



Changing how we do elections in Wales

The Welsh Government want to know what
you think



This is an easy read version of '**Welsh Government Consultation on Electoral Reform**'.

August 2017

How to use this document



This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.



You may need support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be difficult to understand. These are in **bold blue writing** and have been explained in a box beneath the word.



Where the document says 'we', this means **Welsh Government**.

To get more copies of this easy read version please contact:



Fairer Futures Division, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ



Phone: 0300 060 3300



Email: SEPMailbox@wales.gsi.gov.uk



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What the minister Mark Drakeford says



We have been voting in the same way for many years. We now have a chance to decide if we want to change how we run elections.



We hope that making changes to elections will make it easier for everyone to vote.

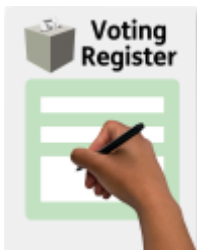


We want more people to stand for election and more people to vote at elections.



We want to think about:

- different ways to **register to vote**



register to vote - this is when you have your name on a list of people allowed to vote.



- different ways of voting



- letting young people vote



- ways for you to know about the people who are standing for election.



I hope you will answer the questions we have in this paper.



We really want to find out what is useful and what you think looks good



Mark Drakeford,
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local
Government.

What this is about



It is important that you vote in elections. We need you to want to vote. And we want to make voting easy for you.



A new law came in this year. It is called the **Wales Act 2017**. This law means we can choose how to run elections in Wales.

This law covers elections for:



- the Welsh Assembly



- county councils



- community and town councils

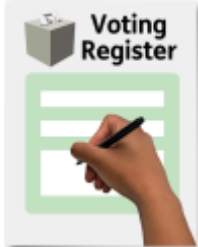


We cannot change general elections for the UK parliament in Westminster.

This booklet is about changing:



- who can vote



- how you [register to vote](#)



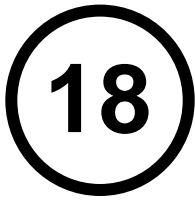
- how you vote



- what you do to stand in an election.

Who can vote?

Age to vote



You can vote in all elections if you are over 18 years old.



We want 16 and 17 year olds to be able to vote in local elections. We want them to vote for:



- county councils



- community councils



- town councils.



This is a big change. We think young people know more about politics now from school and websites like Facebook.



We hope if you vote when you are young you will keep voting. You will be interested in politics in Wales and perhaps more likely to stand for election.



Question 1. Do you agree that the age for voting in Welsh local elections should be 16?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

People from the European Union



People from the **European Union (EU)** who live in Wales can vote in local elections



The **European Union** is a group of countries whose governments work together. It is often called the **EU**.



We do not know what will happen to their vote when we leave the **EU**. We want them to be able to carry on voting.



People who come from other countries that are not in the **Commonwealth** cannot vote. Such as people from America or China cannot vote.



The **Commonwealth** is a group of countries that the UK used to rule. Such as Jamaica and India.



After we leave the **EU**, people who move here will not be able to vote.



Think about people who live here, keep our laws and are affected by council decisions.



Do we give a vote to everyone who lives in Wales legally, wherever they were born?



Question 2. Do you want people from the EU, who come here after we leave the EU, to have a vote?

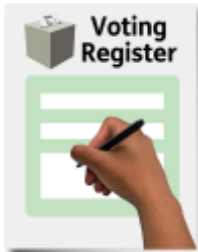
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐



Question 3. Do you want everyone who lives in Wales to be able to vote wherever they were born?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

Getting more people to **register to vote**



You must be on the **voting register** to be able to vote.



The **voting register** is a list of people who can vote.



Not everyone is **registered to vote**. This is not fair because if you are not on the **register**, you are not allowed to vote.



We think it may be good for a government department to **register you to vote**. Such as benefits office or driving licence office. You would not need to do anything - the offices would do it all.



All you would need to do is check your name is there.



Question 4. Do you want offices like benefits to give us your name for the voting register?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Everyone in a house registering together



Before, 1 person in a house could **register** everyone who lived there. But this was changed.



Sometimes it is easier to have everyone living in a house **registering** on 1 form.



Everyone would need to sign the form in some way.



This means that people who at the moment are not **registered** to vote will be.



It is a good way for landlords or care homes.



Question 5. Do you want everyone in a house to register on the same form?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

The way we vote

Polling stations



We have used **polling stations** and marking your vote with an **X** for many years.



A **Polling station** is the building where you go to vote. It is usually somewhere like a school or community centre.



We need to think about other ways to vote.



Perhaps more people will vote if we use other ways.



Most people use computers or smart phones now. Especially young people.



Perhaps we need to think how we can use them to vote.



We need to make sure it is safe to do this.



No-one must be able to mess about with voting.



Question 6. Do we need to try other ways to vote?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Everyone posting their vote



You would get your voting papers in the post.



There will be an envelope with postage to send your vote back.



This has been tried and more people voted this way.



It costs money to post everything but we will save on **polling stations** and staff.



We will make it against the law to use someone else's postal vote.



Question 7. Do you want to post your vote for council elections?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Voting on our computer



We would need computers with a touch screen at all **polling stations**.



We need to make sure your vote is done in private. Staff can help if you are not sure what to do. They must make sure no one tells you how to vote.



This will save money on counting the votes.



We will still need a place with someone who says how many votes everyone got.



Question 8. Do you want to vote using our computer?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Voting on your computer or smart phone.



You would have a code, like you need for your bank card. This will make sure only you can use your vote.



We think more people will vote using this way.



Question 9. Do you want to vote using your own computer or Smart phone?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Using other places for polling stations

We might use places like:



- supermarkets



- pubs



- leisure centres



- railway stations.

Places that people visit every day.



There would be private places to vote. And it must be easy for everyone to use.



Question 10. Do you want to use other places as a polling station to vote?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Standing for election



People who stand for election are called **candidates**.



Sometimes **candidates** can get bad abuse. They are called names and attacked.



Candidates have to put their home address on their papers and everyone can see this. This can make them feel unsafe.



We think there needs to be a way to contact them. But this can be an email address or something from social media like Facebook or Twitter.



Question 11. Do you think we can take the home address off everything for a person who is standing for election?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

What candidates think



It is important you know what each **candidate** believes in and what they want to happen.



Each **candidate** can be asked to write this down in a way that is easy to understand.



What each **candidate** writes can be collected together and put on the internet.



Question 12. Do you think each candidate needs to write down what they believe in and what they want to happen? Then all of this is put on 1 website?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐

Political parties



A **political party** is a group who agree how to make life better for people. They come together and have a **candidate** for an election. In Wales political parties include:

- Plaid Cymru
- Labour
- Conservatives
- UKIP
- Liberal Democrats



Some **candidates** do not belong to a **political party**. They are independent.



Candidates must say which **political party** they are from or that they are independent.



Question 13 Do you think candidates need to say what political party they stand for?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not sure ☐



Thank you for answering our questions. Please send your answers to:



Local Government Democracy
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ



RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk



You must send us your answers by
10 October 2017.

Hard words

Candidate

A candidate is a person who stands for election as an AM, MP or councillor.

Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is a group of countries that the UK used to rule. Such as Jamaica and India.

European Union / EU

The European Union is a group of countries whose governments work together. It is often called the EU.

Polling station

A Polling station is the building where you go to vote. It is usually somewhere like a school or community centre.

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Register to vote

This is when you have your name on a list of people allowed to vote.

Voting register

This is a list of people who can vote.