



AEA statement in response to the joint Law Commissions' report on electoral law

We welcome today's report from the Law Commission and Scottish Law Commission which we fully support and agree that electoral law is out of date and fragmented.

Over recent years, we have repeatedly stated that modern elections cannot continue to be run on multiple acts bolted on to one hundred year old legislation. We fully support this report's recommendation for a single, consistent legislative framework and that there should be, as far as possible, a general and consistent set of rules for all elections.

The recommendations for reforming electoral administration are also welcomed, many of which we have raised in post-election reports . We would particularly support moves to:

- Clearly and simply set out the law on residence for electoral registration in primary legislation, with guidance to help registration officers make consistent decisions.
- Standardise absent voting application forms
- Create a single set of candidate nomination papers to replace the current mixture of forms, allowing postal and electronic submission, not just hand-delivery
- Give returning officers sole responsibility for the designation and review of polling districts instead of councils
- Allow returning officers to adjourn a poll in the case of an emergency affecting a significant number of voters.

We strongly urge the UK and devolved governments to progress the recommendations outlined in this report as soon as practicable, and will work closely with the Law Commissions and other key stakeholders to support this.

17 March 2020