



Elections Scotland

# Handbook for polling station staff

Supporting the Scottish Independence  
Referendum  
Thursday 18 September 2014

## Translations and other formats

This document can be made available in certain alternative formats. For further information, contact Ros Wilson at [ros.wilson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:ros.wilson@edinburgh.gov.uk), telephone 0131 469 3820.

## Foreword by Mary Pitcaithly OBE Chief Counting Officer



On Thursday 18 September 2014 Scottish voters will be asked whether they wish Scotland to be an independent country. This referendum is an historic occasion and, as Convener of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland, I have the privilege and the responsibility of co-ordinating the way in which it is conducted. My aim is simple – ***that the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum will deliver a result that will be trusted as accurate.***

Your work in the polling station will ensure that voters and agents will have a positive experience on the day of the referendum while the accuracy of your paperwork will make a vital contribution to the timeliness of your local count and of the national result.

In addition to this guidance, your Counting Officer will provide you with training, with particular instructions for your own area and with support on the day of the referendum itself. Read all the information you are given carefully, as this will help you carry out your duties and deal with any issues that may occur.

My thanks are due to all those who have assisted my team in preparing this guidance, but particularly to you, who, as members of the polling station team, will use it to deliver a first-class polling station experience to the voters of Scotland on Thursday 18 September.

Mary Pitcaithly OBE  
Convener of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland  
Chief Counting Officer

# Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>		Checking supplies and materials	9
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>	Polling station layout	10
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>		Signs and notices	12
<b>The referendum and the polling station team</b>	<b>2</b>	Who can be in the polling station?	12
The Scottish Independence Referendum	2	Persons under 16 accompanying voters	13
The Chief Counting Officer, Counting Officers and Electoral Registration Officers	2	Companions of disabled voters	13
The polling place, the polling station and the polling station team	2	The Chief Counting Officer and staff	13
Roles and responsibilities of the polling station team	3	The Counting Officer and staff	13
Duties of the Presiding Officer	3	Referendum agents	14
Duties of the Poll Clerk	4	Polling Agents	14
Information Assistants	4	Police Officers	14
Polling Station Inspectors	5	Electoral Commission representatives and observers	14
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>		Others admitted by the Presiding Officer	15
<b>Before the day of the referendum</b>	<b>6</b>	Sealing the ballot box	16
Training for polling staff	6	Some last-minute checks	16
Locating the polling place	6	<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	
Contacting other team members	7	<b>The day of the referendum: opening and conducting the poll</b>	<b>17</b>
Delivery or uplift of the ballot box	7	Opening the polling station	17
Casting your own vote	7	Summary of the voting procedure	17
a) Voting in person	7	Stage one – checking the voter	18
b) Voting by post	8	a) The checking process	18
c) Voting by proxy	8	b) Who is on the Polling List?	18
d) Voting by emergency proxy	8	c) Other Electors	19
Standards of appearance	8	d) Who can vote?	19
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>		e) Who can't vote?	19
<b>The day of the referendum: before the poll opens</b>	<b>9</b>	Stage two – issuing the ballot paper	20
Arriving at the polling station	9	a) the issuing process	20
What if the key-holder does not attend?	9	b) What if the ballot paper doesn't bear the unique identifying number?	20
		c) What if the ballot paper doesn't bear the official mark?	20
		Stage 3 –voting	21
		Spoilt ballot papers	21
		General assistance to voters	21
		Young voters	22

Certificates of employment	22
Postal votes	22
Maintenance of the polling place	22

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **The close of poll 24**

Close of poll procedures	24
Who can attend the close of poll?	25
Completing the paperwork	25
a) Checklist of official forms to be completed by the Presiding Officer	25
b) Checklist of official packets, envelopes and their contents	25
c) The ballot paper account	26
d) The rest of the paperwork	26
Packing up polling station materials	26
Transporting materials to the count	27
a) Delivery by the Presiding Officer	27
b) Collection by the Counting Officer's staff	27

## **APPENDICES**

<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>28</b>
Equality issues	

<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>32</b>
Dealing with problems on the Polling List	

<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>35</b>
Procedure for postal and proxy voters	

<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>39</b>
Voters with an anonymous Polling List entry	

<b>Appendix 5a</b>	<b>40</b>
The prescribed questions	

<b>Appendix 5b</b>	<b>44</b>
Tendered ballot papers	

<b>Appendix 6</b>	<b>46</b>
Security at the polling station	

<b>Appendix 7</b>	<b>48</b>
Procedure for dealing with personation	

<b>Appendix 8</b>	<b>49</b>
Guidance on tellers, the media and exit polls	

<b>Appendix 9</b>	<b>51</b>
Health and safety	

<b>Appendix 10</b>	<b>52</b>
Frequently asked questions for polling station staff on the day of the referendum	

<b>Appendix 11</b>	<b>55</b>
Polling station set-up checklist	

# 1 Introduction

This handbook is designed to assist polling station staff working at the Scottish Independence Referendum on Thursday 18 September 2014. It describes the procedures to be followed and how to deal with any issues that may arise.

As members of the polling station team, you play a central role in the referendum. Your role is vital in ensuring that voters and agents have confidence in the referendum process.

You will receive training on your role, but you must still read this handbook carefully in advance of the day of the referendum to ensure that you are familiar with all the processes described in it.

References are made throughout this handbook to the Counting Officer. This is because most arrangements related to the conduct of the poll are the responsibility of the Counting Officer. In practice, however, it is the referendum office at your local council that will deal with the day-to-day preparations for the conduct of the referendum.

Polling station staff will be given local contact details before the day of the referendum and this will most likely be, in the first instance, the referendum office.

You must be aware that any person who is or has been involved in campaigning for a particular outcome in the referendum is debarred by law from employment in a polling station. So if you are, or have been, actively campaigning you must turn down any offer of appointment to a polling station

post. Advise your referendum office as quickly as possible so they can appoint another person to the post.

## 2 The referendum and the polling station team

### **The Scottish Independence referendum**

---

On Thursday 18 September 2014, voters in Scotland will be asked to vote on independence. The referendum question is

“Should Scotland be an independent country?”

Voters will be asked to place their cross in either the Yes or No box. The successful option will be the one that gains a majority of votes nationally.

### **The Chief Counting Officer, Counting Officers and Electoral Registration Officers**

---

The Chief Counting Officer is Mary Pitcaithly, OBE, Convener of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland. She is responsible for the overall conduct of the referendum in Scotland and is supported by a Counting Officer in each local authority area. Each Counting Officer has a referendum team which deals with the administration and the organisation of the local poll and count, including the staffing of the polling stations.

Electoral Registration Officers are responsible for compiling and maintaining the electoral register and the lists of postal and proxy voters.

Most commonly, you will have contact with members of the referendum team and staff in the Electoral Registration Office to support you in your referendum duties.

### **The polling place, the polling station and the polling station team**

---

Although many voters will cast their votes by post, most will do so in person at a polling station within a polling place.

It is important to know the difference between a polling place and a polling station. A polling place is the building (such as a school or church hall) in which polling takes place. A polling station is the particular location within a polling place (such as a room, or a part of a room) where voters cast their votes. So a polling place can contain one or more polling stations.

The Counting Officer at your council will decide how many staff are needed for each polling place and how they are deployed. Staffing needs will differ depending on the number of polling stations in each place and the number of voters assigned there.

There are two main staff roles at a polling station - the Presiding Officer and the Poll Clerk. Each polling station will be assigned to a particular Presiding Officer who will be assisted by one or more Poll Clerks.

Where there is more than one polling station in the polling place, one of the Presiding Officers will have responsibility for the management of the polling place overall.

The Counting Officer may also appoint Polling Station Inspectors to tour the polling stations throughout the local area on the day of the referendum.

## **Roles and responsibilities of the polling station team**

---

The role of all polling staff is to ensure that voters can cast their vote in secret, free from influence and in a calm atmosphere.

Both the Presiding Officer and the Poll Clerk must be able to carry out each other's duties if required. However, Presiding Officers have overall responsibility for the polling station and carry out an additional supervisory role.

In law, there are a certain duties that **only** Presiding Officers can carry out. These are:

- requesting a police officer to remove someone from a polling station (see Appendix 6)
- asking the prescribed questions (see Appendix 5a)
- limiting the number of accredited observers present at any one time (see Chapter 4 page 15).

The paragraphs below list the main duties that may be required of polling staff. You should note that the precise allocation of duties may vary, especially in polling stations where there is more than one Poll Clerk.

### **Duties of the Presiding Officer**

---

Presiding Officers are responsible for the conduct of the ballot in the polling station and must have a sound knowledge of voting procedures.

The Presiding Officer's main duties are to:

- comply with instructions issued by the Counting Officer

- ensure the secrecy and security of the ballot
- act impartially at all times
- liaise, if required, with the key-holder of the building
- organise the layout of the polling station if required to do so
- instruct and supervise the work of the Poll Clerk(s) at the polling station
- open and close the polling station on time
- maintain order in the polling station
- be polite and professional in dealing with voters, agents and others
- take responsibility for and account for the ballot box, the ballot papers and the paperwork for the station
- ask the prescribed questions of voters when necessary, including when asked to do so by agents or before the issue of a tendered ballot paper
- ensure that the proper procedure for voting is followed
- ensure that the corresponding number list is marked correctly
- ensure that all ballot papers issued at the polling station bear the correct official mark and unique identifying number and that they are issued properly to eligible voters
- deal with special voting procedures as required
- receive and securely store any postal votes handed in to the station
- monitor the activities of tellers outside polling places and ensure that they do not interfere with the voting process



- manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the polling station including referendum and polling agents, representatives of the Electoral Commission, accredited observers and others and ensure that they do not interfere with the voting process
- keep the polling station neat and tidy
- remove any inappropriately sited campaign material
- ensure that all signs and notices are clear, visible and remain in place throughout the day.
- check that voters are eligible to vote in the referendum and at that particular polling station
- check and mark off voters' electoral numbers in the Polling List to show that they have voted
- write the voter's electoral number on the corresponding number list against the number of the ballot paper issued
- issue ballot papers to voters when directed to do so by the Presiding Officer
- ensure that all ballot papers issued from the station bear the correct official mark and the unique identifying number
- answer voters' questions in a friendly and professional way
- help with any other polling station duties on the instruction of the Presiding Officer
- assist the Presiding Officer to complete necessary procedures after the close of poll.

Where there is more than one polling station in a building, the Counting Officer will designate one of the Presiding Officers to take an overall responsibility for the polling place.

### **Duties of the Poll Clerk**

Poll Clerks do not have the responsibilities of the Presiding Officer, but they must still know all the procedures for voting and how to deal with any problems.

The Poll Clerk's main duties are to:

- comply with the instructions of the Counting Officer and the Presiding Officer
- ensure the secrecy and security of the ballot
- act impartially at all times
- assist with the layout of the polling station and prepare for the opening of the poll
- be polite and professional in dealing with voters, agents and others

### **Information Assistants**

In some areas, particularly in polling places with multiple polling stations, Poll Clerks may be asked to act as Information Assistants, directing voters to the appropriate polling station and answering their questions, or covering for staff breaks and generally assisting the rest of the polling team. The senior Presiding Officer in every polling place will be responsible for assigning duties to team members to ensure that the best possible service to voters is provided throughout the day.

## **Polling Station Inspectors**

The Counting Officer may have appointed a team of Polling Station Inspectors to tour polling stations throughout polling day. These inspectors are effectively part of the polling station team and are there to help you fulfil your duties as well as to check that things are running smoothly and in accordance with procedure. They should not be confused with the official observers accredited by the Electoral Commission.

## 3 Before the day of the referendum

### Training for polling station staff

To perform your duties effectively, you must be well-informed about the referendum and procedures in the polling station. Even if you have already worked in a polling station on many occasions, you must not rely solely on your past experience. Some procedures will certainly be different from last time.

Reading the handbook is not enough. You must attend a training event organised by your Counting Officer. Failure to attend is likely to disqualify you from working at the referendum.

Further training and practical information on dealing with polling station issues are available online on YouTube using the links below:-

- Polling Staff training : <http://youtu.be/qSyu4ajUdHM>
- Voter Scenarios [http://youtu.be/b6Rp32ID\\_U4](http://youtu.be/b6Rp32ID_U4).

These are excellent resources prepared by South Lanarkshire Council with support from the Electoral Management Board for Scotland. Although they are not specific to the referendum, they deal clearly with issues that you may face in the polling station.

### Locating the polling place

The council chooses the locations for the polling places in its area. The Counting Officer decides how many polling stations are needed in each one and how many members of staff will be needed to run them.

Do not assume that a polling place will be in the same place as it has been in previous years. The Counting Officer will provide information on the location of the polling place and station to which you have been assigned when staff appointments are made. You must make sure that you know how to get there.

On the day of the referendum, the key-holder should open the building not **later than 6.30am**. The referendum office will have advised the operators of the buildings of the requirements for opening. Where the key-holder will not be available to open the building, the referendum office will have made alternative arrangements. In some circumstances, this may mean that the Presiding Officer will be expected to liaise with the key-holder to obtain keys and open the building. If this is the case, your referendum office will let you know in advance.

In these circumstances, Presiding Officers should check that they have all the relevant keys including any gate keys and any information relative to the operation of alarms. They should make sure that they have the key-holder's contact details readily available in case anything goes wrong.

It is well worth your while undertaking a "dry run" of the journey before the day of the referendum so that you are clear on how to get there and how long it will take. If you are unfamiliar with the area and are not travelling by car, you should check out the availability of public transport at the time you will be travelling.

Arriving in good time will enable you to ensure that the polling station is properly set up before the polls open at 7am.

You must ensure that you take enough food and drink to last for the whole of the day of the referendum, as you will not be able to leave the polling place while the polls are open.

### **Contacting other members of the team**

---

If you know any other members of the polling team for your polling station place you could contact them in advance and compare notes. When you attend your training session you could try to find out if the other members of the polling team for your location are present and make contact.

### **Delivery or uplift of the ballot box**

---

Unless the ballot box is being delivered directly to the polling station, the Counting Officer will notify Presiding Officers of the arrangements for the collection of the box and all other relevant referendum materials. Where the ballot box and other referendum materials are to be collected by the Presiding Officer and then kept at the Presiding Officer's home, great care must be taken to ensure their security at all times. In particular, no referendum materials should be left unattended in a car.

### **Casting your own vote**

---

You should be thinking about how you will arrange to cast your own vote at the referendum.

Firstly, you should make sure that you are registered to vote. If you are not yet registered, you can obtain a registration form online at [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk) or from your local Electoral Registration Office or on its website. The deadline for registration is **midnight on Tuesday 2 September 2014**.

You have a number of options in relation to the manner in which you vote. If you are working in the council area in which you are registered to vote, you can still vote in person, although you could also vote by post or by proxy. If you are registered to vote in a different council area from the one in which you are working, you cannot vote in person, but must arrange a postal or proxy vote.

#### **(a) Voting in person**

If you have been appointed to work at the polling station where you are assigned to vote, you can simply cast your vote in the normal way. Choose a quiet time to vote when your absence from duty will not cause a problem.

If you have been appointed to work at the polling place where you usually vote, but at a different polling station, it is also simple to vote. Choose a quiet time to go to the polling station where you are due to vote and cast your vote in the usual way.

If you are registered to vote in the council area where you are working on the day of the referendum, but at a different polling place, you can still vote in person by obtaining a certificate of employment from the Counting Officer. You can then vote at the polling station where you are working. Again, choose a quiet time to cast your own vote. The referendum office will advise you how to go about obtaining a certificate of

employment.

If, however, you are registered to vote in a different council area from the one in which you are working, you **CANNOT** vote in person. You must arrange a postal or proxy vote.

### **(b) Voting by post**

Any registered voter is entitled to vote by post. If you want to vote this way, you must apply to your local Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) not later than **5pm on Wednesday 3 September 2014**. You can obtain a registration form online at [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk) or from your own ERO's website. You do not need to supply any evidence that you are unable to vote in person.

### **(c) Voting by proxy**

You can appoint a proxy to vote for you. This means that you nominate someone of your choice to cast your vote on your behalf. If you want to vote this way, you must apply to your ERO not later than **5pm on Wednesday 3 September 2014**. You can obtain a registration form online at [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk) or from your own ERO's website. You will have to give information about why you want to vote by proxy.

### **(d) Voting by emergency proxy**

If you are appointed to a polling station post after the deadline for applying for postal or ordinary proxy votes, i.e. after **5pm on Wednesday 3 September 2014**, it is too late for you to arrange a postal vote but you could still apply for an emergency proxy. Contact your local ERO to obtain an application form.

If you apply up until **Wednesday 10 September 2014**, you must explain why

you need an emergency proxy vote but need not arrange for attestation (written confirmation) by another person.

If, however, you apply on or after **Thursday 11 September 2014** you will have to submit confirmation from the referendum office that you will be working at the referendum, are unable to vote in person because of your employment and that you only became aware of this after the deadline date for applying for a normal proxy vote.

The deadline for emergency proxy applications is **5pm on the day of the referendum**, but it would be in your interests to make proxy arrangements as soon as you know you will be working in the polling station.

### **Standards of appearance**

You need to consider what you will wear on the day of the referendum. The atmosphere at the polling station should be business-like and friendly and you should dress accordingly. Since you will be there from early morning until late in the evening, you should also consider your personal comfort.

Polling stations are often located in large halls or gyms which, because they are normally used for sporting activities, have limited heating. You should ensure that you take some warm clothing. If the room is very cold, you should contact your referendum office to request additional heating to be provided.

Remember that you are a representative of the Counting Officer and must act impartially at all times. This means that you must not wear any badges, slogans or colours that might bring your impartiality into question.

## 4 The day of the referendum: before the poll opens

**The polling station must open at 7am precisely. You must inform the referendum office as soon as possible if you have any problems that could prevent you from opening the polling station on time.**

### Arriving at the polling station

Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks must arrive at the polling station by **6.30am** at the latest. Make sure you allow enough time to get to the polling station – do not be late. Polling station staff unavoidably detained or unable to attend the polling station must contact the referendum office as soon as possible.

Presiding Officers must check that watches or clocks are accurate to ensure that the polling station is open on time.

Take your appointment notification, this guide, the list of emergency contact numbers and any other local information issued by the Counting Officer with you to the polling station on the day of the referendum.

Presiding Officers should check the Poll Clerk's appointment notification and ensure that they are aware of the requirement of secrecy.

### What if the key-holder does not attend?

If you have contact details for the key-holder, try to make contact by telephone. If you have the key-holder's home

address and it is nearby, you could also consider sending a member of the polling station team to their home. If you still can't gain entry, contact the referendum office as early as possible to advise them of the situation and to ask for further instructions. If necessary and where you have the materials to do so, set up a temporary polling station. There may be sufficient space at the entrance to the building, or even outside it. In some cases, Presiding Officers have even used the back of a car. Whatever the situation, voters must be able to vote in secret from 7am onwards.

Keep the referendum office and any agents and observers in attendance informed of whatever arrangements you make.

### Checking supplies and materials

Some Counting Officers will supply the ballot box and related polling materials directly to polling stations. If this is not the case in your area, Presiding Officers will be responsible for the transportation of the boxes and other materials. The larger items, such as the polling booths, will normally have been delivered to the premises earlier. The Counting Officer will advise Presiding Officers of the arrangements.

A checklist of polling station supplies will be provided with the ballot box and other materials. If, on checking the contents, any items of equipment or materials listed on the inventory are missing, contact the referendum office immediately.

Materials should be checked on receipt. Take care when lifting the materials or equipment as they may be heavy (see Appendix 9 for information on health and safety).

The Presiding Officer should check that the ballot papers are the correct ones for the polling station, that all bear the correct official mark on the front and the unique identifying number on the back and that there are no obvious errors in the numbering of the papers. Check that there are 100 ballot papers in each ordinary (white) ballot book.

Put the ballot books in numerical order. You must check the numbers on the back of the ballot papers against those on the corresponding number list before polling begins. The ballot papers must be issued in the same order as the numbers printed on the corresponding number list. If the numbers do not match, or if there is any other problem with the ballot papers, contact the referendum office immediately.

Do not issue ballot papers on which there are errors or where the printing is indistinct or unclear. If you void a faulty ballot paper, remember also to void the entry on the corresponding number list.

### **Polling station layout**

---

The first job on arrival will be to set up the polling station, unless this has already been done for you. The layout of the room is important. Poor layout could cause unnecessary confusion and access difficulties. Appendix 11 provides a checklist for polling station set-up and the display of notices. Even if the polling station has already been set up for you, you should still check

that it has been set up properly using the checklist.

Caretakers may already have arranged the room, particularly if the referendum office has given them instructions on the layout of the polling station in advance. However, polling station staff may have to set up the room or rearrange the furniture. Some polling booths are heavy so be careful when erecting or moving them. See Appendix 9 for advice on health and safety issues.

Rooms where polling takes place vary greatly, from gyms or church halls with numerous polling stations to small rooms containing only one.

Obviously, there is no single layout which is suitable in all circumstances. Using the checklist, ensure that your polling station is set out in the best way for the voters who will be using it.

The layout must work for the voter and contribute to the smooth running of the polling station. In particular, the needs of voters with a range of disabilities must be considered.

Remember that the ballot box should be placed where the Presiding Officer can place a hand over the slot if necessary. Sundries such as spare ballot books, essential forms and envelopes should be placed close to the polling team in such a way that they cannot be interfered with by others.

When setting up the polling station, you should ask yourself these questions:-

- Is the ballot box accessible for all voters?
- Can a wheelchair user easily get around the polling station and its surrounding areas?

- Are all the polling booths set up in such a way to maintain the privacy of voting for all voters?
- Is the low-level polling booth in the most appropriate position for wheelchair access, with sufficient space for a wheelchair to be manoeuvred comfortably?
- Are the notices accessible for all voters?
- Are the polling booths positioned to make best use of the available light?
- Are the polling agents and observers positioned so that they do not interfere with the proceedings, but can still observe them?
- Are there chairs available in the polling station for voters who cannot stand for long periods?
- Are the spare ballot papers and other documents stored within reach of the polling team but in a place where they cannot be accessed by others?
- Is the ballot box positioned at a height which will allow voters in wheelchairs to cast their votes without difficulty?
- Is the ballot box located in such a way as to allow the Presiding Officer to put their hand over the slot if necessary?

In all cases:

- Use the checklist in Appendix 11 when setting up the polling station or checking that it has been set up correctly.
- Where there is more than one station in the polling place, make sure that the numbers of the stations are clearly displayed to avoid any

confusion.

- Make sure that the polling booths are placed so that people outside cannot see how voters are marking their ballot papers.
- Arrange the ballot box and polling booths to ensure that they are accessible to all voters, yet fully visible to polling station staff.
- Position the issuing table and the ballot box in such a way to prevent any voter from leaving the polling station without passing you and the ballot box.
- Consider what arrangements you would need to make to be able to accommodate and deal with voters during busy periods.
- Have at hand the referendum office and electoral registration office contact details and follow any enquiry procedures instructed by the Counting Officer should any issues arise during the day of the referendum.

**Remember that in a room where there is more than one polling station, the ballot boxes must be kept separate. Otherwise, voters from one polling station may put their ballot paper in the wrong ballot box by mistake and neither of the ballot paper accounts for the two polling stations will tally. Even though the ballot boxes are kept separate, staff must remain vigilant as voters may still get confused about which ballot box they should use.**



## **Signs and notices**

---

Think what each sign and notice is for when putting it up. Walk the route the voter will follow, checking all signs and notices. Some are directional while others provide information for voters. Ensure that they are positioned so that they can be read by all voters, including those in wheelchairs.

Street bills (lists of streets showing the number of the polling station where those voters are due to vote) should be prominently displayed in such a way that voters can easily identify the polling station where they are assigned.

The 'Guidance for voters' notice is to be displayed within each polling booth, as well as inside and outside the polling station. It provides information on how to vote.

If the Counting Officer has provided any notices in alternative languages and formats, e.g. in Braille, in languages other than English, or in pictorial formats. These must also be displayed as instructed.

A large sample copy of the ballot paper should be displayed inside the polling station, ideally in a well-lit location where voters can easily see it before being issued with their ballot paper.

An enlarged hand-held copy of the ballot paper, marked 'sample', will also be supplied by the Counting Officer. This can be given to voters who are partially sighted to take into the polling booth for reference when marking their ballot paper. It must be returned to you when they have voted. Ensure that voters are aware it cannot be used to cast their vote.

Make sure that there is no material that might be construed as supporting the views of any referendum campaign displayed in or on the premises. If any such materials are found, they must be removed or covered up. This could be a particular issue in schools where current affairs project work may be on display. Care should be taken when removing materials to ensure they are not damaged and they should be carefully replaced at the end of the poll.

## **Who can be in the polling station?**

---

The law specifically provides for certain persons to be present in polling stations (in addition to polling station staff and voters). These are:

- persons under the age of 16 accompanying voters
- the companions of voters with disabilities
- the Member of Parliament for the constituency in which the polling station is situated
- the Member of the Scottish Parliament for the constituency in which the polling station is situated
- the Members of the Scottish Parliament for the region in which the constituency is situated
- the councillors for the electoral ward in which the polling station is situated
- the Members of the European Parliament for the electoral region of Scotland
- the Counting Officer and members of the Counting Officer's staff
- police officers on duty at the polling station

- referendum agents
- polling agents appointed to attend at the polling station
- representatives of the Electoral Commission
- accredited observers; and
- any other person the Presiding Officer permits to attend.

### **Persons under the age of 16 accompanying voters**

Persons under the age of 16 may accompany voters into the polling station to observe the voting procedure. Presiding Officers can limit the number of those under 16 allowed in the polling station at any one time if they consider their attendance to be impeding the proceedings in any way.

Remember that the referendum is the first national electoral event at which young people aged 16 and 17 are eligible to vote. So be sensitive in greeting and dealing with young people who may be voting for the first time rather than simply accompanying another voter.

### **Companions of disabled voters**

Although many disabled voters will be able to vote without assistance, some will not, and those who cannot are entitled to bring someone with them to cast their vote. When dealing with disabled voters who need the help of a companion, make sure that you directly address and respond to the voter and not just the companion.

See Appendix 1 for further details, including information on what assistance the Presiding Officer may provide.

### **Councillors, MPs, MSPs and MEPs**

By law, councillors for the ward in which the polling station is situated, the MP for its Westminster constituency, the MSP for its Scottish Parliament Constituency, the MSPs for its Scottish Parliamentary region and the MEPs for the electoral region of Scotland are permitted to attend at the polling place. However, they should not disrupt voting or attempt to canvass voters. The Counting Officer is likely to have supplied these persons with passes entitling them to visit polling stations.

Details and samples of passes will be shown to you at training and passes should be displayed before entry is granted. It may be worth acquainting yourself with the names of the elected representatives who are entitled to attend your station. This may be handled at training.

### **The Chief Counting Officer and staff**

The Chief Counting Officer, Mary Pitcaithly, and her staff are entitled by law to attend polling stations. These officers would advise the Counting Officer if planning to make an official visit and would have identification to allow them access to the polling station.

### **The Counting Officer and staff**

Counting Officers and their staff may visit during the course of the day. This may be to carry out duties such as delivering additional equipment, inspecting the polling station or collecting postal ballot papers that have been handed in there by voters. These officers will have identification allowing them access to the polling station.

## **Referendum agents**

---

Referendum agents are appointed to act on behalf of permitted participants at the referendum. (Permitted participants are campaigners or campaign groups registered with the Electoral Commission.) Referendum agents have the right to enter and to remain in a polling station but they must not disrupt voting or attempt to canvass voters. Referendum agents will have passes issued by the Counting Officer.

## **Polling agents**

---

Referendum agents may appoint polling agents to work on their behalf in polling stations on the day of the referendum. Polling agents have the right to enter and to remain in the polling station to observe voting. Their main purpose is to detect personation – that is, someone trying to vote illegally in the name of another voter.

Not more than one polling agent may be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same permitted participant. (Permitted participants are campaigners registered with the Electoral Commission.) Polling agents will have passes issued by the Counting Officer which they must display to obtain access to the polling station. Your referendum team will be able to show you sample passes at training.

Polling agents may wish to note on their own copy of the register of electors or edited polling list the names of those who have voted but they cannot take this marked copy of the register/polling list out of the polling station until after the close of poll. They must not interfere with the voting process and must not campaign or canvass voters in the

polling station. They have the right to observe the preparation and opening of the polling station and its closure and may add their seal to the ballot box at the close of poll (though not at poll opening). During polling hours, polling agents who wish to remain in the polling station should be placed at a separate table that is close enough to observe the proceedings, but not in a position that would compromise the secrecy of the ballot.

Polling agents are not normally permitted to wear rosettes or campaign badges in the polling station although they may be permitted to wear them in the polling place when outwith the polling station. Your Counting Officer will have notified you of the rules that apply in your council area.

## **Police officers**

---

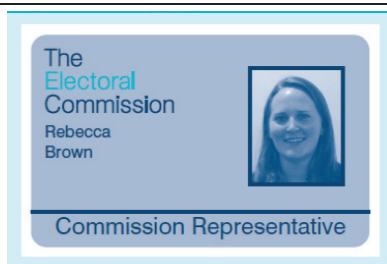
Police officers on duty may be present in the polling station at any time, although it is the Presiding Officer's duty to maintain order in the polling station (see Appendix 6).

## **Electoral Commission representatives and accredited observers**

---

Representatives of the Electoral Commission and other individuals accredited through the Commission's official observer scheme are entitled to attend all polling station proceedings. They do not need to give advance notification of where they intend to observe, but every observer must carry photographic identification issued by the Commission and should not be allowed to observe proceedings without this.

Example of ID issued to Commission representatives - pink



Example of ID issued to Accredited Observers- white



The status of individuals seeking to gain entry to polling stations as observers can always be checked with the Counting Officer.

Commission representatives and accredited observers agree to abide by a national [Code of Conduct](#), which includes an agreement that they will not interfere with any proceedings.

Presiding Officers may ask observers (but **NOT** Commission representatives) to leave the polling station, but only if they are:

- breaching or attempting to breach the secrecy of the ballot
- knowingly obstructing the polling process
- asking voters about their voting preference.

If an observer is removed from the

polling station, the Presiding Officer must provide a note to the observer stating the reasons why they have been removed.

Presiding Officers should also record any such incidents and notify the Counting Officer as soon as possible.

An observer removed in the circumstances above is not entitled to re-enter the polling station for the remainder of the poll.

In case of overcrowding, Presiding Officers are entitled to limit the number of accredited observers (but not Commission representatives) present inside a polling station at the same time. Where it proves necessary to limit the number of observers, it is suggested that this should be for a specified time, such as for 30 or 60 minutes. However, it is important to note that no officer is entitled to bar all observers from the entire process, only to limit the number of observers present at any one time. When such action is taken, this should be recorded in a polling station log.

Presiding Officers should record the details of any accredited observers or Commission representatives who attend at their polling station.

Electoral observation is a legitimate and valuable part of the electoral process, and care should be taken not to hinder or obstruct the conduct of the observation.

### **Others admitted by the Presiding Officer**

---

This power is to be used with discretion. It allows you to permit entry to essential workers such as caretakers, to allow them to carry out appropriate duties.

You must not permit any person to obstruct voters or compromise the security of the ballot.

### **Sealing the ballot box**

---

The Presiding Officer should close and seal the ballot box just before 7am, after having shown to all present that it is empty. In the unlikely event that more than one ballot box has been issued to the Presiding Officer (because of the number of ballot papers likely to be issued), each ballot box must be sealed before polling starts. However, only one ballot box should be in use at any one time, and additional boxes should be stored securely out of sight until they are required.

Ballot boxes vary in design, as does the method of sealing them. Whatever method is used, make sure that the ballot box is properly secured. At this stage, polling agents must **not** be allowed to affix their seals to the ballot box. Their seals may only be attached at the close of poll.

### **Some last-minute checks**

---

Just before the polling station is opened, take a few moments to double check that everything is ready. Make sure that the ballot papers, the corresponding number list, the tendered ballot papers and other official documentation are safely out of reach of voters. Tendered ballot papers should be kept separate to ensure that they are not issued in error. Tendered ballot papers are easily

identified as they are a different colour to the ordinary ballot papers. At the referendum, tendered ballot papers will be pink while ordinary ballot papers will be white. Tendered ballot books contain fewer ballot papers than ordinary ballot books. Tendered ballot papers will often be supplied in a sealed and labelled packet to identify them as being different from the ordinary ballot papers.

Information on the circumstances in which tendered ballot papers must be issued can be found in Appendix 5b.

Ballot papers may be provided loose leaf but will most likely be supplied in books where they can be detached as they are issued. Check that the ballot papers are in the correct numerical sequence and that the numbers match those pre-printed on the corresponding number list. This will save accounting problems at the close of poll.

Check that the ballot papers bear the unique identifying number on the back and that the correct pre-printed official mark is also present on the front of the ballot paper. At the training session, the Counting Officer will show you an example of the official mark to be used at polling stations.

Check that the ballot pencils are sharpened and fixed securely to the polling booths. Ensure you sharpen these regularly throughout the day.

## 5 The day of the referendum: opening and conducting the poll

**The hours of the poll are from 7am until 10pm.**

### Opening the polling station

There may be a number of voters waiting for the polling station to open. Greet them and invite them inside as soon as it is 7am. **Do not issue ballot papers before 7am.**

### Summary of the voting procedure

For the majority of voters who come to the polling station, the voting process will be straightforward. The following procedure should be followed in those circumstances:

#### **Stage one – checking the voter**

- Greet the voter, ask for their name and address, and make sure that they are eligible to vote
- Mark the voter's entry on the Polling List as instructed by your Counting Officer, in such a way as to show clearly that that person has voted
- Call out the number and name of the voter.

#### **Stage two – issuing the ballot paper**

- Do **NOT** write anything on the ballot paper.
- Write the electoral number (including the polling district reference letter(s) if not pre-printed) on the corresponding number list next to the ballot paper number to be issued.

- Ensure that the ballot paper includes the correct pre-printed official mark on the front and the unique identifying number on the back.
- Hand the ballot paper to the voter.
- Read the instructions on the ballot paper to the voter.
- Tell the voter to go to the ballot booth and mark the paper.
- If there is more than one polling station in the room, ensure that the voter knows which ballot box the marked paper should be placed in.

#### **Stage three – voting**

- The voter marks the ballot paper in the privacy of the polling booth.
- Before placing the ballot paper in the ballot box, the voter should show the number on the back of the ballot paper to the Presiding Officer.
- You should say 'goodbye' and thank the voter as they leave the polling station.

The appendices in this handbook show what to do when something out of the ordinary occurs, such as dealing with anonymous voters, proxy voters and emergency proxy voters. All polling staff must read these sections carefully before the day of the referendum so they are ready for most situations that may arise.

**Remember to follow all stages of the process carefully or the voter may inadvertently be disenfranchised.**

## **Stage one – checking the voter**

---

### **(a) The checking process**

In a polling station with a Presiding Officer and only one Poll Clerk, one person should be responsible for the Polling List and the ballot papers and the other should be responsible for ensuring that the electoral number is entered correctly in the corresponding number list. Follow any instructions issued by your Counting Officer on how tasks should be allocated.

If there are two Poll Clerks, the Presiding Officer may wish to oversee the process, dealing with voters and any special circumstances. In this case, the two Poll Clerks should share duties and could swap over every so often, on the instruction of the Presiding Officer.

Greet voters as they approach the table. If there are two or more polling stations in the room, make sure that voters attend the correct one. Street bills listing the streets or addresses for each station should be displayed and polling station staff should be on hand to guide voters.

Many voters bring their poll card with them to show to the Poll Clerk even though this is not a requirement for most of them. Offer the poll card back to the voter: If the voter declines the poll card, the Poll Clerk should dispose of it securely. Follow your Counting Officer's instructions for the disposal of secure waste.

Unless an elector has an anonymous entry, the Poll Clerk must:

- confirm the voter's name and address before checking that they are on the Polling List and eligible to vote

- mark the voter's entry on the Polling List in the way instructed by the Counting Officer, so as to show clearly that that person has voted. (Be sure to mark the correct entry and look out for households where there is more than one voter with the same forename.)
- read out the voter's name, electoral number and polling district reference from the Polling List (this is a safeguard against personation – i.e. using someone else's identity in order to obtain a vote illegally).

**Only voters with anonymous entries on the Polling List and their proxies must produce their poll card or proxy poll card in order to vote.**

Voters with an anonymous entry are registered without reference to their name or address in order to protect them from harm. Read out only their electoral number and record it on the corresponding number list. Return the poll card to any such voters once you have marked their entry on the Polling List. For an explanation of the voting procedure for anonymous voters, see Appendix 4.

### **(b) Who is on the Polling List?**

The Polling List will normally be in alphabetical and numerical order by street, although odd numbers will frequently appear separately from even numbers. You should note that entries will occasionally occur out of sequence. In rural areas, named properties may be listed alphabetically.

Together with their name, most voters just have their electoral number and address. These voters are eligible to



vote at any election or referendum. However, some voters will also have a letter preceding their name. These letters indicate their eligibility to vote in certain elections or referendums.

At the referendum, there will be no dates against names on the Polling List as only voters who have attained the age of 16 on or before the day of the referendum are included on the list.

### **(c) Other Electors**

In most cases, the Polling List will contain the names of all voters allocated to the polling station. A few voters may have registered anonymously and will appear without reference to their name or address. Their entry on the Polling List will consist of their electoral number and the letter 'N', and will be found at the end of the Polling List under the 'Other Electors' section. Similarly, persons who have made a service declaration will also be found at the end of the Polling List in the same section.

If you can't find a voter's entry in the Polling List, make sure you check the "Other Electors" section. If the Polling List for the polling district is split between stations, the "Other Electors" will appear in the list for the last station dealing with that polling district.

### **(d) Who can vote?**

- Voters who are 16 years of age or over. All voters appearing on the Polling List will have attained voting age by the day of the referendum. No dates of birth will be shown.
- Voters with no letters before their names.
- Voters with an anonymous entry who have only the letter 'N' in place

of their names. These are anonymous voters who must bring their polling cards with them in order to vote.

- Voters with a 'K' or a 'G' before their names (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry).
- Voters with an 'L' before their names (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry).
- Voters with a 'P' beside their name (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry). These are voters who have appointed a proxy to vote for them. Ordinarily, the proxy will cast their vote. However, the voters themselves are entitled to vote if they arrive to do so before the proxy has voted on their behalf. (If this happens and the proxy then arrives to vote on behalf of the elector who has already voted, the proxy cannot then vote on that elector's behalf.) Where a proxy is voting for an anonymous voter, the proxy must bring their proxy poll card in order to be able to vote on the anonymous voter's behalf.

### **(e) Who can't vote?**

- Voters with an 'A' before their names (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry). These are voters who have chosen to vote by post and are therefore not able to vote in person at the polling station. (However, completed postal votes may be handed in by or on behalf of a voter at any polling station in their council area. Postal votes handed to you must **NOT** go in the ballot box. See Appendix 3 for more information.)



- Voters with an 'E' before their names (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry).
- Voters with an 'F' before their names (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry).
- Voters with a 'U' before their names (or before the letter 'N' in the case of an anonymous entry).

electoral number on that list against the number of the ballot paper being issued.

**Always enter the electoral number on the corresponding number list.**

**Do NOT write anything on the ballot paper itself.**

## Stage two – issuing the ballot paper

### **(a) The issuing process**

Ballot papers are numbered and must match the numbers pre-printed on the corresponding number list. Ballot papers must be issued in strict numerical order starting with the lowest number in the batch. Otherwise, you will have problems at the close of poll when completing the ballot paper account.

If the voter is shown on the Polling List as being eligible to vote and has, if necessary, answered the prescribed questions satisfactorily (see Appendix 5a), that voter must be issued with a ballot paper.

The Poll Clerk (or Presiding Officer) with the ballot papers must:

- select the next ballot paper
- ensure that the ballot paper bears the official mark
- read out the ballot paper number and
- hand the ballot paper to the voter and read out the instructions at the top of the ballot paper.

The officer with the corresponding number list must write the voter's

### **(b) What if the ballot paper does not bear the unique identifying number?**

All ballot papers must bear a unique identifying number on the back of the ballot paper. Polling staff will be advised at the training session as to the format of this number.

If all the ballot papers are missing the unique identifying number the Presiding Officer should notify the referendum office immediately. If only some papers are missing the number, the Presiding Officer should only issue those ballot papers that contain the number and should also notify the referendum office of the situation.

### **(c) What if the ballot paper does not bear the official mark?**

The official mark will be pre-printed on the ballot papers. The Counting Officer will advise staff at training what the official mark for ballot papers issued at polling stations will be. Every ballot paper **must** bear the correct official mark. Any ballot paper that is lacking the official mark will be rejected at the count.

If the ballot papers do not contain the correct pre-printed official mark as advised by the Counting Officer, the

Presiding Officer should contact the referendum office immediately for advice on how to proceed.

### **Stage three – voting**

---

Voters must mark the ballot paper in the privacy of the polling booth and then place the ballot paper face down in the ballot box so that no one may see the way they have voted. Voters may find it easier to do this if they fold the ballot paper. They should show the unique identifying number on the back of the ballot paper to the Presiding Officer or Poll Clerk before placing it in the ballot box.

Ensure that voters place their ballot papers in the correct ballot box for their station.

### **Spoilt ballot papers**

---

**If a voter accidentally spoils their ballot paper, do NOT issue them with a tendered ballot paper.**

Sometimes voters do make mistakes, e.g. by marking the wrong option. If this happens, the Presiding Officer must take the spoilt ballot paper and write 'cancelled' on it before placing it in the envelope provided.

Do **NOT** place the spoilt ballot paper in the ballot box. Once a spoilt ballot paper has been placed in the ballot box, a replacement ballot paper cannot be issued.

Issue the voter with another ballot paper. Do not forget to write the voter's electoral number against the new ballot paper number on the corresponding number list and to write 'cancelled' by

the electoral number for the cancelled ballot paper. The Presiding Officer must also remember to ensure that the replacement ballot paper bears the correct official mark.

At the close of poll, the Presiding Officer must count and then record the number of spoilt ballot papers on the ballot paper account.

### **General assistance to voters**

---

Polling staff have a duty to assist voters in the voting process. Remember, voters are customers. Greet them with a smile and take into account any special needs they may have.

Never be off-hand, prejudiced or patronising. Do not become angry or agitated, even when under pressure.

Listen carefully if you are asked a question. If you are unable to answer a voter's questions or concerns, refer them to the referendum office.

When giving general assistance, polling station staff must be careful not to lead voters to cast their votes for either answer to the referendum question, nor to offer an opinion about either outcome.

There are a number of written instructions available for voters in the polling station. Firstly, there are the instructions on the ballot paper itself. There is also the 'Guidance for voters' notice. If any voter asks for assistance it may, in some circumstances, be helpful to read out these instructions to them.

The Counting Officer may also have provided instructions or guidance in

alternative languages or formats depending on requirements within the community. The Presiding Officer should be familiar with the resources that are available and provide these as and when appropriate. Some voters may still find the instructions unclear. They may ask, for example, to have their favoured option pointed out to them. In these circumstances, the Presiding Officer should read out the instructions printed at the top of the ballot paper and the options in the order that they appear on the ballot paper.

Special procedures to follow when assisting disabled voters are described in Appendix 1.

### **Young Voters**

---

The referendum is the first national electoral event at which 16 and 17 year olds are able to vote. As a result, you may have a higher than usual number of voters who are voting for the first time and who may need some additional assistance from you to understand the process.

### **Certificates of employment**

---

Some polling station staff may have been issued with a certificate of employment. These certificates are signed by the Counting Officer, allowing staff to vote at a different polling place within the council area from the one where they are registered to vote. Similarly, a police officer may present such a certificate, signed by an inspector (or higher rank). In such a case, the Presiding Officer must issue a ballot paper and then cancel the certificate and place it in the envelope provided.

### **Postal votes**

---

Presiding Officers are responsible for receiving any postal votes (or any part of a postal vote, i.e. the postal ballot paper or postal voting statement) handed in at the polling station. Postal votes or parts of postal votes handed in must **NOT** be placed in the ballot box but in the packet provided.

For further details on the procedure for receiving and storing postal votes in polling stations see Appendix 3.

### **Maintenance of the polling place**

---

The Presiding Officer should check the polling place regularly, including checking for any build-up of voters waiting to vote, and ensure that voters have unhindered access at all times.

- Check signs and notices and replace or repair any that have been defaced or damaged.
- Ensure that the entrance to the polling station, including any ramps, is not blocked.
- Where temporary ramps are used, ensure that they are firmly in place and check to ensure that they have not become dislodged during the day.
- Instruct anyone campaigning in or around the polling station to stop.
- Remove any campaign literature that may have been left in the polling station.
- Make sure that there is sufficient light for voters in the polling booths.
- Make sure that the pencils are still in the booths and sharpen them if necessary.

- Ensure that nothing has been left in the booths, including ballot papers or information on any referendum campaign.
- Check the ballot box seals/lock.
- Give the ballot box a shake or use a ruler or ballot box compactor to push the ballot papers down if the box seems full.
- Keep the polling station, including any passageways leading into the polling station, clean, tidy and free from any hazards.
- If you notice any queues forming, take steps as instructed by the Counting Officer for dealing with them.

## 6 The close of poll

**The poll must close at 10pm, but any eligible voters who attend the polling station before 10pm and who are still waiting to vote at 10pm must be allowed to vote.**

### Close of poll procedures

---

Check the polling place not just immediately before the close of poll, but also regularly in the lead-up to the close of poll and take steps to ensure that, as far as possible, all waiting voters will be able to be issued with a ballot paper by 10pm. If that is not possible, take steps to ensure that they will all be inside the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station for the purposes of voting by that time.

Inform the referendum office immediately in the event of a queue existing or building up in the lead-up to the close of poll.

If there is more than one polling station in the building, check that anyone waiting to vote is at the correct polling station for their address.

Make sure that nobody joins the queue after 10pm.

Some people in the queue may be waiting to hand in a postal vote. You should call anyone doing so to come forward in order to reduce the time spent queuing.

If there is a queue at 10pm and if the polling station can accommodate all the voters in the queue, ask voters to move inside the polling station and close the doors behind the last voter in the queue.

If the polling station is too small to accommodate all the voters in the queue, a member of the polling station team should mark the end of the queue by positioning themselves behind the last voter in the queue.

Explain to anyone who arrives after 10pm and tries to join the queue that the poll has closed and that, by law, they cannot now join the queue to be issued with a ballot paper. There may be circumstances where staff marking the end of the queue or staff within the polling place are challenged by a voter who wishes to vote even though they arrived after 10pm. Such voters cannot be issued with a ballot paper under any circumstances. General guidance to support you in maintaining security in and around the polling station can be found in Appendix 6.

Anyone who at 10pm is not waiting to vote either inside the polling place or in a queue outside it must not be issued with a ballot paper or allowed to hand in their postal vote.

Anyone who is issued with a ballot paper must be allowed to vote.

Voters must leave the polling station as soon as they have placed their ballot papers in the ballot box.

### **Who can attend the close of poll?**

The following persons are permitted to be present at the close of poll:

- the Counting Officer and the Counting Officer's staff
- referendum and polling agents
- police officers on duty at the polling station
- representatives of the Electoral Commission: and
- accredited observers.

After the close of poll and when the last person has voted, the Presiding Officer must seal the slot of the ballot box, and any polling agent present may also affix their seal to it.

The Poll Clerk, in the meantime, should take down all the signs and tidy the room. If instructed to do so, polling station staff may also be required to dismantle the polling station furniture and return the room to its original state. Take care when moving heavy items. See Appendix 9 for guidance on health and safety.

Polling agents are also entitled to be present when the paperwork is being completed and when the various packets of documents are sealed as described below.

### **Completing the paperwork**

**Take care when filling in the paperwork. It is far more important to be accurate than fast.**

### **(a) Checklist of official forms to be completed by the Presiding Officer**

- the ballot paper account
- the list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions
- the list of votes marked by the Presiding Officer
- the statement of the number of voters whose votes were marked by the Presiding Officer
- the statement of the number of postal votes delivered to the polling station
- the list of tendered votes.

Completion of the paperwork is easier if all the official forms are laid out with their corresponding envelopes. The front of each of the official envelopes lists the contents. You should complete as much of each form and envelope as possible during the day, well before the close of poll.

It is quite possible that some of the official forms may not have been needed during the day – where no tendered ballot papers have been issued, for example, or where there have been no votes spoilt. Remember that even when this is the case, you still need to complete the relevant forms with a nil return.

### **(b) Checklist of official packets and envelopes and their contents**

- the ballot paper account – keep this with the ballot box
- the packet containing the postal votes handed in at the polling station – keep this with the ballot box

- unused and spoilt ballot papers (both ordinary and tendered) – if they do not fit the packet provided, wrap it around them and secure with string or elastic bands
- the tendered ballot papers
- the marked copy of the Polling List (including any marked notices as described in Appendix 2) and list of proxies
- the completed corresponding number list
- the certificates of employment
- the tendered votes list, the list of voters with disabilities assisted by companions, the list of votes marked by the Presiding Officer, the statement of the number of voters whose votes are marked by the Presiding Officer and the declarations made by the companions of voters with disabilities.

### **(c) The ballot paper account**

The ballot paper account is the most important of all the paperwork and should be filled in first, with care. In many instances, the first section of the ballot paper account will have been completed in advance by the Counting Officer's staff. It is the Presiding Officer's duty to complete the remainder of the form.

The ballot paper account reconciles the number of ballot papers dealt with by the Presiding Officer. Remember to count the number of ballot papers issued according to the corresponding number list and include this on the ballot paper account. The form relies on the serial numbering of the ballot papers and this is why it is so important to issue ballot

papers in numerical order as pre-printed on the corresponding number list.

The ballot paper account and the packet containing the postal votes must be delivered with the ballot box and other documentation to the count centre as directed. Take time to ensure that you place them in the correct packets as instructed at your training session. Be careful not to lose them or place them by mistake in another envelope or with other referendum materials as this will cause problems and delays at the count.

### **(d) The rest of the paperwork**

Presiding Officers must complete all official forms. Once the Ballot Paper Account is complete, they should then attend to the rest of the paperwork. Complete and sign the other forms on the checklist (see paragraph [\(b\)](#) above). Do not forget to fill in the forms with 'nil' returns if they have not been needed during the day.

### **Packing up polling station materials**

Pay careful attention to the packing instructions given to you by the Counting Officer. It is essential that you follow these to the letter as packing materials incorrectly could lead to problems and delays at the count.

In order, pack the materials into their official envelopes and packets. The corresponding number list and the unused ballot papers must be placed separately in the appropriate envelopes or packets. Packets containing postal votes (or parts of postal votes) handed in at the polling station must also be kept separate as these will be needed quickly at the count centre.

Your Counting Officer will have supplied you with a number of sacks, bags or crates to transport the paperwork and other referendum materials back to the count centre. Make sure that the items go in the appropriate container in accordance with the instructions you have been given.

### **Transporting materials to the count**

The ballot box, ballot paper account, postal votes envelope, sacks or bags containing the official envelopes and other referendum stationery and materials must be delivered to the count centre. In some areas, it will be the duty of the Presiding Officer to deliver the materials to the count centre while in others the Counting Officer will have arranged for materials to be picked up from the polling station and delivered to the count. This will be made clear in your instructions.

#### **(a) Delivery by the Presiding Officer**

If the items are to be delivered by the Presiding Officer, the Counting Officer will have given instructions on the location of the count centre and the entrance to be used. One of the Poll Clerks may be asked to assist the Presiding Officer if there is too much for one person to carry. Presiding Officers must contact the Counting Officer immediately if any problems occur that may cause a delay in getting to the count centre.

**If you have to deliver the ballot materials to the Count centre, go there directly and without delay.**

#### **(b) Collection by the Counting Officer's staff**

If the materials are to be collected from the polling station, the Presiding Officer must remain in charge of them until they are uplifted.

**Do not leave the ballot boxes unattended at any time and ensure that ballot boxes are handed only to authorised members of the Counting Officer's staff.**

Finally, before leaving the polling station, make sure that any waste material is disposed of appropriately and the premises are left tidy. Where you have been entrusted with keys to the premises, you must ensure that these are returned to the appropriate person.



# Appendix 1 – Equality issues

## **Disabled voters**

---

The following guidance is designed to help to ensure that there is equal access to voting for all.

Polling station staff must ensure that disabled voters are not offered a lower standard of service than other voters. Reasonable adjustments to practices and procedures must be made so that people with a range of disabilities are not disadvantaged in any way.

The Counting Officer will make arrangements to ensure that disabled voters have, as far as possible, the same access to the electoral process as anyone else. However, practices adopted by Presiding Officers on the day of the referendum can also help to make a difference:

- If car parking spaces are provided for disabled people, make sure that they are available for that purpose throughout the poll.
- In any event, if possible, keep parking spaces close to the polling station entrance free for disabled people.
- Ensure that there is good signage for any alternative disabled access and make sure that this is not obstructed throughout the day.
- Use a purpose-built ramp if available, but make sure that it is suitable. Ensure that ramps remain in place and secure throughout the day.
- Propping double doors open can help to ensure good access for all; however, make sure that these are

not fire doors.

- Are doormats level with the floor? If not, can they be removed if they could be dangerous?
- Have a seat available for any voter who may need to rest - ideally there should be a mix of chairs with and without armrests.

## **Assistance to voters unable to gain access to the polling station**

---

Ideally your polling station will be located in a fully accessible building.

Unfortunately, in practice, this may not be the case as in some areas there may not be accessible buildings available for use as polling stations

If a physically disabled voter is unable to enter the polling station, the Presiding Officer, after informing any agents present, may take the ballot paper to the voter. After the ballot paper has been marked, the Presiding Officer must place the ballot paper into the ballot box immediately. It is essential that the secrecy of the vote is maintained in all circumstances. The ballot box must not be left unattended or removed from the polling station at any time.

## **Assistance for disabled voters**

---

Some disabled voters may request the assistance of the Presiding Officer to mark the ballot paper for them. If the voter knows how they wish to vote, they must instruct the Presiding Officer, in the privacy of the polling booth, to mark the ballot paper on their behalf accordingly. Ensure that no other voter can overhear the choice expressed by the disabled voter you are assisting.

If possible, choose a part of the polling station where a conversation in normal tones cannot be overheard. Any such agents present should be invited to listen to and to observe the Presiding Officer, so that they can confirm that the ballot paper is marked in accordance with the wishes of the voter.

On occasion, the voter may be unsure of how they wish to vote. In that case, the Presiding Officer should read out the instructions on the top of the ballot paper, the referendum question and the options in the order they appear on the ballot paper. Once the voter has made a decision, the Presiding Officer must mark the ballot paper accordingly. If the Presiding Officer has to mark a ballot paper for an elector, the name of the voter must be noted on the official form 'List of votes marked by the Presiding Officer'. At the close of poll, the Presiding Officer must also fill out the 'Statement of the number of voters whose votes are marked by the Presiding Officer'.

Alternatively, a disabled voter may be assisted by a companion, with the permission of the Presiding Officer, who must be satisfied that the voter's disabilities would prevent them from voting unaided.

The disabled voter's companion must be either a qualified voter or a close relative (spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild) aged 16 or over. The voter should ask the permission of the Presiding Officer to be assisted by their companion.

The companion, not the voter, is required by law to complete a simple declaration, 'Declaration to be made by

the companion of a voter with disabilities'. It is helpful for the Presiding Officer to fill out the declaration on the companion's behalf and to ask them to check the information and sign the document.

The Presiding Officer must make sure to explain the process clearly to both the voter and their companion.

The Presiding Officer must record the voter's name and electoral number, as well as the companion's name and address, on the form 'List of voters with disabilities assisted by companions'.

### **Blind or partially sighted people**

A blind or partially sighted voter can vote with minimal assistance using the tactile voting template provided. All polling station staff must know how to use this template and be able to explain its use to blind or partially sighted voters. Make sure that the template is securely attached to the ballot paper and that the voter is confident about using it. The voter should:

- lift the selected window for their preferred option
- mark their preferred option with a cross
- close the window
- separate the template from the ballot paper
- place the ballot paper in the ballot box (the Presiding Officer may assist if requested); and
- return the template to the Presiding Officer.

Ensure that the large-print version of the ballot paper is displayed in a well-lit area

where voters can easily see it before being issued with their ballot paper. The enlarged hand-held copy of the ballot paper, marked 'sample', should also be made available to voters.

Blind or partially sighted voters may request assistance from the Presiding Officer or qualified companions.

Do:

- give precise instructions to help such voters find their way
- guide the voter on their instruction (most blind or partially sighted people prefer to take the arm of the helper).

Do not:

- assume that help is needed – always ask first
- distract guide dogs by fussing or petting them and do not take hold of the lead
- touch the voter without first asking if they wish to be guided.

### **Deaf blind people**

---

Red bands on a white cane or a red and white harness on a guide dog indicate that the person has both impaired sight and impaired hearing.

### **Deaf people**

---

Hearing loss can range from mild to profound. Some people with hearing loss will use spoken English and may rely on lip-reading to communicate. Others may have British Sign Language as their first language, although they may also use lip-reading. A person with hearing loss may wear hearing aids, although these do not

restore their full hearing. Do:

- get the deaf person's attention before speaking
- tap them gently on the shoulder or wave at them
- face the person being spoken to
- speak clearly, not too slowly, and use normal lip movements – use natural facial expressions and gestures
- remain patient and repeat if necessary
- use plain language
- if someone does not understand what you have said, try saying it in a different way
- maintain eye contact
- be prepared to write something down if the person continues to not understand what you are saying
- find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting, and away from noise and distractions.

Do not:

- shout – it distorts your face and voice and it looks aggressive
- place anything in your mouth
- cover your mouth
- speak too fast
- speak too slowly or exaggerate lip patterns
- turn away or look down
- speak with bright light behind – this will shadow your face
- have anything in your hand if gesturing
- give up if the deaf person does not understand immediately.

## **Mental capacity, disability and voting**

It is possible that a person who applies for a ballot paper might appear to the Presiding Officer to have some form of mental health problem or to have a learning disability.

A person who is registered as an elector or entered on the list of proxies cannot be refused a ballot paper, in other words be excluded from voting, on the grounds of mental incapacity.

In all cases, the Presiding Officer should try to ensure that a person is given appropriate assistance in order to be able to cast their vote. For example, the voter may need the voting process explained to them by the Presiding Officer, or the voter may request the assistance of a companion.

# Appendix 2 – Dealing with problems on the Polling List

## **Age – entitlement to vote**

---

It is an offence for persons under 16 years of age to vote in this referendum, whether alone or accompanied. If someone is obviously under 16, they, and anyone with them, should be warned that they will be guilty of an offence if they vote in this referendum.

The Presiding Officer must ask the prescribed questions and the person must answer them unaided (see Appendix 5a for the prescribed questions).

If the person answers the questions satisfactorily, they must be issued with a ballot paper. No other questioning may be carried out.

A note should be made of the voter's name, address and any other particulars, including the time of the incident and details of any person accompanying the voter. The Counting Officer should subsequently be informed.

## **Misspelled names and voters who have changed their names**

---

Sometimes an elector's name has been misspelled or the name has legally changed since the completion of a registration form, e.g. by marriage.

Ask the voter the prescribed questions (see Appendix 5a). If the voter answers satisfactorily, they must be allowed to vote and the Presiding Officer should make a note of the inaccuracy and pass it on to the Electoral Registration Officer

(ERO), either directly or through the referendum office in accordance with any instructions by the Counting Officer.

If the voter is insistent that they wish the error to be amended before they vote, the Presiding Officer should contact the referendum office for advice or alternatively direct the voter to the ERO.

## **Other electors**

---

At the end of some Polling Lists is a heading 'Other Electors'. Voters listed here include anonymous, service and overseas electors, together with voters who have registered by declaration of local connection, i.e. no longer having a residential qualification but nonetheless still being able to vote (subject to entitlement).

It is unlikely that service voters will have been issued with a poll card. Overseas electors are not entitled to vote at the referendum but may still appear on the polling list marked with E or F. This being the case, they will not have received poll cards. However, poll cards will have been posted to all anonymous electors and their proxies who, unlike ordinary electors, will need to produce their poll card in order to vote in the polling station (see Appendix 4).

## **A person who is not on the Polling List**

---

Usually, the Polling List will contain all those entitled to vote at that polling station. If a person's name does not appear in the Polling List this may be

because the person has not returned a registration form. However, it is possible that an error has occurred.

### **Clerical errors on the Polling List**

---

If the ERO discovers that a correctly completed application form has been received and the person was only omitted from the Polling List as a result of a clerical error, the ERO can correct this error up until **9pm on the day of the referendum** and make provision for the person to be able to vote up until the close of poll at 10pm. The error may be discovered by the ERO either before or on the day of the referendum or by a voter or a proxy in the polling station.

### **Clerical errors identified by the Electoral Registration Officer before the day of the referendum**

---

If an error is identified before the day of the referendum but after the Polling List has been produced for the polling station, the ERO will have provided a separate 'notice', including any additions or amendments, as well as the normal Polling List. The Poll Clerk (or Presiding Officer) must mark this notice instead of the Polling List, but all other procedures are the same, including sealing up such a notice with the Polling List at the close of poll.

### **Clerical errors identified by the Presiding Officer on the day of the referendum**

---

If someone who presents themselves at the polling station is not on the Polling List (or the notice) and is insistent that they made an application to register, the Presiding Officer should refer this immediately to the ERO.

### **Clerical errors identified by the Electoral Registration Officer on the day of the referendum**

---

If it is determined that a correctly completed application form was received and the person was only omitted from the Polling List as a result of a clerical error, the error will be corrected and the ERO will give notice to the Presiding Officer (either in writing or by way of a spoken message, e.g. by telephone).

### **Procedure to allow a person to vote following the correction of a clerical error on the day of the referendum**

---

Instructions as to how the information will be communicated to the Presiding Officer will be given at the training session.

If the notice is communicated by way of a spoken message, the Presiding Officer must make a written record of the voter's name and number and mark this record when issuing a ballot paper in the usual manner. Presiding Officers may have been provided with a special form for this purpose.

If the notice is communicated in writing, either that notice must be marked in the same way as if it were part of the Polling List, or the Presiding Officer must write and mark the voter's name and number on a special form provided for this purpose. Presiding Officers will have received specific instructions at their briefing session. Once the voter's name and number have been marked, a ballot paper must be issued in the usual manner.

The marked notice or marked written record must be sealed up with the Polling List at the close of poll.

## **Any other person who is not on the Polling List**

---

Anyone else who is not on the Polling List (or the notice) for that polling station must not be allowed to vote. However, do not send any voter away before checking the Polling List thoroughly, including the Other Electors listed at the end of the Polling List. Remember that some electoral numbers may be printed out of sequence.

The person may be registered to vote in a different polling district. If the voter requires more help, refer them to the referendum office or to the ERO.

# Appendix 3 – Procedure for postal and proxy voters

## Postal voters

---

Some voters will have applied to vote by post at the referendum. To show that they are postal voters, those who have chosen to vote by post will have the letter 'A' against their names in the Polling List to be used at the polling station. The names and the addresses where the postal ballot papers have been sent will be shown on the list of postal voters. Such voters are **NOT** allowed to vote in person at the polling station, even if they state that they have not received their postal ballot paper.

However, completed postal votes may be handed in, by the voter or someone on their behalf, at the referendum office or at any polling station within the council area. The postal vote should be in a sealed envelope and the Presiding Officer must place it, unopened, in the packet provided. The packet must be kept secure at all times.

**Postal votes must NOT be placed in the ballot box.**

## Collection of postal votes from polling stations

---

The Counting Officer may arrange for collection of postal votes from polling stations during the day of the referendum. If postal votes are collected from the polling station, they should be placed in a packet, which should be sealed. Polling agents can also add their seals to the packet if they wish. Any postal vote packets not collected by

close of poll must be delivered to the count centre in accordance with the Counting Officer's instructions.

## What happens if someone is listed as a postal voter (or postal proxy voter) but claims not to have applied for a postal vote?

---

There are occasions when an elector or an appointed proxy asks for a ballot paper only to find that they are marked on the Polling List as being a postal voter.

The Presiding Officer should check the entry on the Polling List to confirm that the voter or proxy is marked as a postal voter. The Presiding Officer should then explain the circumstances to the voter or proxy and if they insist that they have not applied for a postal vote then the following procedures should be followed.

If the voter or proxy is in possession of their postal vote, they should be advised that the vote cannot be placed in the ballot box, but that the postal vote pack, duly completed, can be handed in to the polling station, the referendum office, or any other polling station in the council area for delivery to the Counting Officer, so long as it is received before 10pm.

Voters or proxies marked as having been issued with a postal vote cannot be given an ordinary ballot paper in the polling station. However, an elector or proxy who claims never to have applied for a postal vote but who is listed as a postal voter, is entitled to receive a tendered ballot paper at the polling station at any time.



Alternatively, **up until 5pm on the day of the referendum**, they may be issued with a replacement postal ballot pack by the Counting Officer. The Presiding Officer should refer the voter or proxy to the referendum office for advice on this procedure.

If it is **before 5pm** but the voter or proxy cannot or does not want to make arrangements for a replacement postal vote to be issued, the Presiding Officer should follow the procedure for issuing a tendered ballot paper instead (see Appendix 5b). **After 5pm**, the voter or proxy cannot be issued with a replacement postal vote, so the Presiding Officer can only issue a tendered ballot paper.

Before issuing a tendered ballot paper, the Presiding Officer must ask the appropriate prescribed questions (see Appendix 5a).

If the voter or proxy answers the prescribed questions satisfactorily, the Presiding Officer must issue a tendered ballot paper – the voter or proxy must not be given an ordinary ballot paper.

In all instances, the Presiding Officer should make a record of the voter's details as instructed by the Counting Officer. They should also advise the voter to contact the Electoral Registration Officer, particularly if they wish to cancel their postal voting arrangements for future elections and referendums.

### **What happens if an elector (or postal proxy) has not received or has lost their postal ballot paper?**

---

A postal ballot paper cannot be replaced at the polling station. If an elector (or postal proxy) states that they have

applied to vote by post but have not received or have lost their postal ballot paper, they should be advised to apply to the Counting Officer for a replacement, as long as this application is made **before 5pm on the day of the referendum**. The Counting Officer can issue replacements up until that time.

If an elector (or postal proxy) arrives **after 5pm** on the day of the referendum and states that they have lost or not received their postal ballot paper, they can be issued with a tendered ballot paper if they answer the prescribed questions satisfactorily (see Appendix 5a). Tendered ballot papers **cannot** be issued to such an elector (or postal proxy) **before 5pm**.

### **Proxy voters**

---

Some voters will have appointed a proxy to vote on their behalf. Even so, voters may still vote in person provided that they do so before the proxy and that the proxy has not applied to vote by post.

When a voter asks to cast a proxy vote, ask for the voter's name and address and see if they are included on the list of proxies. Then check the Polling List to see if the voter has already voted. Any voter who has applied to vote by proxy will have the letter 'P' against their name on the Polling List.

If the voter has already voted, you must advise the proxy that they cannot now vote on behalf of that voter.

If the voter has not voted, you can issue a ballot paper. Note, however, that if the proxy is also voting on their own behalf, they should do so before voting as a proxy.

Ask for the proxy's name and address

and draw a line on the list of proxies to indicate that the proxy has voted.

The voter's entry in the Polling List must then be marked in the usual manner and the voter's name and number read aloud.

The Presiding Officer or Poll Clerk responsible for issuing ballot papers must write the voter's electoral number (**NOT** the proxy's) on the corresponding number list beside the appropriate ballot paper number to record that the ballot paper has been issued.

Remember that a ballot paper may only be issued to voters who are eligible to vote in the referendum. If the voter's entry in the Polling List is prefixed with a letter that does not entitle them to vote in the referendum, the proxy is unable to cast a vote on their behalf. See Chapter 5 page 19 "Who can vote at the referendum?" and "Who can't vote at the referendum?"

### **Procedure for issuing ballot papers to proxies voting on behalf of voters with anonymous Polling List entries**

To protect them from harm, some voters will be registered without reference to their name or address – they will have an anonymous Polling List entry (see Appendix 4).

Some voters who have an anonymous entry may have appointed a proxy to vote on their behalf. In that case, ask for their poll card. Proxies wishing to vote on behalf of an anonymous voter **MUST** produce their official proxy poll card and will not be able to vote as a proxy without one.

Instead of asking for the voter's name and address and calling out the voter's

name, only their electoral number should be asked for and called out.

Remember that a ballot paper may only be issued to voters who are eligible to vote in the referendum. If the voter's anonymous entry in the Polling List is prefixed with a letter that does not entitle them to vote in the referendum (see Chapter 5 page 19), the proxy is unable to cast a vote on their behalf.

### **Eligibility for voting as a proxy**

A person is not entitled to vote as a proxy on behalf of more than two voters who are not close relatives. The only circumstances in which a person can act as a proxy for more than two voters is if they are immediate members of their family (i.e. spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild).

Where a person who has been appointed to act as proxy for more than one voter applies to cast those voters' votes, the proxy should only be given the ballot paper for one voter at a time.

Proxies may also be challenged in the same way that an ordinary voter may be if they are suspected of personation. If this happens, ask the relevant prescribed questions (see Appendix 5a).

### **What if the voter turns up to vote instead of their proxy?**

An elector who has appointed a proxy is entitled to receive their ballot paper if they apply for it in person, but only if the request is made before a ballot paper has been issued on their behalf to the proxy.

The list of proxies must not be marked if

this happens, but the voter's entry on the Polling List must be marked instead. If the proxy then turns up later, they must **NOT** be allowed to vote as a proxy for the voter. If, however, they insist that the voter has not yet voted and the prescribed questions are answered satisfactorily (see Appendix 5a), a tendered ballot paper may be issued.

Where the voter who has appointed the proxy wishes to vote in person, but their proxy has requested to vote by post, the voter cannot be issued with a ballot paper. An 'A' marker will appear against the voter's name in the Polling List and the name of the proxy and the address to which the postal vote has been sent will appear on the list of postal proxies.

### **What happens if someone else appears to have voted as a proxy?**

---

The Presiding Officer should follow the procedure for issuing tendered ballot papers for proxies if a proxy's entry on the list of proxies and the entry of the voter on the Polling List have already been marked (see Appendix 5b).

The Presiding Officer should only issue a tendered ballot paper after asking the prescribed questions for proxies (see Appendix 5b).

### **Emergency Proxies**

---

Note that the rules have changed in respect of emergency proxies. Voters can appoint an emergency proxy up to **5pm on the day of the referendum** if they are unable to vote in person as a result of illness or disability arising after the deadline for normal proxies (**5pm on Wednesday 3 September**).

In addition, emergency proxies can be

appointed up to **5pm on the day of the referendum** for voters who will be unavoidably and unforeseeably absent from their registered address or who are unable to attend the polling station because of reasons relating to their occupation, service or employment, as long as these reasons arose after the deadline for normal proxies.

If anyone does apply on the day of the referendum, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and Counting Officer will make sure that polling station staff are informed of the procedure to follow.

If the ERO grants an emergency proxy application on the day of the referendum, the relevant Presiding Officer will be advised either in writing or by telephone.

The Presiding Officer should then make a note of the voter's name, address and electoral number and attach this information to the list of proxies. There may have been a blank form included at the end of the list of proxies for that purpose.

Once the ERO's decision to grant an emergency proxy application has been notified, the Presiding Officer must issue a ballot paper in the usual way. The ERO's written record (if available) or the Presiding Officer's note should be marked to show that the proxy has voted on the voter's behalf.

If someone comes to the polling station **before the 5pm deadline** to act as a proxy on a voter's behalf, where that voter has not previously applied for a proxy, you should advise the proposed proxy to contact the ERO without delay.

## Appendix 4 – Voters with an anonymous Polling List entry

To protect them from harm, some voters will be registered without reference to their name or address. They will have what is called an anonymous entry in the Polling List, which will consist of their electoral number and the letter 'N'. Some of these voters may also have further letters that qualify their eligibility to vote at certain elections or referendums. (See Chapter 5 page 19 for details).

If a Polling List contains anonymous entries, these will be found at the end of the Polling List under the 'Other Electors' section. It is important to remember that, where the Polling List for a single polling district is split between two or more polling stations, the entry may appear on the Polling List for one of the other polling stations using that part of the Polling List.

The procedure for issuing a ballot paper to an anonymous voter is different from ordinary voters.

### **Procedure for issuing ballot papers to voters with an anonymous entry**

---

Unlike ordinary voters, anonymous voters **MUST** have a poll card and will not be able to vote without one.

- ask for their poll card – it will not contain their name or address but will have their electoral number

- check the Polling List – the entry for that electoral number should be an 'N', rather than a name and address
- mark the voter's entry in the Polling List
- do not ask for the name or address of the voter – call out only their electoral number
- enter the electoral number in the corresponding number list
- issue the ballot paper and return their poll card to them.

The prescribed questions may also be put to a voter with an anonymous Polling List entry, but they are different from those put to ordinary voters (see Appendix 5a).

### **What if a voter with an anonymous entry appears at the polling station without a poll card?**

---

If they have simply forgotten to bring their poll card with them, ask them to come back to the polling station at a later time with their poll card. If they claim that they never received one or that they have lost it, ask them to contact the Counting Officer immediately. If a replacement poll card is issued and the voter later returns to the polling station with it, a ballot paper must then be issued in the manner described above.

# Appendix 5a – The prescribed questions

The prescribed questions can be asked of any voter or proxy. However, the Presiding Officer must put the prescribed questions precisely and calmly in the following circumstances:

Circumstances in which a **tendered ballot paper** must be issued:

- A voter (who has not appointed a proxy) applies for a ballot paper but the Polling List shows that they have already voted. In this circumstance, even if the questions are answered satisfactorily, the voter is entitled only to a tendered ballot paper.
- A proxy voter's entry on the list of proxies has already been marked and the entry of the voter on the Polling List has also been marked. Upon satisfactorily answering the questions, the voter or proxy is entitled only to a tendered ballot paper.
- A proxy voter returns to the polling station after their application to cast a vote as a proxy has been rejected because the Polling List indicates that the voter has voted in person (the list of proxies in this case would not be marked), and insists that the voter has not voted. If they answer the questions satisfactorily, they will be entitled only to a tendered ballot paper.
- A voter's (or a proxy's) name appears on the postal voters list (or proxy postal voters list) but they state that they did not apply to vote

by post. If the voter (or proxy) answers the questions satisfactorily, they are entitled only to a tendered ballot paper.

- A voter (or proxy) whose name appears on the postal voters list (or proxy postal voters list), arrives at the polling station after 5pm on the day of the referendum and claims to have lost, spoilt or not received their postal ballot paper. If the questions are answered satisfactorily, the voter (or proxy) will be entitled only to a tendered ballot paper.

Circumstances in which an **ordinary ballot paper** must be issued:

- A voter states that their name is not as shown in the Polling List. If, in response to the prescribed questions, the voter can confirm that the Polling List entry refers to them, an ordinary ballot paper must be issued.
- Polling station staff suspect a voter or a proxy of personation. If, in response to the prescribed questions, the voter can confirm that the Polling List entry refers to them, an ordinary ballot paper must be issued.
- A referendum agent or polling agent requires the questions to be asked. If the prescribed questions are answered satisfactorily, an ordinary ballot paper must be issued.

- The voter is registered as eligible to vote but is clearly under age. If the prescribed questions are answered satisfactorily, an ordinary ballot paper must be issued. (However, the voter and any accompanying adult should be advised that it is an offence for a person to vote at the referendum before the age of 16 years. If the voter insists on casting their vote, the matter should be referred to the referendum office and the Electoral Registration Office.)

The Presiding Officer, regardless of any doubt they may have, must issue an ordinary or tendered ballot paper, as appropriate, to anyone who has answered the questions correctly. If a person refuses to answer the questions, then neither an ordinary nor a tendered ballot paper can be issued. If that person returns later, then the Presiding Officer must again ask them the prescribed questions.

No inquiry may be made as to the right of any person to vote, other than the statutory questions shown below.

#### **The prescribed questions to be asked of a person applying to vote as an elector**

---

‘Are you the person named in the Polling List as follows?’ (You must then read out loud the whole entry from the Polling List.)

If the answer is ‘no’, do not issue a ballot paper. If the answer is ‘yes’, then ask:

‘Have you already voted in this referendum otherwise than as proxy for some other person?’

If the answer is ‘yes’ to this question, do not issue a ballot paper.

If the person has answered ‘yes’ to the first question and ‘no’ to the second question, an ordinary or tendered ballot paper must be issued as appropriate.

#### **The prescribed questions to be asked of a person applying to vote as a proxy (but not on behalf of a voter with an anonymous entry)**

---

The prescribed questions for proxies have a different wording:

‘Are you the person whose name appears as (read out the name that appears in the list of proxies) in the list of proxies for this referendum as entitled to vote as proxy on behalf of (the name of the voter on the Polling List)?’

If the answer is ‘no’, do not issue a ballot paper. If the answer is ‘yes’, then ask:

‘Have you already voted in this referendum as proxy on behalf of (the name of the voter on the Polling List)?’

If the answer is ‘yes’ to this question, a ballot paper must not be issued. If the answer is ‘no’, then ask:

‘Are you the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of (the name of the voter on the Polling List)?’

If the answer to this question is ‘yes’ (and the questions above have been answered satisfactorily), an ordinary or tendered ballot paper must be issued as appropriate.

If, however, the answer is 'no', then ask:

'Have you already voted in this referendum on behalf of two persons of whom you are not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild?'

If the answer to this question is 'yes', do not issue a ballot paper.

If the answer is 'no' (and the questions above have been answered satisfactorily), an ordinary or tendered ballot paper must be issued, as appropriate.

**The prescribed questions to be asked of a person applying to vote as a proxy for a voter with an anonymous entry**

---

'Are you the person entitled to vote as proxy on behalf of the voter whose number on the Polling List is (read out the **number** from the Polling List)?'

If the answer is 'no', do not issue a ballot paper. If the answer is 'yes', then ask:

'Have you already voted in this referendum as proxy on behalf of the voter whose number on the Polling List is (read out the number of the voter on Polling List)?'

If the answer is 'yes' to this question, a ballot paper must not be issued. If the answer is 'no', you must also ask:

'Are you the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the person whose number on the Polling List is (read out the number of the voter on the Polling List)?'

If the answer to this question is

'yes' (and the questions above have been answered satisfactorily), an ordinary or tendered ballot paper must be issued as appropriate.

If, however, the answer is 'no', then ask:

'Have you already voted at this referendum on behalf of two persons of whom you are not the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild?'

If the answer to this question is 'yes', do not issue a ballot paper.

If the answer to this question is 'no' (and all of the above questions have been answered satisfactorily), then an ordinary or tendered ballot paper must be issued as appropriate.

**The prescribed questions to be asked of a person applying to vote in person when they are shown on the Polling List as a postal voter**

---

The following prescribed questions are for voters shown on the Polling List as postal voters but who claim either to have not applied to vote by post or who present themselves at the polling station after 5pm on the day of the referendum and claim to have lost or not received their postal ballot papers.

'Did you apply to vote by post?'

If the answer is 'no', a tendered ballot paper must be issued.

If the answer to this question is 'yes', then ask:

'Why have you not voted by post?'

If the question is answered satisfactorily, the Presiding Officer should record the

reason and issue a tendered ballot paper.

If, however, the voter says that they have not voted by post because they have lost or not received (all or any part of) their postal ballot pack, a tendered ballot paper can be issued **only after 5pm**. If it is before 5pm refer them to staff at the referendum office who should be able to issue a replacement postal ballot pack.

**The prescribed questions to be asked of a person applying to vote as a proxy when they are shown as having been issued with a postal proxy ballot paper**

---

The prescribed questions for proxies named on the proxy postal voters list but who claim either to have not applied to vote by post or who present themselves at the polling station after 5pm on the day of the referendum and claim to have lost or not received their postal ballot papers are as follows:

‘Did you apply to vote by post as proxy?’

If the answer is ‘no’, a tendered ballot paper must be issued.

If the answer to this question is ‘yes’, then ask:

‘Why have you not voted by post as proxy?’

If the question is answered satisfactorily, the Presiding Officer should record the reason and issue a tendered ballot paper.

If, however, the proxy says that they have not voted by post because they have lost or not received (all or any part of) their postal ballot pack, a tendered ballot paper can be issued **only after 5pm**. If it is before 5pm refer them to staff at the referendum office, who should be able to issue a replacement postal ballot pack.



# Appendix 5b – Tendered ballot papers

**You must read these instructions carefully before issuing any tendered ballot paper. If you are not the senior Presiding Officer for the polling place you should consult that officer before issuing the paper. Some Counting Officers may also require you to phone the referendum office before issuing a tendered paper. You should follow the instructions issued by the Counting Officer.**

## Tendered ballot papers

Tendered ballot papers are pink while ordinary ballot papers are white. Tendered ballot books contain fewer ballot papers than ordinary ballot books. Tendered ballot papers will often be supplied in a sealed and labelled packet to identify them as being different from the ordinary ballot papers. They can only be issued in specific circumstances which are discussed below.

The Counting Officer will have advised you in training of the procedures you must follow before issuing a tendered ballot paper. This may involve consulting the senior Presiding Officer for the polling place or contacting the referendum office for confirmation. Be sure to follow these procedures.

## Circumstances in which to issue tendered ballot papers

The Presiding Officer must make sure that tendered ballot papers are issued only in the prescribed circumstances. Tendered ballot papers should only be issued if:

- the voter number appears on the Polling List (or notice) as having already voted
- a proxy's entry on the list of proxies has already been marked and/or the entry of the voter who appointed them as a proxy has been marked
- the voter (or proxy) who appears on the list of postal voters claims not to have applied for a postal vote. They are entitled to request a replacement postal ballot pack from the Counting Officer up until 5pm, but can be issued with a tendered ballot paper at any time if they so wish
- it is after 5pm and the voter (or proxy) who appears on the list of postal voters claims to have lost, spoilt or not received their postal vote

If tendered ballot papers are issued in error, the Presiding Officer must make a note of the unique identifying numbers of the tendered ballots that have been issued by mistake and inform the Counting Officer as soon as possible.

Before issuing a tendered ballot paper, the Presiding Officer should explain the circumstances to the voter (or proxy) and must then ask the prescribed questions relevant to their situation (see Appendix 5a).

If the prescribed questions are answered satisfactorily, then the Presiding Officer must issue a tendered ballot paper. The Presiding Officer should then explain the tendered vote procedure to the voter (or proxy).

## **Procedure for issue**

---

Once the voter (or proxy) has satisfactorily answered the prescribed questions, the voter's electoral number (including the polling district reference) must be written against the number of the tendered ballot paper being issued on the tendered votes list.

Ensure that the tendered ballot paper bears the official mark, fold it, then unfold it and hand it to the voter or proxy so that they can see both options on the ballot paper. They must then vote in secret, fold the tendered ballot paper and return it to the Presiding Officer.

**The tendered ballot paper must NOT be placed in the ballot box.**

To make sure this does not happen, the Presiding Officer should stand by the ballot box and cover the slot. The Presiding Officer must take the tendered ballot paper, **without unfolding it**, and endorse it on the back with the name of the voter together with their electoral number (including the polling district reference) and place it in the official envelope provided. They must then enter the voter's electoral number and name on the 'List of tendered votes'.

If a proxy votes on behalf of a voter, endorse the tendered ballot paper with the proxy's name, but with the voter's electoral number. Enter the electoral number, together with the name of the proxy, on the 'List of tendered votes'.

## **Reasons for completing a tendered ballot paper**

---

On occasion, voters may ask why they

are being offered a tendered ballot paper. Even though tendered ballot papers are not included in the count, a tendered ballot paper provides evidence that a voter was concerned about the conduct of the referendum at the time of voting, rather than after the result was declared. As such, tendered ballot papers are the first step in pursuing a complaint about the electoral process. If a voter does not take this step it could mean that there is no formal record that they tried, but were unable, to cast their vote.

In addition, whenever a tendered ballot paper is issued, the name and the electoral number of the voter are entered on the list of tendered votes. This list then enables the Counting Officer to establish whether there are any patterns of possible personation across their area. For example, a significant number of entries on the list might hint at organised and large scale malpractice.

# Appendix 6 – Security at the polling station

It is essential that polling stations are run in a calm and orderly manner. The Presiding Officer is responsible for the security of the polling station while any senior Presiding Officer also has a duty for the security of the polling place as a whole.

## **Keeping order**

---

Presiding Officers must maintain order in the polling station. They have the power to order a person's removal from the polling station. Eligible voters must nevertheless be allowed to vote before they are removed. A Presiding Officer who orders the removal of a person should record the details of the incident and pass them on to the referendum office.

A person who has been removed from the polling station but has not chosen to exercise their right to vote may only be re-admitted on the authority of the Presiding Officer. If the person returns and conducts themselves in an orderly manner, they must be given the opportunity to vote.

There is no legal definition of the extent of the polling station but, at a minimum, it is the room in which voting takes place.

Poll Clerks are not empowered to order a person's removal from the polling station. Only the Presiding Officer can do this.

## **Serious disturbances or incidents and the adjournment of the poll**

---

The Counting Officer will have informed the police of the location of polling stations. Police officers may be assigned polling station duties and may visit them during the day. If there is disorder at the polling station during the day, contact the referendum office and inform them of the situation. If necessary, call the police to deal with the problem. The Counting Officer will have issued you with emergency contact numbers.

In the event of a serious disturbance or incident e.g. bomb scare, fire, flood, etc., the Presiding Officer may be asked to vacate the premises or may decide to do so. If the emergency services ask for the building to be evacuated, it must be done. Inform the referendum office immediately and seek guidance on further actions that should be taken.

Never put the personal safety of voters or the rest of the polling station team at risk, or risk any injury to any person. If it is possible to do so without putting personal safety at risk, then all the sensitive referendum materials (the ballot box, ballot papers, Polling List, etc.) may be removed from the building and kept under the care of the polling station staff.

If forced to leave the premises, establish a temporary polling station at a safe distance from the serious disturbance or incident. Regardless of whether there has been an interruption

in polling, the polling station must still close at 10pm.

However, a note should be made of the time during which the polling station was unable to operate.

In the most extreme cases, the Counting Officer will permit the Presiding Officer to adjourn the poll until the following day. If the poll is adjourned, then the Counting Officer will arrange for the referendum materials to be collected.

**Presiding Officers must NOT adjourn the poll without the Counting Officer's consent.**

### Dealing with difficult situations

It is possible that during the course of the day of the referendum polling station staff will encounter difficult situations or be faced with confrontational behaviour.

The following steps may assist polling station staff with potentially difficult or challenging situations:

- Listen to the voter – it is good practice to look at the person while they speak, demonstrating interest.
- Understand – let the person know that every effort is being made to understand the problem from their perspective. This emphasises that an informed decision is being considered.
- Explore – ask the person if there is any further relevant information that they can give that might help the process along.
- Summarise – give the response and the reason for it. Do not become engaged in an argument.

# Appendix 7 – Procedure for dealing with personation

## **What happens if polling station staff suspect a voter of personation?**

There may be rare occasions when a member of the polling station team, a referendum agent or a polling agent suspects that the person requesting a ballot paper is not who they claim to be. This is called personation and it is a serious offence.

Remember that a person, other than a proxy, is not guilty of personation if they apply for a ballot paper by a name which is not their own, as long as it is the name under which they have been registered.

Presiding Officers must not interrogate a person if they suspect personation. Only the prescribed questions may be asked. The questions must be put to the person before they are issued with a ballot paper, and not afterwards (see Appendix 5a).

The prescribed questions determine whether the voter is the person who appears on the Polling List (or the list of proxies if they are voting as a proxy for someone else), and if they have voted before in the referendum (or on behalf of that voter if they are the proxy).

If the person answers the questions satisfactorily, an ordinary ballot paper must be issued. The Presiding Officer should, however, report their suspicions to the Counting Officer as soon as possible.

If there is a confrontation, or a reasonable expectation of confrontation, the Presiding Officer should consider

their own safety and the safety of all other people present as a priority. Consideration may be given to other ways of supporting a future investigation, such as recording registration numbers of vehicles and preserving items touched by a person involved in an incident, if it is safe to do so, until the arrival of a police officer.

If a person has been arrested on the grounds that they are suspected of committing or of being about to commit personation, that person must not be prevented from voting as long as they answer the prescribed questions satisfactorily.

## **What happens if a referendum agent or a polling agent challenges a voter?**

If a referendum agent or a polling agent challenges a voter (through the Presiding Officer), the voter must not be prevented from voting as long as they answer the prescribed questions correctly.

## **What happens if someone else (apart from a proxy) appears to have voted on behalf of the voter?**

There are rare occasions when a person asks for a ballot paper only to find that their name on the Polling List is marked as already having voted. If it appears that someone other than their appointed proxy has voted on behalf of an elector, the tendered ballot process outlined in Appendix 5b should be followed.

# Appendix 8 – Guidance on tellers, the media and exit polls

## Tellers

Tellers volunteer for campaign organisations. They stand outside polling places and record the electoral numbers of voters who have voted. By identifying voters who have not voted and by relaying this information to their campaign organisations, tellers play an important role for the campaigns. The campaigners or their supporters may then contact the voters who have not yet been to vote and encourage them to do so. In this way, tellers may help to boost turnout at the referendum.

Unlike polling agents, who will have accreditation from the Counting Officer and who are entitled to remain within the polling station if they so wish, tellers are not allowed inside the polling station except to vote on their own behalf, as proxy for another voter, or as a companion of a disabled voter.

It is for Counting Officers and Presiding Officers to determine where tellers are permitted to stand. Normally, tellers are required to stand outside the polling place. Where the layout of the polling place permits and particularly in inclement weather, Counting Officers may instruct Presiding Officers to allow tellers to stand at a convenient location close to the entrance of the polling place, such as the foyer. However, tellers may be required to leave if the Counting Officer or the Presiding Officer believes that their presence inside the building is compromising the secrecy of the ballot or impeding or obstructing the voters. Where the polling place

consists of one room only, tellers must not be permitted to carry out their activities within that room.

There should be no more than one teller at a polling place for each permitted participant at any time. (A permitted participant is a campaigner or campaign organisation registered with the Electoral Commission.) Where a polling place has separate entrances, it may be appropriate for there to be tellers at each entrance, but no more than one per permitted participant at each.

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

The Counting Officer may provide further guidance on the activities of tellers.

Tellers must:

- always remain outside the polling station, unless casting their own vote, voting as proxy or accompanying a disabled voter
- always comply with the instructions of the Counting Officer and Presiding Officer.

Tellers must not:

- be able to see or hear what is happening inside the polling station
- impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling place or station

- demand any information about a voter's electoral number, name or address
- ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their electoral number or to retrieve their poll cards
- have discussions with voters that may give rise to allegations of undue influence (e.g. voting intentions or campaign affiliations)
- display any campaign material in support of or against any particular campaign other than a rosette or badge.

Counting Officers may issue specific instructions relating to whether tellers may:

- approach voters for information as they enter or leave the polling place: and
- display a rosette or badge displaying the name of the campaign.

You should follow the instructions issued by your Counting Officer.

Presiding Officers have a responsibility for ensuring that voters can cast their votes in a free and fair manner. They should check on tellers' activities from time to time and make sure that they do not block the entrance or hinder voters from entering the polling place/station.

Presiding Officers should always have regard to the instructions of the Counting Officer in relation to tellers. If there are problems with tellers' activities during the day of the referendum, the Presiding Officer should contact the referendum office for further instructions.

## **The media**

---

Representatives of the media have no right to enter a polling station except as voters or accredited observers. They must not be allowed to film or interview voters in the polling station or the polling place. If a film crew is filming or interviews are taking place outside the polling place, make sure that voters are not hindered or harassed on their way to vote and that the entrance to the polling place is not obstructed.

Some members of the media may be accredited as observers by the Electoral Commission. If this is the case, they will have ID badges issued by the Commission (see Chapter 4 pages 14-15). They must display their badge to gain access to the polling station. If they are accredited in this way they are entitled to access the polling station in the same way as other accredited observers and they are subject to the Commission's code of conduct. They are still not allowed to film or to interview voters in the polling station or the polling place.

## **Exit polls**

---

Public opinion poll companies may be commissioned to run an exit poll for the referendum. Presiding Officers may be informed by the Counting Officer if a polling company intends to conduct an exit poll outside the polling place. If that is the case, make sure that the interviewers neither enter nor block the access to the polling place.

# Appendix 9 – Health and safety

## Health and safety of polling station staff and voters

---

Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks must be aware of any potential risks to safety throughout the day of the referendum. This requires an inspection of the premises as a whole and of the immediate area outside. If hazards are identified, some remedy needs to be considered. Liaise with the key-holder first if appropriate and where possible. Make a record of any hazards identified and the action taken and advise the referendum office of any that you cannot resolve.

If an accident occurs to any person at the polling station or place, a record must be made of the incident and the following information recorded:

- full name and address of person involved
- time of accident
- location of accident
- brief details of accident
- evidence of injury or damage
- name and address of any witnesses
- conditions prevailing at the time
- action taken by polling staff and by any key-holders
- name of doctor or paramedic called
- details of any hospital admission.

The referendum office should be informed immediately.

## Lifting heavy objects

---

Listed below are some points that, if observed, may help to reduce the risk of injury to those who are involved with manual handling operations:

- Before attempting to lift or move any object, test the weight by tilting to determine how heavy the load is and the position of its centre of gravity
- Before starting to lift or move any object, ensure that the area in which you are working is clear and free from obstructions
- Ensure that you have a firm, comfortable grip before lifting
- Ensure that you have a firm footing before lifting
- When lifting, keep your head up, your back straight and your feet slightly apart
- Wherever possible, lift from the knees using your leg muscles
- Keep the object you are lifting as close to your body as possible
- Do not pile objects so high that you or your load might overbalance
- Do not pile objects so high that you cannot see where you are going
- If you cannot lift or move the load on your own, ask for assistance
- Help others to lift or move a load if you are asked and if you are capable of doing so.



# Appendix 10 – Frequently asked questions for polling station staff on the day of the referendum

**Q. Why do you need to write my electoral number beside my ballot paper number? Does this mean my vote is not secret?**

**A.** This is required in the referendum rules. This is an updated version of a system that dates from the Ballot Act 1872, which was introduced to avoid the possibility of counterfeit ballot papers being used and to assist with the detection of alleged fraud.

Numbered ballot papers make it far more difficult for an unscrupulous person to introduce copies of official ballot papers into the ballot box. If fraud has occurred, it would be possible to detect it by reference to the corresponding number list.

There is a safeguard to prevent the ballot paper numbers on the corresponding number list being linked with the marked ballot papers. At the close of poll, the corresponding number list is placed in a sealed envelope by the Presiding Officer at the polling station. The sealed envelope is then taken to the Counting Officer at the referendum count, where it remains sealed, as required by law. After the count has taken place, the used ballot papers are also sealed. The only occasion when the sealed packets can be opened is on the order of a sheriff principal as a result of a petition for judicial review or as part of an investigation into an alleged referendum offence. Even then, it is

very rare for the documents to be examined except in cases where fraud or personation (i.e. someone voting illegally on someone else's behalf) are being investigated.

Because of the above safeguards, it is virtually impossible for any person to be in a position to marry up a voter to a particular ballot paper.

For that reason, voters can be confident that the ballot remains secret. Voters need not fear that the way in which they voted could be detected, except under the very special circumstances outlined above.

**Q. I've forgotten to post my postal vote. Can I vote in person here at the polling station?**

**A.** We can't give you an ordinary ballot paper here at the polling station. However, you don't need to post your postal vote in order to vote. You, or someone else on your behalf, can deliver your postal vote by hand to the referendum office or to this or any other polling station in the council area, so long as it is received before 10pm tonight when the poll closes.

**Q. My postal vote hasn't arrived yet – what can I do?**

**A. Before 5pm:** A replacement can be issued if you can get to the referendum office before 5pm today. You will need to take along some form of identification.

Staff in the referendum office will be able to provide more information on this procedure and can tell you what sort of identification is acceptable.

**After 5pm:** You are entitled to receive a tendered ballot paper. If you are on the Polling List for this polling station and you answer the prescribed questions satisfactorily, we will be able to issue you with one.

**Q. My postal vote has arrived, but now I've lost my ballot paper. What can I do?**

**A. Before 5pm:** A replacement can be issued if you can get to the referendum office before 5pm today. You will need to bring along any pieces of your postal ballot pack that you still have and some form of identification. Staff in the referendum office will be able to provide more information on this procedure and can tell you what sort of identification is acceptable.

**After 5pm:** You are entitled to receive a tendered ballot paper. If you are on the Polling List for this polling station and you answer the prescribed questions satisfactorily, we will be able to issue you with one.

**Q. I've received my postal vote but now I've changed my mind and want to vote in person at the polling station. Can I cancel my postal vote?**

**A.** No – if you have been issued with a postal vote you can't now vote in person. However, you can deliver your completed postal vote, sealed in the envelopes provided, by hand to this or any other polling station in the council area or to the referendum office before 10pm today. If you are unable to deliver it yourself, someone else can deliver it for you so long as it

is received before 10pm today.

If you want to cancel your postal vote for future elections and referendums, please contact the Electoral Registration Officer.

**Q. What do you mean I'm not registered – I thought that everyone could vote?**

*Never send any person away without the most stringent checks. Check the Polling List thoroughly to ensure that the enquirer is not registered. Check whether the entry is listed out of order and whether it appears under "Other Electors" at the end of the Polling List for that polling district (remember that this may be at another station in your polling place). If, after checking, you still can't find the entry, refer the person to the Electoral Registration Officer to confirm that they are not on the Polling List. If, however, after making these checks, it is clear that the person is not on the Polling List, respond as follows:-*

**A.** You need to be on the Polling List to vote at this referendum. In order to be included on the electoral register and to be able to vote at future elections and referendums, you will need to apply to the Electoral Registration Officer.

If you are sure you returned a registration form, please contact the Electoral Registration Office immediately. There is provision for the ERO to correct clerical errors in the register up until 9pm tonight.

**Q. My husband has had an accident/been admitted to hospital/been taken ill and can't vote in person. Is there anything that can be done?**

*If the enquiry is made **before 5pm***

**A.** Yes, but only if the medical emergency occurred **after 5pm on Wednesday 3 September** (the deadline for applying for proxy votes). He can apply to the Electoral Registration Officer to appoint a proxy to vote on his behalf, but the application must be made **before 5pm today**. His application must be countersigned by a person who is 18 or over, knows him but is not related to him and can confirm he became ill after the deadline for applying for an ordinary proxy vote. You must contact the Electoral Registration Office immediately for advice on arranging an emergency proxy vote.

*If the enquiry is made **after 5pm***

**A.** I'm sorry, but it is now too late to organise an emergency proxy vote.

**Q. My sister has been called away suddenly for reasons of occupation/service/employment and can't vote in person. Is there anything that can be done?**

*If the enquiry is made **before 5pm***

**A.** Yes, but only if she learned this **after 5pm on Wednesday 3 September** (the deadline for applying for proxy votes). She can apply to the Electoral Registration Officer to appoint a proxy to vote on her behalf, but the application must be made **before 5pm today**. Unless she is a service voter, called away on duty, the

application must be countersigned either by her employer, or if she is not an employee, by someone over 18 who knows her but is not related to her, confirming that she was required to work away from home after the deadline for applying for an ordinary proxy vote. You must contact the Electoral Registration Office immediately for advice on arranging an emergency proxy vote.

*If the enquiry is made **after 5pm***

**A.** I'm sorry, but it is now too late to organise an emergency proxy vote.

**Q. My father has had to go away at short notice and cannot come to the polling place in person.**

*If the enquiry is made **before 5pm***

**A.** Yes, but only if he learned this **after 5pm on Wednesday 3 September** (the deadline for applying for proxy votes). He can apply to the Electoral Registration Officer to appoint a proxy to vote on his behalf, but the application must be made **before 5pm today**. His application will need to be countersigned by another person who is aged 18 or over, knows him but is not related to him and can confirm that he was unavoidably and unforeseeably obliged to be away from home after the deadline for applying for an ordinary proxy vote. You must contact the Electoral Registration Office immediately for advice on arranging an emergency proxy vote.

*If the enquiry is made **after 5pm***

**A.** I'm sorry, but it is now too late to organise an emergency proxy vote.

# Appendix 11 – Polling station set-up checklist

Use this checklist before 7am to ensure that the polling station is set up correctly.

## Outside the polling station



### Entrance, exit and approaches

Is the approach signage clear and can voters easily identify where the polling station is?

Are there parking spaces reserved for disabled people?

Check there are no hazards between the car parking spaces and the entrance to the polling station.

Do noticeboards or any public areas display any material that could be construed as supporting the views of either campaign in the referendum? If so, cover or remove them or have them covered or removed.

### Signage

Have you ensured good signage for any alternative disabled access and can it be read by someone in a wheelchair?

Is the 'Guidance for voters' notice (including any supplied in alternative languages and formats) displayed in the polling booths, as well as inside and outside the polling station and is it accessible to all voters?

Where there is more than one polling station, are they clearly numbered?

### Level Access

Is there a suitable ramp clear of obstructions?

Is the ramp stable? If not, contact the referendum office immediately.

Are doormats flush with the floor? If not, remove them.

### Entrances

Have double doors been checked to ensure good access for all?

Is the door for any separate disabled access properly signed?

## **Inside the polling station**



Is the polling station set up to make best use of space?

Walk the route the voter will be expected to follow, and check that the layout will work for voters, taking into account how they will move through the voting process from entering to exiting the polling station.

Would the layout work if there was a build-up of voters waiting to vote?

Is best use being made of the lights and natural light available?

Is there a seat available if an elector needs to sit down?

### **Official notices**

Is the 'Guidance for voters' notice (including any supplied in alternative languages and formats) displayed inside the polling station, inside all polling booths and accessible to all voters?

As you walk through the route that the voter will follow, are the posters and notices clearly visible, including for wheelchair users?

Ensure that notices are not displayed among other posters where voters would find it difficult to see them.

### **Polling booths/ballot box**

Is the ballot box placed immediately adjacent to the Presiding Officer?

Is the ballot box correctly sealed?

Can a wheelchair user gain easy access to the ballot box?

Can a wheelchair user gain easy access to the polling booth?

Are polling booths correctly erected and in such a position so as to make best use of the lights and natural light?

Can the Presiding Officer and Poll Clerk observe them clearly?

Are the pencils in all the booths sharpened and available for use?

Is the string attached to the pencils long enough for the size of ballot papers and to accommodate both right-handed and left-handed voters?

**Large-print and hand-held sample ballot paper**

✓

Are the large-print ballot papers clearly visible to all voters?

Are the hand-held samples available and visible to all voters?

**Tactile voting template**

Is the tactile voting template available and in full view?

Do all staff know how to use it?

**Ballot papers**

Are the ballot papers the correct ones for the polling station and are they numbered correctly and stacked in order?

Do the ballot papers bear the correct official mark on the front?

Are the ballot papers and other essential documents safely stored close to the Presiding Officer and Poll Clerk but out of the way of others?

**Corresponding number list**

Are the ballot paper numbers on the corresponding list printed in numerical order?

Do the ballot paper numbers printed on the corresponding number list match those on the ballot papers?

**Polling List**

Do you have the correct polling list for your polling station?

**Printed and Published by  
Falkirk Printworks  
Units 6 & 7 Castle Place  
Bankside Industrial Estate  
Falkirk FK2 7XB**

**On behalf of**

**The Chief Counting Officer  
Lothian Chambers  
59-63 George IV Bridge  
Edinburgh EH1 1RN**