



News Release

Date: 6 January 2016

Annual update of electoral register

All households are being asked to confirm their details for the Island's electoral register in a comprehensive update which will help to keep the register accurate ahead of this year's local authority and House of Keys elections.

The annual 'canvass' process is in line with the requirements of the Registration of Electors Act 2006. Registration forms are being delivered this week and must be returned by February 1.

Electoral Registration Officer Della Fletcher explained: 'An accurate electoral register is important for the integrity of the democratic process. Over time people change address and the register becomes increasingly unreliable. After a year has passed we do not know if people are still living at the address at which they are registered.

'In the absence of a system to monitor the movements of all individual citizens, the only way to maintain an accurate register is to make the voter responsible for keeping their entry alive and up to date. That is why we have the annual canvass giving every household the opportunity to confirm details for the register and secure the right to vote.'

Registration forms have been sent to all households currently listed on the electoral register, and to 'The Occupier' at properties with no registered electors. Those who fail to respond will be contacted subsequently as the Electoral Registration Officer is obliged to ensure that the information on the register is accurate. Therefore, it may be necessary to

take steps to correct inaccuracies, which could result in a person's removal from the register.

Mrs Fletcher said good progress had been made tidying up the electoral register to make it more reliable and accurate than it had been for several years.

But she added: 'There is no doubt that the Island's electoral legislation is in need of modernisation, and a root and branch review has already been set in motion. This is a huge and complex issue, however, and a new system cannot be developed until after this year's general election.'

Ends

Word count: 330

Website: <http://www.gov.im/co/>

Twitter: [@IOMGovernment](https://twitter.com/IOMGovernment)

Media enquiries: Alistair Ramsay 01624 686243

NOTES for Editors

Residents cannot stand or vote in this year's House of Keys general election or local authority elections unless they are on the electoral register. Being unregistered can also affect a person's credit reference history and excludes them from jury service. Being on the register does not mean you have to vote but it is a legal requirement to return the completed form when asked to do so by the Electoral Registration Officer.

In addition to the annual canvass the electoral register is also updated on a quarterly basis giving residents the opportunity to join the register throughout the year. As at January 1 2016 there were a total of 49,149 electors on the register.

The Registration of Electors Act 2006 provides for fines of up to £1,000 for persons who fail, without reasonable excuse, to provide the information required by the Electoral

Registration Officer or who provide false information. The existence of this potential penalty is made clear on the registration forms.

The forms are accompanied by a leaflet encouraging people to register and also highlighting the dates and registration deadlines for this year's local authority and House of Keys elections.

Local authority elections take place across the Island on April 28. The last opportunity to register in order to vote or stand as a candidate is on March 18.

The House of Keys general election is on September 22. The last opportunity to register in order to stand as a candidate is June 17, and the last opportunity to register in order to vote is September 1.

End of notes