

UK PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION – 8th JUNE, 2017

ARRANGEMENTS IN FORCE AT THE POLL

1. In this note, the term “polling place” includes not only the building in which polling takes place, **but also ancillary buildings, the playground or other grounds around the building, and also includes all walls, railings, fences etc, around the boundary of the building.** A “polling station” is a room or part of a room in which polling for a particular section of the register takes place.
2. All candidates, election agents and polling agents must have been notified of the requirement of secrecy in terms of Section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and must hold the appropriate admission cards or similar authority from the Returning Officer, otherwise admission to the polling place **will not be permitted.**
3. The fixing of bills or other materials to or against any part of the polling place is **NOT** allowed under any circumstances. Candidates should note (a) that the local authority has not approved the fixing of material to any property in its ownership and (b) the statutory restrictions on “flyposting”.
4. Campaigning, canvassing, the influencing of voters or the offering of literature within the polling place are strictly **prohibited.** Electors must be able quietly and privately to cast their vote free of any intimidation or obstruction and to enter the surrounding area in the same manner. The secrecy of the ballot will be respected. Any advertising within a polling place is forbidden.
5. Candidates, election agents and polling agents (at stations for which they have been appointed) shall be allowed into the polling station for the purposes prescribed by law. Polling agents seeking to check the identity of voters will only be allowed to do so within the polling place where such arrangements have customarily been the practice and if the Presiding Officer is satisfied that there is no inconvenience or obstruction to voters. **Tellers must remain outside a polling place.** They may ask a voter his/her name or electoral number, provided such enquiries are made **after** the voter leaves the polling station and on the understanding that a voter may refuse to give such information. On no account must the voter be asked the way he/she has cast their vote. Tellers will be expected to wear a coloured rosette of a reasonable size or similar lapel item, as this assists electors by making it clear that they are party workers and not electoral officials. They must not, however, wear, carry or display any headwear, footwear or apparel that carries any writing, picture or sign relating to any candidate or political party, apart from a rosette (or similar item).
6. There is no restriction on the wearing of rosettes, lapel stickers or badges by candidates or election agents within a polling place, although any visit will be expected to be of reasonably short duration. Polling agents situated within a polling station for the purposes of detecting personation are **not** permitted to display any means of identifying the party or candidate which they represent but those only making a brief visit to a polling station are permitted to wear rosettes, lapel stickers, badges or similar items. Polling agents *may* be permitted to situate themselves within the grounds of a polling place, **only where such arrangement has customarily been the practice AND where**

the No. 1 Presiding Officer is satisfied that there is no inconvenience or obstruction to voters. You should note that this is not an absolute right. It is an essential requirement, however, that any polling agents who are permitted within the polling place **will not stand in the direct path of voters entering/leaving the building, will not stand in front of the main door to the building and must not in any way impede voters' free access to the building.** Those polling agents may wear a rosette, lapel sticker, badge or similar item. In such an instance, permission to be situated within the grounds of a polling place does **not** extend to being stationed within the building itself unless all identifying items are first removed.

7. No more than one polling agent shall be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same candidate or political party. The principal function of a polling agent is to detect any offences of personation in the polling station and, for this purpose, he or she has the right to be present in the allotted polling station(s) for the duration of polling and to have the statutory questions asked of a voter as to his/her identity. The polling agent should be situated in such a position that he/she can see the voter and hear his/her name and address but in no circumstances should be able to ascertain the way in which a vote was cast or see the serial number of the issued ballot paper. It will be permissible for polling staff to indicate to polling agents how many votes have been cast at any point during polling hours but never to reveal whether an individual voter has cast their vote.
8. A duty is placed on the No. 1 Presiding Officer by the Returning Officer to see that information for voters as to the station in which each voter has to vote is clearly displayed at the entrance to the polling place. The No.1 Presiding Officer will ensure that signs and notices are in place to provide information for voters, namely: a) 'Guidance for voters' displayed inside the polling station, b) 'Information on how to vote' displayed in the polling booth and c) a large ballot paper poster displayed inside the polling station and an enlarged hand-held copy marked 'sample'. No posters or other material that might be construed as supporting the views of any candidate or political party involved in the election should be displayed in or on the premises.
9. Vehicles are not normally allowed within the polling place gates, nor immediately outside the entrance or within a reasonable distance of the entrance, unless for reasons of safety or distance from the street. If admitted for these reasons, vehicles displaying campaign material must not remain within the polling place any longer than necessary to allow its occupants to vote (with the exception of cars occupied by a candidate or election agent for the duration of his/her visit to that polling place for electoral purposes). If, however, a vehicle bringing a person with a disability to the polling place has affixed to it a candidate or party's campaign material, then the vehicle should be allowed to remain only for as long as it takes the voter to register his/her vote. The No. 1 Presiding Officer has discretion where the local conditions give rise to doubt.
10. The taking of photographs within a polling place is prohibited.
11. The Presiding Officer at the location in question will seek to resolve any dispute relating to a matter contained within these rules. Candidates and their representatives will be expected to accept the decision of the Presiding Officer on any relevant matter arising. Any further question regarding the

conduct of the poll may be referred to the Returning Officer, or such depute as he may appoint for this purpose.

JIM SAVEGE
Returning Officer