than 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile population</td>
<td>Over 80s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent homemovers</td>
<td>Attainers</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Low levels of literacy or English</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Homeless</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Travellers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disengaged residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young people not in employment, education or training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very rural residents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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| Traditionally registered with concerns about new system | Second home-owners |

5.37 Some challenges may not be audience-specific but may be particular to your area. For example you may have geographical barriers, or you may have low levels of broadband connection that mean people will find it harder to access online registration. Your strategy should also consider how to address these considerations.

Step 3: Understanding channels for engaging residents

5.38 When you have identified these groups, you need to investigate the channels available for reaching them. These channels, which are detailed below, include:

1. Direct contact with residents – whether by letter, face-to-face or over the phone
2. Working with partners – such as local authority departments or community organisations
3. Advertising and media relations – such as posters or publicity events

3.a Direct contact with residents

5.39 An important element of your public engagement strategy is the direct contact you have with individual residents. This includes letters, telephone conversations, text messages, emails, and door-to-door visits. The results from the confirmation dry-run will provide you with valuable information regarding individual residents in your area. It will give you an indication of who you will need to target, so that you can identify how to target them and how to allocate resources.

Writing out to residents

5.40 When you have the results of the actual confirmation you will be required to write to all residents – both those who have been confirmed and added to the IER register and those that haven’t, including absent voters who risk losing their absent vote entitlement because they have not been confirmed. Sending out all these letters within the same timeframe will help to ensure that residents living at the same address will not receive letters at very different times. Part 3: June to December 2014 will cover all aspects of the write-out.

5.41 The letters you send out must be easy to understand and carry clear messages about what the recipient needs to do. You should use the template...
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worrying that the Commission will be providing, which will reflect the results of user testing and will have been tested for plain English, and you should follow the guidance on using it. Information on what will be provided and when is set out in our list of public engagement resources.

5.42 For your public engagement strategy and implementation plan, you will need to have established the practical process for writing out to residents, including timings. You will also need to consider timings for your public engagement activity that supports the write-out – co-ordinating local advertising with the write-out and our write-out advertising campaign will reinforce the message and help encourage residents to take action. We will provide an update on our advertising campaign timings, so you can co-ordinate with your plans for the write-out.

Dealing with response from the write-out and other transition peaks

5.43 Your public engagement strategy and implementation plan need to address how the high level of response and queries that will occur around peaks in public engagement activity and in the run-up to registration deadlines can be resourced as effectively as possible. The workload will vary by stage in the transition, with peaks around the write-out, ahead of the May 2015 elections and in the run-up to the end of the transition when people will be warned of the possibility that they may fall off the register if they don’t take action.

5.44 For the write-out, a significant proportion of local residents could submit personal details in the few days following receipt of the letter. Many more could contact the electoral registration office with queries about registration.

5.45 Applications in response to invitations to register could come in through the online system. We will provide further details of wording that is most likely to motivate people to register online following our research into messages.

Dealing with enquiries from residents

5.46 The write-out and other public engagement activity that residents come into contact with will prompt queries and questions. It’s important that you provide sufficient support for residents who have queries in terms of:

- Enquiry channels – providing telephone support for public information response is important because many residents will have difficulties accessing the internet or understanding written material. At the same time, other residents will expect to be able to e-mail queries, talk to someone face-to-face or write letters to the local authority. In addition, some residents may try to speak to other local authority frontline staff outside of the electoral registration team or the corporate contact centre, such as in libraries or leisure centres. Consideration should be given to providing a face to face
briefing or written information to local authority staff at these facilities so that they can try to resolve basic elector enquiries, even if it’s just by signposting.

- You may also consider resourcing other methods for residents to contact you, such as Facebook, Twitter, web-forms, and text messages. The methods you choose should be promoted in your public information materials and in the engagement activities you undertake.

- Resourcing – if you promote a method of contacting the local authority such as a phone number or e-mail address you need to ensure that it is sufficiently resourced. You will also need to plan the mechanism for dealing with enquiries that come through routes you are not promoting, and ensure that employees are briefed to manage them. To plan levels of resourcing you will need to think about:
  - The peaks for demand for public information. These are likely to occur following peaks in public engagement activity, for instance in the weeks after the write-out, during local advertising campaigns, and in the run-up to registration deadlines.
  - What level of enquiries you have previously received in the run-up to registration deadlines and the number of people unconfirmed in your area in order to make estimates of the likely number of enquiries at the different stages of the transition.
  - Whether you are in a position to outsource response, for example by contracting a specialist call centre, or whether you are able to increase resources at your existing call centre.
  - A contingency for responding to residents if enquiries are much higher than expected.

- Response time – where queries are not dealt with immediately it is important that you establish a fixed timeframe in which responses will be made, and you should let the enquirer know when they can expect to receive an answer. For example, you could set up an automatic response to e-mails letting the enquirer know that you will get back to them within 48 hours.

- Information provided – you will need to ensure that employees responding to enquiries are fully equipped to answer questions or refer the caller to the right place. This means thinking about the likely queries people will have and developing scripts and lines to take that answer these. We will provide you with an FAQ resource to support you in doing this. You should also consider briefing relevant staff so they have an understanding of the registration process and the information around it.

**Reducing the level of enquiries**
5.47 Providing clear and easy to navigate information about IER on your website, and directing residents to Aboutmyvote.org.uk and the online registration website will help to reduce the burden on public information response lines. The better the information available and the easier it is to access, the less people will become frustrated and reach for the telephone. This is equally applicable to other information resources you supply to residents.

**Timing of information and message provision**

5.48 Whilst some information on IER should be available for interested residents early on, the timing of active dissemination of IER registration information should be considered carefully by EROs to ensure that residents can actually take the required actions when they receive information and that later communications have the right impact. Letting people know about IER too early, before they can take action, may mean an unnecessary burden on electoral service resources as a result of a high level of queries, or that people become saturated with the message with the consequence that later communications could have less impact.

**Following up with non-responders**

5.49 EROs will have to take steps to obtain responses from electors in response to both household enquiry forms and invitation to register requests. This will include sending out further invitations to register to non-responders and using canvassers to conduct house-to-house enquiries. Your public engagement strategy should set out who you expect to have to target with follow-up activity based on the results of the confirmation dry-run and other data and how you will do this.

5.50 Part 3 - June to December 2014 will include further details on the practical aspects of issuing reminders and making house-to-house enquiries.

**3.b Raising awareness using advertising and media**

5.51 Public awareness activity such as advertising and working with the media is an important part of public engagement. As ERO, you have a general duty to promote participation and you will need to undertake advertising of your own as far as is possible – this may be in media you already own such as local authority newsletters, websites, bus shelters, poster sites or notice boards. You will also have a number of other channels available for raising awareness, such as social media and media relations tools.

5.52 To support your local public awareness activity, the Commission will be running advertising campaigns in England, Scotland and Wales, as set out above, at key points during the transition to raise awareness of the actions people need
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to take to join or remain on the register. The list of public engagement resources outlines timings for when Commission advertising plans will be available.

5.53 For your public engagement strategy, you should ensure your public awareness raising activity is co-ordinated to take place at times that will best support activities and key stages in the transition such as the write-out and at the end of the transition where residents who have not provided personal identifiers will be removed from the register.

Advertising templates

5.54 In response to requests from EROs, the Commission will provide a wide variety of advertising templates to use locally around the introduction of IER and during transition (see our list of public engagement resources for more details on what will be provided and when it will be available). We recommend using these as the creative approaches – the overall design and theme – will undergo user-testing to ensure they are effective in meeting objectives. Templates will be produced in a variety of formats, for various audiences and media, and can be modified with local details, or used as they are. Using them will also help to save time and money in developing new advertisements locally and reduce inconsistencies between adjacent areas where the same people may come into contact with other IER advertisements.

Messages to residents

5.55 Messages used in advertising and more widely in every communication with the public must be right for the audience and effective in driving the required action. Different people will be motivated by different key information and it may take a combination of incentive, explanation and penalty to motivate some groups. The right messages must be provided at the right point in the transition. In response to requests from EROs, we will be providing template wording to support EROs in their communications with the public (see list of public engagement resources). Our resources will draw on the results of the message testing we have undertaken, and it’s strongly advised that you draw on these in your communications to residents.

Timing

5.56 Timing of advertising activity is crucial to it having impact, and also ensuring that people don’t get so accustomed to the message that they switch off. It’s generally not a good idea to start advertising too early, when people can’t take the required action and are less interested in the subject because it’s not pressing or they haven’t heard about it yet in the news. You may want to consider limiting the use of some channels to the periods where they will have most impact and maximise the results of the other activity you are undertaking, such as partner work, community events and media relations activity. You may want to co-
ordinate advertising and other activities to peak at key points in the transition, including the write-out and the end of the transition in 2015.

**Using your own media channels (owned media)**

5.57 You will need to identify the best places to display your advertising. Buying media (advertising space) such as outdoor poster sites and press advertisements can be prohibitively expensive. More inexpensive options such as community newsletters or local listings magazines may also be out of reach. You may, however, have a range of local-authority-owned channels available to you. Where the advertisement will need printing or reproducing for the medium, the costs may still be substantial.

5.58 In planning public engagement, you should undertake an audit of potential owned media, map who that media reaches, and select the combination of options that are best placed to raise awareness generally and to reach your specific target audiences.

**Potential owned media**

5.59 The following are examples of owned media:

- Local authority residents’ magazine
- Internal staff newsletters
- Local authority-owned vehicles
- Local authority-owned poster sites
- Local authority buildings
- Bus shelters and billboards
- Notice boards

5.60 You may also want to consider the website of your own local authority as an additional low-cost media channel. You should, for instance, check that your web content is up-to-date and reflects the forthcoming transition to IER. You could include links on key pages (such as the home page) to include information about IER, with links to external websites, such as [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk) and the online registration portal. The Cabinet Office are working on a similar, larger-scale digital signposting scheme which will direct internet-users who are completing transactions like changing the address on their driving licence to the registration portal.

5.61 When choosing which media to use, you should consider the following:

- Reach – the number of people who would be exposed to the activity. You should also consider the number of relevant people who would be exposed to it in terms of any target audience the activity intends to reach.
- Frequency – the number of times people would be exposed to the activity.
For example, you could estimate the reach and frequency of a poster in a doctor’s waiting room.

**Using social media**

Social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+ and others provide an inexpensive opportunity to raise awareness and can be a mechanism for responding to public queries. Using your own local authority social media channels can be useful particularly in alerting stakeholders who may pass on your messages to their contacts.

By making the messages you post interesting, amusing, urgent or engaging, they are more likely to be noticed and passed between users, therefore reaching a wider audience. Posts should be made at key times to ensure that they have maximum impact – some of these will be planned ahead around transition events and registration deadlines and some posts may be reactions to developments in the wider environment. To maximise reach, ongoing promotion work is required to build the numbers using your social media channels.

Social media has limitations – for example, the public audience for your own social media channels may in many cases be limited to those who are already engaged with the local authority, and even where the audience is wider, some groups can be fairly unresponsive to messages that come from anyone other than their online contacts.

**Street marketing**

Street marketing involves recruiting staff or volunteers to make face-to-face contact with people, for example at an event such as a road show or at a stall in a shopping centre. It can be a useful tool for targeting under-registered groups as the information can be brought to them, rather than requiring them to seek it out. Because it requires an immediate response, forms can be collected on the spot, making the process of registration seem a lot easier. This also gives the public the opportunity to ask about anything they do not understand. You could also supply posters and leaflets to draw attention to the volunteers.

**Provide reminders in the locations where residents can register instantly**

It’s been shown that an individual is more likely to take the action requested of them if they can do it straight away. The likelihood to act decreases over time. Think about the locations that provide an opportunity for people to register there and then - providing information at those points may have greater influence on people taking the step to register. The online registration function introduced for IER provides new possibilities for this - you may want to display reminders on library computers, at job clubs where computers for CV writing are provided, or in free computing skills classes.

**Buying media (paid-for advertising)**
The Commission will undertake paid-for advertising through regional channels and across media such as television as part of our public awareness activity across England, Scotland and Wales. If you are also paying for advertising space – or pooling budgets with other local authorities to buy advertising space that is mutually beneficial, you should consider the factors in the box below.

**Essential factors in choosing media**
- **Total reach** – the number of people expected to be exposed to an advertiser’s message at least once in a specified time.
- **Frequency** – the number of times a member of the audience is exposed to a message in the specified time.
- **Cost** – The cost of reaching one thousand people (CPT) or of reaching your target market (CPT-TM).

We will share plans of our campaign media coverage in your area as early as possible. These final plans will not be available until our media is booked a few months ahead of the start of the campaign in 2014, but we will provide information on developments and broad approaches ahead of this.

**Channels and who they reach**
- **Radio** – reaches lower income residents and young adults; segmented audience can be reached by appropriate stations.
- **Online** – less useful for lower income households; reaches 18-24s and students particularly through social media.
- **Newspaper** – potential to reach lower incomes, particularly in certain titles.
- **Magazines / newsletters** – target specific local areas or community groups.
- **Advertorials** (promotional articles) for local press and websites – could be used to carry more detailed information.
- **Outdoor** – useful to reach target audiences by locating in areas with high density; potential to reach students; billboards and buses can provide high frequency of views.
- **Mobile advertising vans** – can deliver messages to geographic areas with high densities of your target audience.
- **Event sponsorship** – potential to reach young people and BMEs.

**Planning media buying**
You may buy individual sites from media owners or if you have a larger budget you may work with a media buying agency who are best placed to select the best media to meet your objectives and reach target audiences. Media is typically bought fairly close to when a campaign is due to go live, but you will
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need to hold conversations early on to establish the deadlines for buying advertising media, and for supplying artwork. There are also likely to be technical requirements for the supply of artwork.

What to consider when buying media

- Consider how you plan your media spend by establishing reach and frequency. It may be better to have fewer adverts on a larger radio station than lots of adverts on a small radio station.
- Is a high reach campaign in a local newspaper running for one day better than a low reach campaign in a community magazine that lasts a month? Just because it lasts longer, it doesn’t mean that people will read it more than once.
- Think about the audience before accepting any special offers from media owners. Ask why the price is reduced – it may be that the space does not have a proven ability to reach your audience.

Getting others to spread the message (earned media)

5.69 As well as raising awareness through advertising, peoples’ likelihood to register will be affected by the messages they hear in the press and news media. Media relations activity provides an opportunity to get your message on the news agenda and raise the profile. By actively working with the media you also have greater influence on the types of messages that are carried. You may not be able to control public opinion but you can supply messages that are more likely to reassure people and reduce the potential for negative coverage that could deter people from registering. Activity to undertake may include:

- Issuing press releases ahead of key points in the transition
- Making a well-prepared spokesperson available for radio and television interviews
- Holding publicity-generating events

5.70 We will provide template press releases ahead of the write-out and at other points in the transition.

Publicity activity

5.71 Publicity activity can help generate interest from the press and the public. You could consider holding an event or hosting a speaker that would boost awareness. Novel activities at existing community events can draw attention and you can promote them in advance. You may want to talk with other local authorities about approaches they have found successful. By notifying the press ahead of the event you can attract their attendance and achieve further media coverage.

Accessibility and impact
5.72 Many of the communications you produce can draw on our resources and templates, which include template text, letters, leaflets and advertising templates. These will be produced following testing and will be produced with impact and accessibility in mind. Information on what we will provide and when it will be available can be found in our list of public engagement resources.

5.73 When producing your own communication materials you will need to ensure that they are clear and accessible, emphasise key messages and have a layout that supports clarity and impact. Clear and concise writing has a much higher chance of reaching as many people as possible and ensuring the recipient will understand what they need to do. Carefully considered communications that provide information in the way the reader wants to receive it is more likely to have greater impact for a broader audience, whether busy professionals, disengaged young people or residents with lower literacy levels. It’s worth identifying whether there is someone in your local authority who has expertise in writing for the public, plain English or website accessibility, or where possible could undertake relevant training.

**Calls to action**

5.74 We will be providing a range of template paragraphs (see list of public engagement resources for further information) to use with residents which will be informed by our research into what messages drive action. For the communications you produce that are aimed at getting people to do something, a prominent ‘call to action’ is fundamental to success. A ‘call to action’ is simply a statement that lays out what you want the audience to do next – for example, ‘register online’. Without it people won’t understand what they should do, and if it is unclear or buried in other information it may well be ignored.

5.75 Calls to action should be:

- Written succinctly clearly telling people what to do
- Use active instructive language (‘Visit www.bigtown.org.uk for more information’ is better than ‘interested parties can find further relevant details at the Council’s website’)
- Visually prominent in the document - for example, in larger text, a different colour and with space around it to draw people’s attention to it

**Publicising contact details**

5.76 Not everyone will understand the communication and some people will need further help or reassurance, so contact details of where the reader can get help should be included.
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For further information, see our factsheet on producing accessible communications.

3.c Working with partners to reach target audiences

Working with partners, both inside and outside the local authority, will be key throughout the implementation of IER, both to help with the administration of IER processes and to promote public awareness.

Partnerships can help you in a number of ways to raise public awareness:

- For some social groups, messages are more likely to be acted upon if they come from someone they trust and know – for example, you may contact a respected religious or community leader or organisation to ask them to talk to their community about the change.
- Partners can also raise awareness by making the issue a familiar part of everyday life.
- Partners can extend the reach of your advertising – for example, a dentist may put posters in their waiting room.
- Partners may include information in the communications they already send out.
- Partners such as charities may also help you to increase your capacity by answering people’s questions and supporting them to fill in forms.

It will take time to set up partnerships and build effective relationships so dialogue should be started early. Partnerships should be free, with each side getting a mutual benefit for entering the partnership. However, some costs - for example, for the production of materials for partners to use with residents - may be incurred.

Partnerships can be established at every level, from working with individual community leaders to national businesses as part of a large ‘partnership marketing’ strategy. Partnerships also need to be built internally within the local authority and with organisations that provide services for the local authority.

What partners can do

The scale and timing of partnerships and the amount of activity they undertake will vary hugely. It could include asking a faith leader to raise voter registration with his church, providing registration forms for estate agents to attach to rental contracts, identifying a charity whose volunteers are willing to help
people fill in forms, or working with a large local employer who is keen on
supporting community causes. It could also involve you providing materials for or
working together on delivering a workshop on democracy and registration. In
some cases the partner may be able to identify opportunities that you had not
considered.

**Identifying potential partners**

5.82 It is important at this stage for your public engagement strategy to map
out potential partners to deliver messages about registration.

5.83 Partners could include groups or individuals who:

- have previously supported registration work
- are in regular or significant communication with target audiences
- have good relationships with target audiences and have previously worked
  with the local authority but not on registration
- have good relationships with target audiences and have never worked with
  the local authority
- have a high profile in the local area among broad audiences

5.84 Partners could include:

- Service providers - for example, housing associations, home care services,
  further education colleges.
- Government structures and local authority teams – for example, parish
  councils, housing services.
- Influential individuals – for example, a religious leader, a prominent student
  landlord, politicians, political parties and candidates.
- Community groups and charities – for example, a boxing club, Neighbourhood
  Watch, over-60s social, disability charity.
- Private companies and organisations – for example, a large local employer,
  gym, dentist, estate agent.

5.85 For further examples, see our example tactics sheets under ‘Step 4:
Identifying tactics to reach your local target audience’ below.

5.86 As you won’t be able to work with everyone, decision-making processes
on possible partnerships need to consider the local picture, including who will
best reach target groups, what are the practicalities of working together what
would be the level of engagement in the partnership, and a range of other factors
that will vary locally.

5.87 You will need to also consider cost benefit – some partnerships may take
a large amount of time to set up and reach only a very small number of people.
But if those people are high on your target list and unlikely to be engaged in other
ways, the partnership may still be worthwhile. Similarly, an organisation that works with residents who are not on your target list, but reaches a huge number of residents and is committed to taking time to spread your messages could at least be considered.

5.88 As outlined above, the Commission will be undertaking partnership work across England, Scotland and Wales, but this should not affect your ability to plan local partnerships. We will update you on our plans for national partnerships in September 2013.

Politicians and political parties

5.89 Candidates and their supporters can extend your registration reach as they may be interested in promoting registration during their electoral campaigning. Parties also have a number of volunteers who may be involved in doorstep canvassing and so could potentially spread your registration message. You should start talking to your local councillors and other elected representatives early on in the process. Where candidates, parties and politicians are not engaged, there is a risk that the messages and information they provide to residents about registering could be wrong or incomplete. It is therefore important that you develop a plan for working with these individuals and groups at an early stage.

Approaching partners about supporting registration

5.90 You will need to approach potential or existing partners about the possibility of them supporting your registration work. To an extent, you will need to ‘pitch’ your request to them to ensure that it has the highest chance of getting them on board, particularly as they may have requests from other organisations. Before you approach partners it would be useful to have ideas of how they could help and how helping out would be beneficial to them and the people they work with. It is also worth thinking about the timing of your approach – will they, for example, be busy at a particular time with a specific priority? Despite your efforts, some organisations and individuals will not be in a position to get involved; it’s important to accept this and where possible consider alternatives. You will also need to support partners throughout the activity in order to increase the likelihood of them remaining engaged.

Timing and co-ordinating of partnership activity

5.91 The Commission will also be undertaking national partnership marketing activity. This is likely to involve working with national organisations such as charities or employers, that are best placed to reach target audiences and which these audiences are familiar with, to spread our messages and support people registering. We are currently developing plans for national partnership marketing but we are committed to sharing the information through an EA Bulletin as soon
as they have been established so that local teams are aware of the coverage of our activity. We will also put plans in place to avoid the risk of duplication of local activity.

**Partnership risks**

5.92 Involving other individuals and organisations in the delivery of your plans will present risks. That is not to say the risks should stop you working with partners, but you will need to be aware of them and identify mitigations appropriate to the particular risks in your area – this should be captured in your risk and issues register. Some of the potential risks include:

- **The partnership results in wide-scale complaints**
- **The partner misrepresents your message** - Do they understand the relationship and their responsibilities? Do they understand the message you want to get across to residents? Do they keep to the message, and to what extent does it matter if they don’t? Are they clear when the work ends, or when the message changes?
- **The partner does not carry out the work they agreed** - Is this risk more significant because you have put time and money into the relationship? Perhaps they misunderstood the workload, or find themselves with an unexpected priority, or perhaps they start to incur additional costs and expect re-imbursement.
- **The cost outweighs the benefits** - You may produce comprehensive materials and the organisation does little to help support your registration work.

**Setting up the partnership**

5.93 In setting up the partnership, taking account of the above risks and any other risks you identify locally, the following points should be addressed:

- explain why the partnership is beneficial to both parties
- agree the level of support the partner will offer
- understand the mechanisms they will use for reaching their audience
- agree whether any materials will be needed and, if so, who will be producing them
- agree what messages they will use in communicating with their audience
- agree what information they will provide on how the audience can respond or where they can get more help
- agree who at the local authority will be available to answer the partner’s questions
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- be clear about timings and when messages need to change
- establish regular communications
- ensure that if things are not going as planned they are open to stopping the activity and, where relevant, returning materials
- agree an approach to evaluation of the activity

5.94 Particularly for larger partnerships, you may want to have a telephone conversation or face-to-face meeting to cover these considerations.

Step 4: Identifying tactics to reach your local target audience

5.95 When local target groups have been identified, a strategy needs to be developed about how they can be reached. It may take a range of approaches to convince a resident to take the action needed, using the different channels outlined in the above section, such as direct contact, advertising and working with partners. Example target audiences and the opportunities for reaching them are set out below.
## Table of audiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Opportunities to reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>Need to know to look out for letter and update details if they change.</td>
<td>- Write-out letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Public information about change through broader audience channels such as local authority website, magazine and other communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Local awareness-raising advertisements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Local media work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>System is new and people may have queries or concerns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconfirmed</td>
<td>Need to know to look out for letter and supply personal identifiers. Risk</td>
<td>- Write-out letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that some people will miss their letter.</td>
<td>- Follow up with direct contact (e.g. letters, phone calls, and house-to-house canvassing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Communications from partner organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Public information about change on broad audience channels such as local authority website, magazine and other communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Local awareness-raising advertisements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Local media work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>System is new and people may have queries or concerns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconfirmed with an absent vote</td>
<td>At risk of losing the ability to vote using their preferred method</td>
<td>- Write-out letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Follow up with direct contact (e.g. letters, phone calls, and house-to-house canvassing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Targeted public information provision and partnership work where absent voters fall into specific social groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Targeted activity and direct contact ahead of publication of the revised register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Local media work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>System is new and people may have queries or concerns.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not on final pre-IER register,</td>
<td>Barriers such as transient residency, unawareness of rights, disengagement,</td>
<td>- Targeted engagement activity including direct contact, public information provision, advertising, and working with partner organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including typically under-</td>
<td>or difficulty with registering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>registered and harder-to-reach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table of potential groups requiring targeted activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Opportunities to reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Young people                         | - Not reached by traditional media  
- Unaware of need to register  
- Reliant on family influences  
- Disengagement with politics  
- Distrust of authority  
- Other priorities | - Peer influenced  
- High social media users  
- High smart phone and text message use  
- Online registration and information  
- Opportunity to influence the family |
| **Example tactics and resources sheet** |                                                                             |                                                                                        |
| Students                             | - Highly transient  
- Disengagement with paperwork and post  
- Other priorities and distractions  
- Not used to registering themselves | - Institution asks them to complete paperwork  
- Grouped in halls of residence or ‘student areas’ of town  
- Potential to be incentivised |
| **Example tactics and resources sheet** |                                                                             |                                                                                        |
| Attainers                            | - Unaware of need to register  
- Reliant on family influences  
- Disengagement with politics  
- Other priorities | - Many in school, college or training providing potential communication channels  
- Online registration  
- High smart phone and text message use  
- High social media use  
- Peer influenced |
| **Example tactics and resources sheet** |                                                                             |                                                                                        |
| Homemovers                           | - Unaware of need to re-register  
- Not a priority  
- May not receive registration post | - Partners helping to spread messages |
| **Example tactics and resources sheet** |                                                                             |                                                                                        |
| Mobile population, private renters and communal residency | - Unaware of need to register/change details  
- Disengagement with politics  
- Other priorities | - Partners helping to spread messages |
<p>| <strong>Example tactics and resources sheet</strong> |                                                                             |                                                                                        |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Example Tactics and Resources Sheet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Under-registered black and minority ethnic | - Disengagement with politics  
- New residents may be unaware of rights | - Partners helping to spread messages  
- Local advertising in locations with higher density of target population |
| People with disabilities and particular communication requirements | - Unable to access mainstream communications  
- Some may rely on carers to receive and return post  
- May need help with completing forms | - Need to produce accessible communications  
- High users of service providers providing potential communication channels  
- Potential to reach carers and those who have influence with them |
| Over 80s | - Very low internet use  
- Difficulty getting to post box  
- May rely on carers to receive and return post  
- May need help with completing forms  
- Less exposed to outdoor advertising | - High users of service providers providing potential communication channels  
- Potential to reach carers and those who have influence with them |
| Disengaged households; young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) | - Disengagement with politics  
- Distrust of authority  
- Difficulty with completing forms  
- Not involved with institutions | - High users of certain services providing potential communication channels  
- Peer influenced  
- Potential to be incentivised |
| Low level of literacy or understanding of English (or, in Wales, English or Welsh) | - Unaware of rights  
- Difficulty completing forms | - Provision of information in other languages  
- Partners helping to spread messages and providing help with form completion  
- Information in world language media |
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#### Homeless and Travellers

- **Example tactics and resources sheet**

  - Difficulty accessing and completing forms
  - Partners helping to spread messages and providing help with form completion

#### Residents in Very Rural Areas

- **Example tactics and resources sheet**

  - Less exposure to central services
  - Less exposure to outdoor advertisements
  - Partnering with community groups
  - Rural communications
  - Reliant on concentrated range of services

#### Traditionally Highly Likely to Be Registered but Have Concerns about New System

- **Example tactics and resources sheet**

  - May have concerns about change
  - Public information on change on broad audience channels such as local authority website, magazine and other communications
  - Telephone support using approved scripts
  - Local media work

### Cabinet Office Funding to Maximise Registration among Under-Registered Groups

5.96 The Cabinet Office has funding available to support schemes to increase the rate of voter registration among under-registered groups prior to the actual confirmation process in 2014. It is running six schemes of which the following four may indirectly impact on rates of voter registration in your area, but do not directly involve the ERO:

- Digital signposting: links to information about IER and online registration will be placed on key Government online transactional services.
- Schools outreach: organisations deliver information about IER in schools and encourage voter registration.
- Democratic engagement innovation fund: funding is awarded to organisations (with a focus on those in the voluntary and small and medium-sized enterprise sector) which have innovative proposals for increasing voter registration.
- Regional outreach fund: consortia bids are invited from organisations which could deliver voter registration events in four to six, small to medium sized regions.

5.97 You will receive information about whether these schemes are being offered in your area from the Cabinet Office.
Two further schemes supported by the Cabinet Office are offered directly to EROs, with funding available for them on an opt-in basis. These schemes are:

- **Targeted canvassing:** EROs bid for funding which will allow them to conduct targeted canvassing of electors after the publication of the register in February/March 2014 but before the beginning of the confirmation process to help to ensure that as many voters as possible will be confirmed.

- **Registration fund:** funding is awarded to EROs to support proposals for increasing the rate of voter registration among under-registered groups.

Full details about these schemes, including how to apply for the funding, were sent to EROs, local authority Chief Executives and Electoral Service Managers by the Cabinet Office in June 2013 and are available on the Cabinet Office web portal: [https://ertp.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/](https://ertp.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/).

### Registration Fund

You may have ideas about how to reach some of the under-registered groups mentioned in the table above. The Cabinet Office and the Commission are aware that alongside some strong ongoing programmes for reducing under-representation, EROs often have new ideas for targeting under-registered groups but lack the resources to be able to deliver them on an appropriate scale. The Cabinet Office have funding available to award to EROs who successfully submit proposals for practical schemes which could be run prior to confirmation to increase the rate of voter registration among under-registered groups in their area.

EROs may wish to consider how they could develop and implement a practical scheme for increasing the rate of voter registration among under-registered groups between October 2013 and July 2014. Funds will be paid to successful EROs as an un-ring-fenced grant.

### Retaining the trust of existing electors

You may find that social groups who are traditionally more likely to register also need greater support than usual. Some may feel negative or cynical about the change or have queries about the practicalities. For example, they may not understand the reason for transition or they may be uncomfortable providing their personal identifiers or worry about data security.

It’s important that you don’t overwhelm the majority of people with the level of information about the change to the extent that messages about the specific action they need to take get lost. At the same time, to reassure those who have concerns, detailed information should be available for those who want it. This means ensuring employees answering telephone calls from residents are briefed so that they are equipped with answers to challenging questions, and that
the local authority website is up-to-date with clearly sign-posted information such as frequently asked questions. Work with local media will also help to reassure voters. Please see our list of public engagement resources for details.

5.104 It is also worth monitoring public opinion by asking frontline staff to feed back any patterns of concerns residents have that impact on their engagement with IER. You may then be in a position to provide further information on these areas, for example by updating your website, and you may also want to inform the Commission so that the information can be shared more widely.

**Step 5: Monitoring and evaluating public engagement**

**Why you need to monitor and evaluate**

5.105 Throughout the transition you should monitor the delivery of your public engagement activity, as well as carry out an evaluation at the end of each key stage to ensure that your activities are effective and remain appropriate throughout the transition. To demonstrate that you have met this challenge your strategy and implementation plan will need to be updated as required.

5.106 In your strategy you will need to outline how you plan to monitor and evaluate the success of your public engagement activity. Evaluations are essential for measuring the effectiveness of a project and demonstrating achievements. Evidence gathered through the process of monitoring and evaluation can help you to make any necessary amendments to your activity in order to help target your resources where they are most needed.

**Planning monitoring and evaluation**

5.107 At the planning stage it is important to identify a mechanism for monitoring the success of your activity and define the questions to be addressed by an evaluation and how these questions might be answered.

5.108 In order to evaluate the success of an activity, it is important to have clear objectives. When designing your public engagement strategy you should have in mind the objectives of each activity and these should be as measureable as possible. The evaluation measures you use should relate back clearly to the initial objectives.

5.109 You may not be able to evaluate everything in the detail you would like, but there are a variety of methods that can be used (see below) to assess the effectiveness of your activity. It is important to undertake evaluation as extensively as possible so that you can make best use of your resources. You should set out any limitations to the evaluation in your plans, including any potential risks to the reliability and validity of the evaluation design and the resulting findings.
5.110 The evaluation plan needs to set out who will participate in the evaluation. It should also determine who is going to be responsible for the various parts of the evaluation. Your implementation plan should include details of the implementation of the engagement strategy, including evaluation of the strategy’s impact. Consideration should also be given to the resources allocated to evaluating a particular project. A satisfactory account of the effectiveness of a project cannot be given without evaluation, but the cost of the evaluation should be proportionate to the cost of the project.

5.111 The plan should also identify relevant stakeholders, such as other local authorities, who would be interested in the evaluation and who the findings should be shared with.

**Available evaluation measures**

5.112 A mix of indicators should be used, some of which might be behaviour-based (what people have done, what has actually happened) and some of which might be perception-based (what people believe to have happened).

5.113 When measuring the success or otherwise of public engagement activity consider:

- **Reach** – the number of people who would have been exposed to the activity. You should also consider the number of *relevant* people who have been exposed it in terms of any target audience the activity intends to reach.
- **Frequency** – the number of times people would have been exposed to the activity
- **Whether there have been increases in the number of people taking action, such as registering to vote**
- **Whether positive feedback has been received from participants in a scheme**
- **Whether people's understanding of the process has increased**
- **Whether there has been an increase in requests for information**

5.114 It is likely that a variety of methods will be used to evaluate a project. At the planning stage it is important to think about the most appropriate methods to use for evaluation.

5.115 The following are some mechanisms for collecting evidence to support your evaluation:

- Recording feedback from the public at events or via your website
- Recording the level of responses as a result of the activity
- Recording the number of enquiries on the subject
- Recording the number of hits to the website requesting information
- Recording any feedback provided on social media
- Distributing evaluation questionnaires or feedback forms at the end of an event
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- Conducting a public opinion survey to determine whether the public were aware of your activity, their thoughts about it and whether they took action as a result
- Conducting pre-activity and post-activity surveys to determine whether people’s knowledge and awareness of registration and the process has increased as a result of the activity
- Interviews with stakeholders to determine what they thought of the activity
- Focus groups held with residents to gather feedback – potentially as part of other events

5.116 So that your evaluation is as accurate as possible, it is also important to attempt to measure:

- Environmental factors or ‘background noise’: to what extent is increased participation the result of your activity or of some other factors?
- The base case: i.e. what would have happened in the absence of the activity?

6 Planning and resourcing the transition: your implementation plan

Why it is important to have an implementation plan

6.1 In order to effectively manage the transition to IER, you will need to have in place robust project planning documentation. You will need an implementation plan, which will be your project plan capturing everything that needs to be done for the delivery of the transition.

6.2 Once you have a public engagement strategy in place and understand the particular challenges in your area, you will need to ensure that plans for implementing your strategy are set out as part of your implementation plan for delivering the transition, covering all aspects of contact with electors, including sending out forms and letters and direct face-to-face contact by canvassers, as well as local public awareness activity such as advertising and partnership work with local organisations.

6.3 You will need to ensure that you have in place systems that will enable you to chart your progress towards ensuring that as many eligible residents as possible are included on the IER registers. This will include processes to track responses from individuals and households to different stages of the registration process to allow you to monitor and evaluate progress, and to help you target resources appropriately and identify where amendments to your plans are required.

6.4 To mitigate any risks to the successful implementation of IER, you will also need to maintain a risk and issues register, identifying any risks to the effective delivery of the transition and corresponding mitigating actions.

To meet the challenges set out in proposed performance standard 1 – Understand the particular challenges in your registration area and performance standard 2 - Deliver your implementation plan, you will need to have an implementation plan that remains appropriate, using available data to monitor progress and keep it under review, as well as a risk register.

We have produced a template implementation plan that you can use to plan for the delivery of the transition to IER. You do not have to use the template we have provided for your implementation plan but, whatever form your plan takes, you should ensure that it captures all of the work that you will need to undertake in planning for and delivering the transition to IER, including how you will implement the actions identified in your local public
engagement strategy. At a minimum, your plan should cover the areas included in paragraph 6.5 below.

Your planning documentation should be set out in a way that captures:

- objectives and success measures
- resource requirements
- a training and briefing schedule
- key deliverables and tasks, with start and end dates, as well as owners
- dependencies and relevant partners
- a mechanism for tracking and evaluating progress and for recording amendments to the plan

There will be risks which will need to be managed to ensure effective delivery of the transition. We have developed a template risks and issues register which contains examples of risks that you will need to consider and, if necessary, mitigate, as well as a log on which to record any issues that have emerged and you will need to address. You can use our template risks and issues register for recording all your risks; alternatively, you may wish to include the example risks in your pre-existing risk management documentation, which you may already have developed based on the documentation previously provided by the Cabinet Office, which includes risks relating to the roll-out of the IT.

What should your implementation plan cover?

6.5 Your implementation plan should set out how all aspects of the transition will be delivered, and should cover areas including:

- Establishment of an IER implementation group
- Identification of the required resources, including identification of staffing requirements and any necessary recruitment arrangements
- Identification of training needs, incorporating external and internal sources of training, such as Commission briefings
- Review of internal processes to ensure they are relevant to IER
- Implementation of the public engagement strategy, including how direct contact with electors will be managed
- Details of how the necessary steps as set out in Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 will be carried out
- The management of contractors and suppliers, including printers and software suppliers
- Processes to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate potential integrity problems, including what steps are to be taken to deal with any such problems
Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the progress of transitioning to IER and for recording amendments to your implementation plan or public engagement strategy as a result of this.

Delivery of the tasks included in the Cabinet Office’s preparation plan, which you will be reporting on progress against through the readiness monitoring portal.

6.6 The guidance below builds on the Cabinet Office’s preparation plan and sets out what you should be focusing on once the IT and funding frameworks are in place. Where possible, we have sign-posted where the Cabinet Office have or will make available any further guidance or resources.

Establishing an IER implementation group

6.7 You should establish early contact with key departments and individuals to help you deliver the transition, such as:

- the local authority’s IT department
- the local authority’s finance team
- data holders
- the data protection officer at the local authority
- the local authority’s call centre / reception manager
- the communications / media manager at the local authority (if there is one)
- the local authority’s HR manager
- representatives of local authority teams/individuals and local organisations who work with under-registered groups in your area

6.8 The plan should cover how you will be engaging with these individuals and how often you will meet with them. You will also need to consider:

- whether you should personally chair the group
- who should be involved
- what the terms of reference will be
- how actions will be recorded and taken forward

Identifying the required resources

6.9 The engagement strategy, which will have been informed by the confirmation dry-run results, will identify what work you need to do to engage with electors and, consequently, what resources you will need to do this.

6.10 You should:

- Check that your resource assumptions are robust and that your grant allocations will be sufficient to cover the activities you have identified that
you need to carry out. If you think that your initial grant allocation is insufficient, there are additional funds that could be provided on production of the necessary evidence in support of your local needs. Cabinet Office have provided guidance on how to bid for more funding. A copy is available on the web portal: https://ertp.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/. For any questions on funding, contact the Cabinet Office at: IERfunding@cabinet-office.gsi.gov.uk

- Identify and make any necessary changes to your current electoral / registration services structure, including considering requirements resulting from the larger volume of data to be handled and for ‘business as usual’ registration under the new IER rules beyond the transition.
- Ensure that your IT systems are in place. Guidance on this will be provided separately through the Cabinet Office and will also be highlighted in Part 2 – The registration framework. In the period leading up to the transition, you will be asked to provide monthly progress reports to the Cabinet Office to confirm that particular activities have been completed.
- Check that you have all the necessary equipment to deliver the transition.
- Ensure that your storage requirements are adequate.

**Staffing**

6.11 Recruitment for additional staff to support IER will need to begin as early as possible to ensure that you have the necessary staff in place in sufficient time and that they can be trained as required. You will need to consider the length of time recruitment takes and plan appropriately. You should liaise with your HR contact at the local authority (who should, ideally, already be part of your IER implementation group) as soon as possible to ensure they are aware of your requirements and can provide you with the necessary support.

**Storage requirements**

6.12 You will need to assess your likely storage requirements – both physical and electronic – as a result of the transition to IER and beyond.

6.13 When considering your storage requirements, you will need to consider the volume of information in paper and electronic format that you will need to store and how you will be able to retrieve the data when it is due for destruction, as well as any security requirements to ensure that electors’ personal data is kept safe. Further guidance on the security of data and storage will be provided in Part 2 – The registration framework.

6.14 As part of your planning, you should assess how many confirmation letters, household enquiry forms (HEFs) and ‘Invitations to register’ you are likely to need before the start of the transition in 2014 and you will have to make a decision about whether to store these forms on or off site prior to their being used and make any necessary arrangements.
6.15 In addition to these blank forms, as part of the IER process, you are likely to have to store additional documentation and information. There will be the completed physical forms returned by electors, or the information received electronically through the digital service.

6.16 In certain circumstances, for example where an elector is unable to provide their date of birth, nationality or National Insurance number, electors will also be asked to provide supporting documentation as part of their application. Details on what information electors will need to provide and what you will need to do with it will be included in Part 4 – Maintaining the register throughout the year.

**Identifying training needs, incorporating external and internal sources of training**

6.17 Your implementation plan should cover identifying the training needs of both permanent and temporary staff, including canvassers. The plan should capture any general needs, as well as specific needs resulting directly from the introduction of IER. For example, you will need to identify whether your current staff have the required skill set to support you with analysing data from the confirmation dry-run and any other information the local authority may hold on residents to help you identify how you should target electors and effectively direct your resources to where they are most needed.

6.18 Also, throughout the transition, you are likely to receive and will have to process large volumes of residents’ personal data, which you and your staff will need to keep secure. You will need to identify whether your current staff have the required skill set to support you with maintaining an audit trail of the data, as well as safeguarding residents’ personal details.

6.19 References to training in the plan should incorporate external and internal sources of training, such as Commission briefings and any training commissioned by the Cabinet Office.

6.20 Planning for training activities for temporary staff should start at the earliest opportunity, even although the training itself may not take place until a later stage.

6.21 It is vital that each member of the team, whether permanent or temporary, understands their particular role and any statutory obligations associated with the work they are undertaking. All staff should receive training on the legislative requirements and responsibilities relevant to their role, as well as training on ensuring equal access, data handling and good customer care. You will need to ensure that everyone handling personal data is aware of and is adequately trained in the legal requirements for handling personal data in line with the Data Protection Act, including their personal responsibilities.
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6.22 You should also develop methods of evaluating the training sessions and materials in order to inform future planning. If you have training personnel within your local authority they may be able to assist you with this process.

**Review of internal processes**

6.23 EROs will be required to update their internal processes to ensure they are relevant to IER.

6.24 For example, you will need to consider how you are going to manage large volumes of data and how you are going to maintain an audit trail and the security of any personal data.

6.25 Also, local process maps may need to be created or updated to reflect the changes to procedures necessitated by the changes to the registration process.

6.26 Part 3 – June-December 2014 and Part 4 – Maintaining the register through the year will provide you with information on the particular legal requirements and what you will be expected to do, which will support you in updating your processes.

**Implementation of the public engagement strategy**

6.27 Your plan should include details of how you are going to put your public engagement strategy into practice and how you are going to monitor its effectiveness. You should allocate tasks to specific individuals, set deadlines and have a mechanism for tracking and evaluating progress. In particular, you should plan to review your strategy after the actual confirmation process to reflect the results and re-allocate resources where needed.

To meet the challenges set out in proposed performance standard 2: Deliver your implementation plan, monitoring progress and making amendments where necessary, you will need to keep your strategy under review, updating it as required, using available data to monitor progress.

**How the necessary steps under Section 9A of the RPA 1983 will be carried out**

6.28 Before the transition to IER you should take all necessary steps to ensure that your registers are as accurate and complete as possible, including carrying out house-to-house enquiries and using available local data to identify and target potential electors and to verify and validate data held on your register.
6.29 Details of how you intend to carry out the necessary steps under Section 9A of the RPA both during the IER canvass and throughout the year, including in the period leading up to the May 2015 polls, should be covered in your implementation plan as this duty will continue throughout the transition to IER and into ‘business as usual’ registration under IER.

6.30 Your plan should also capture how you are going to identify and remove any electors who no longer qualify to be registered. You should ensure that you are making full use of all the records available to you to verify entries on the register, taking steps to remove those electors who are no longer entitled to remain registered.

**Engaging with suppliers and reviewing contracts**

6.31 There is likely to be a need for a higher number of printed forms and letters in 2014, given the requirement to send out confirmations of registration, HEF forms and invitations to register. EROs should use their confirmation dry-run results to estimate the number of these forms that they are likely to need. These volumes will need to be shared with print suppliers and any other service providers directly affected by the volume of forms, such as postal service suppliers where these are used. EROs should consider whether there may be a need to renegotiate existing contracts or change suppliers.

We have produced a [contract development and management checklist](#) to support you in managing contracts, as well as appointing a new supplier if required.

**Use of personal data**

6.32 During the transition to IER you will be collecting data from residents, including sensitive personal data such as information about a person’s nationality and National Insurance Numbers. You should ensure that there are appropriate office procedures in place for ensuring the security of the data while it is being processed, in addition to secure storage arrangements.

6.33 You should liaise with the Data Protection Officer and IT Department at your appointing authority to identify any risks to the security of the data you hold, whether on paper forms or stored electronically on your systems. You will need to ensure that your handling procedures and storage arrangements are compliant with data protection legislation. You should also identify whether your staff may need to receive additional training to ensure they handle residents’ personal data in a way that is data protection compliant, and make plans for staff to attend such training as appropriate.
Part 1: Preparing for Individual Electoral Registration

6.34 You can also find guidance on data protection on the Information Commissioner’s website, or you can contact the Information Commissioner’s Office should you have any specific questions.

The Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113
Email: casework@ico.org.uk

Information Commissioner’s Office – Wales
2nd Floor, Churchill House
Churchill Way
Cardiff
CF10 2HH
Tel: 029 2067 8400
Email: wales@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Information Commissioner’s Office – Scotland
45 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7HL
Tel: 0131 244 9001
Email: scotland@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Planning for monitoring and evaluating the success of transitioning to IER

6.35 To ensure that the number of residents added to the IER registers can be maximised, you will need to monitor your progress throughout the transition using all data available to you, including information gained through the actual confirmation process. Information obtained through your monitoring should then be used to update your engagement strategy and overall implementation plan as required. General guidance on monitoring and evaluating your public engagement strategy can be found in Chapter 5, Planning and resourcing the transition: drawing up a public engagement strategy. Further information on keeping your strategy and plans under review will be provided in Part 3: June – December 2014 and Part 4: Maintaining the register throughout the year.

To meet the challenges set out in proposed performance standard 2: Deliver your implementation plan, monitoring progress and making amendments where necessary, you will need to ensure your plan remains
appropriate, using available data to monitor progress and keep it under review.

Delivery of the tasks included in the Cabinet Office’s preparation plan and reporting through the readiness monitoring portal

6.36 The Cabinet Office has already provided you with a preparation plan and a supporting planning template which sets out the key tasks you will need to carry out in relation to the roll-out of the IT and the confirmation dry-run. You are also expected to report on your progress with delivering the tasks on the preparation plan through their readiness monitoring portal.