



Our Home Our Vote Residence-Based Voting Campaign

Council's Model Motion

Councillors are encouraged to amend the model motion as applicable to their local area and, where appropriate, include specific commitments.

Council meeting dd/mm/yyyy

Council Motion – Elections Bill

Proposed by Cllr X

Seconded by Cllr Y

The Council notes

The Elections Bill is currently being debated in Westminster. It reached the House of Lords on the 23rd of February.

The Bill will introduce a number of measures which will impact electors and local authorities, including mandatory photographic voter ID, overseas voting, and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.

In 2019, people born outside the UK made up an estimated [14% of the UK's population](#). They live, work, study, make use of public services, and call the UK their home. Many of our foreign-born residents from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, the approximate [1.4 million foreign residents](#) born in non-EU and non-Commonwealth countries cannot vote in our elections.

Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.

A poll conducted by Number Cruncher showed that [63% of people agree that all residents with lawful status in the UK should have the right to vote in local elections in England and Northern Ireland](#).

The Council welcomes

That the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained.

That [the London Assembly passed a motion in support of residence-based voting rights on the 11th of November 2021](#) and that various organisations in the democracy and immigration sector have [signed a joint statement in support](#) of the OurHomeOurVote campaign for residence-based voting rights.

The Council expresses concern that

EU citizens who enter the UK from 2021 and are not covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, or by 'bilateral treaties' covering voting rights, will not have voting and candidacy rights in local elections from 2022. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.

We fear this complexity in voting eligibility will cause confusion and will reduce voter turnout in local elections.

The Council calls on the Government to

Amend the Elections Bill to extend local election voting rights in England and Northern Ireland to all qualifying foreign nationals in line with voting rights in Scotland and Wales.

The Council will commit to

Increasing its efforts to encourage eligible voters who are not registered to vote to register in advance of elections in May 2022. For instance, but not limited to, including information about voter registration and eligibility in council tax letters, council social media communications, local magazines, and street stalls.

Ask the Leader of the Council to write to Kemi Badenoch MP, the Minister of State (Minister for Levelling Up Communities), requesting that the franchise be extended to all residents in local elections in England and Northern Ireland

London Focus:

The Council notes

The Elections Bill is currently being debated in Westminster. It reached the House of Lords on the 23rd of February.

The Bill will introduce a number of measures which will impact electors and local authorities including mandatory photographic voter ID, overseas voting, and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.

In London, [3,317,000, or 37% of our residents were born abroad](#), with 12% of Londoners being from the EU. They live, work, study, make use of public services,

and call London their home. Many of our foreign-born residents from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, the approximate [377,000 residents](#) foreign residents born in non-EU and non-Commonwealth countries cannot vote in our elections.

Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.

A poll conducted by Number Cruncher showed that [63% of people agree that all residents with lawful status in the UK should have the right to vote in local elections in England and Northern Ireland.](#)

The Council welcomes

That 37% of Londoners are born outside of the UK and that the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained.

That [the London Assembly passed a motion in support of residence-based voting rights on the 11th of November 2021](#) and that various organisations in the democracy and immigration sector have [signed a joint statement in support](#) of the OurHomeOurVote campaign for residence-based voting rights.

The Council expresses concern that

EU citizens who enter the UK from 2021 and are not covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, or by 'bilateral treaties' covering voting rights, will not have voting and candidacy rights in local elections from 2022. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.

We fear this complexity in voting eligibility will cause confusion and will reduce voter turnout in London elections, undermining the effectiveness of projects such as London Voter Registration Week working to improve voter registration.

The Council calls on the Government to

Amend the Elections Bill to extend local election voting rights in England and Northern Ireland to all qualifying foreign nationals in line with voting rights in Scotland and Wales.

The Council will commit to

Increasing its efforts to encourage eligible voters who are not registered to vote to register in advance of elections in May 2022. For instance, but not limited to, including information about voter registration and eligibility in council tax letters, council social media communications, local magazines, and street stalls.

Ask the Leader of the Council to write to Kemi Badenoch MP, the Minister of State (Minister for Levelling Up Communities), requesting that the franchise be extended to all residents in local elections in England and Northern Ireland.