



Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

Report to: Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board
Meeting on: 21 August 2015
Subject: Electoral Registration Report
Author: Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

1.0 Introduction

This report provides an update on electoral registration matters to the members and is intended to keep members informed of current activities and issues facing the Board.

2.0 Individual Electoral Registration

It has been announced that the Transition Phase of IER will come to an end on 1st December this year (see appended letter from the Minister). This will mean that any unconfirmed electors who were retained during the transition phase will be removed. The numbers of unconfirmed electors on 1st August at the start of the Annual Canvass were:

Council Area	Unconfirmed Electors	Unconfirmed Electors in Residential Establishments	Total Unconfirmed Electors
East Renfrewshire	1,713	196	1,909
Inverclyde	1,632	245	1,877
Renfrewshire	3,347	278	3,625
Total	6,692	719	7,411

At present, unconfirmed electors remain on the Register and are able to vote. They are prevented from having any absent vote facility unless they register under IER.

These electors will be issued with a further Invitation to Register as part of the annual canvass and a tailored correspondence highlighting their removal from the Register if they do not respond. Those unconfirmed electors who are registered within Residential Establishments will be treated differently – a member of staff will make direct contact with the Residential Establishment

3.0 Annual Canvass

The 2015 Annual Canvass began in earnest with the issue of Household Enquiry Forms during the week beginning 3rd August. Royal Mail would have been delivering over several days during that week.

Electors have a number of options on receipt of forms:

- Register online using the Government Digital Service,
- Notify the ERO of “Changes” and “No Changes” via the Form and return by Post,
- Submit notification of “Changes” and “No Changes” by Telephone, Text or Internet,
- Visit or call the Registration Office if assistance is required.

A short term issue was discovered very early in the process. This resulted from the security code format being out of step with the agreed format as printed on the Forms. This matter was rectified within two hours.

The initial phase will run to 25th August after which, First Reminder Forms will be posted. Thereafter, we will begin the Door-to-Door canvass which will be conducted in the now routine manner.

The Register will be published on 1st December and any electors who were carried forward through IER Transition will be removed from the Registers.

5.0 Rolling Registration

This is the process for maintaining the Registers between Annual Canvasses and, this year has been in operation since March with updates published from April, including supplementary updates associated with the General Elections. A summary of the changes made is appended.

6.0 “Write-out” to Electors regarding Rejected Absent Votes

The first such exercise was carried out at this time in 2014, following the European Elections, when I wrote to every one of the individual electors whose Absent Vote had been rejected to explain that this had happened and to offer the opportunity to supply a fresh Postal Vote Application.

This applied to a very small number of Absent Voters and their vote was typically due to incorrect date-of-birth, printing rather than signing or signing the wrong form (husband/wife or father/son).

The UK Government decided that this should be repeated following the General Election and the following numbers were involved.

A summary of the impact:

Council Area	Total Absent Voters	Total Rejection Letters Issued	Total of Absent Vote Deletions (31 July)
East Renfrewshire	14,288	334	74
Inverclyde	12,494	251	62
Renfrewshire	25,928	240	68
Total	52,710	825	204

7. Recommendations/...

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- i. The Board notes the contents of this report.

Alasdair MacTaggart
Assessor & ERO
12th August 2015

For further information please contact Alasdair MacTaggart on 0141-618-5900 or via email at alasdair.mactaggart@renfrewshire-vjb.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Rolling Registration.

The table on the following page details the number of changes that have been made via monthly updates during the currency of the current Electoral Register.

Information relating to Rolling Registration changes comes from a variety of sources and we rely heavily on the continuing flow of information to ensure changes are effected as quickly as possible. The main sources, apart from electors are Councils, Landlords and Registers of Scotland. Our targeted activity in respect on unconfirmed electors has had an effect on the changes in electorate since June.

Appendix 1: Rolling Registration changes by local authority area

Renfrewshire Council	Electors		Alterations to Existing Electors				Electorate Change
	Additions	Deletions	Address Changes	Maturity Date	Name Changes	Changes to Opts-in/out	
01-Apr-14	728	436	3	1	40	146	292
09-Apr-14	2,438	1,154	1	2	80	172	1,284
16-Apr-14	386	201	0	1	10	15	185
29-Apr-14	3,091	552	0	4	43	203	2,539
01-Jun-15	618	1,257	0	0	12	20	-639
01-Jul-14	315	981	2	0	20	32	-666
01-Aug-14	345	983	21	1	34	99	-638
Total for Renfrewshire	7,921	5,564	27	9	239	687	2,357

East Renfrewshire Council	Electors		Alterations to Existing Electors				Electorate Change
	Additions	Deletions	Address Changes	Maturity Date Changes	Name Changes	Changes to Opts-in/out	
01-Apr-14	301	207	0	0	27	78	94
09-Apr-14	1,088	614	0	1	41	103	474
16-Apr-14	143	91	9	0	6	16	52
29-Apr-14	1,489	306	0	0	17	63	1,183
01-Jun-15	220	626	3	0	10	10	-406
01-Jul-14	121	493	6	0	7	12	-372
01-Aug-14	159	485	50	1	21	70	-326
Total for East Renfrewshire	3,521	2,822	68	2	129	352	699

Inverclyde Council	Electors		Alterations to Existing Electors				Electorate Change
	Additions	Deletions	Address Changes	Maturity Date Changes	Name Changes	Changes to Opts-in/out	
01-Apr-14	380	208	0	0	26	88	172
09-Apr-14	991	544	0	2	41	75	447
16-Apr-14	161	67	0	1	3	14	94
29-Apr-14	1,484	263	1	0	16	59	1,221
01-Jun-15	279	605	4	1	6	27	-326
01-Jul-14	130	428	0	0	4	60	-298
01-Aug-14	136	518	2	0	18	53	-382
Total for Inverclyde	3,561	2,633	7	4	114	376	928

Joint Board in Total	Electors		Alterations to Existing Electors				Electorate Change
	Additions	Deletions	Address Changes	Maturity Date	Name Changes	Changes to Opts-in/out	
01-Apr-14	1,409	851	3	1	93	312	558
09-Apr-14	4,517	2,312	1	5	162	350	2,205
16-Apr-14	690	359	9	2	19	45	331
29-Apr-14	6,064	1,121	1	4	76	325	4,943
01-Jun-15	1,117	2,488	7	1	28	57	-1,371
01-Jul-14	566	1,902	8	0	31	104	-1,336
01-Aug-14	640	1,986	73	2	73	222	-1,346
Total for Joint Board	15,003	11,019	102	15	482	1,415	3,984

Appendix 2: Ministerial Notification of end of IER Transition

Written Ministerial Statement – John Penrose MP

Title: Individual Electoral Registration

I am today laying before Parliament the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (Transitional Provisions) Order 2015, which will end the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in December 2015.

The Electoral Commission has recommended that the transition to IER should end in December 2016. The Government is concerned that by retaining “carry forward” electors (those who have not yet registered under the new system of Individual Electoral Registration) beyond December this year, this will pose an unacceptable risk to the accuracy of the register. Since the registers published by 1 December 2015 will be used for the Parliamentary Boundary Review and then the elections in May 2016, retaining carry forward electors risks having an unknown number of redundant entries on the registers, which would distort the results of the Boundary Review, increase the risk of electoral fraud, and potentially compromise the integrity of those elections.

The Government does not agree that we should be making a choice between completeness and accuracy, given the importance of both elements in delivering a fair democratic system which commands the confidence and respect of voters. We need to be more ambitious. We can and should aim to achieve both, which is why the Government believes it is crucial that the registers used to conduct the Parliamentary boundary review and for next year’s elections are as complete and as accurate as they can possibly be.

The remaining “carry-forward” group of electors is already only a third of its original size and by December they will have been contacted at least 9 times to encourage them to register individually. In addition to this, I am pleased to announce that up to £3 million of additional funding is being made available for all Electoral Registration Officers in Great Britain to target their non IER registered carry forward electors.

This funding will be targeted primarily at those authorities which have more than five per cent of their register consisting of carry forward electors. All authorities however will be entitled to bid for funding, if they feel they need to take additional steps to target this group of electors.