



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO HEADS OF SERVICE

Response by Head of Service:

1. Has Powys CC analysed the last annual household canvass and compared the results on a ward by ward basis to the previous year's canvass?

The annual Canvass has dramatically changed with the canvass reform programme introduced by the Cabinet Office in 2020. Instead of requiring every household to return a form to confirm information, the register is data matched with the DWP and with local data sets, which then determines which type of correspondence the household get. Where we understand no change is required no response is required allowing us to target limited resources to those wards where there has been a change.

2. Has Powys CC analysed the results of the last annual canvass to see which areas have high numbers of people moving in and out of the area, and used that analysis to drive the pattern of your voter registration activities?

No, unfortunately most of time since the 2019 canvass has been taken up by election planning, administration and processing all the registration applications generated as a result of the HNL in February.

3. Does Powys CC maintain a database of electors who have confirmed their electoral registration details via the "No Change" method, and will it be using this database to ensure people who have been previously registered but haven't been re-registered are contacted?

I am not sure I fully understand your question. We do not maintain a specific database but we can tell which and how properties responded previously. If I understand the purpose of your question, we need to clarify that an elector does not get removed automatically from the register just because they have not responded or we have been unable to make contact to the property. We try and manually check a property against council tax record.

4. In addition to your Council Tax, Housing Tenancy and Benefits databases, are there any additional databases that Powys CC is using to match elector data for electoral registration purposes? If not, are there additional databases that Powys CC could be using for this purpose?

The problem with data sets is their quality and accuracy, for example most departments hold records but do not have to verify the individual for their purposes thereby making them unviable for our purpose.

5. Does Powys CC have a strategy for communicating with ethnic minority communities, and in particular those who don't use English as a first language?

Are there translated versions of electoral registration leaflets and forms available for these residents?

No, we do not. Registration forms are available in 25 different languages but from previous experience we have received no demand for them and a large number of registration applications come through the national registration website. Our IVR (online/telephone) response service is available in more languages but again from experience in previous years demand was negligible even in Welsh, this year 14,665 responses were made in English and 12 in Welsh.

6. What is Powys CCs communication strategy for encouraging residents to register to vote?

We took our lead from the Electoral Commission and Senedd and made the decision, rightly or wrongly, that in the Covid environment, with the uncertainty and worry surrounding that for some of our residents that registration was not a main event and did not want to add to their anxieties. We gave electors as many options as we could for response, telephone, web. Every property received either a letter or form by post, and where a response was needed we gave them a reply envelope if they were unable to respond by other means. Our decision was also guided by our need to let every household know about the changes to franchise and a traditional post out canvass allowed us to leaflet every property in the Authority.

7. Does Powys CC prompt local residents with electoral registration reminders at other points of contact with the council, such as when residents apply for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit or any other council service?

We did not have such arrangements in place but we do receive and use movers records from council tax to write out and prompt new residents to register.

8. Does Powys CC have a specific strategy for residents in the private rented sector and residents in houses of multiple occupation? Are local private sector landlords being liaised with to ensure electoral registration information is included in tenancy packs and other communications they have with their tenants?

No, we do not. We have in the past with limited success and interest from private landlords.

9. Are council officers present at citizenship ceremonies to encourage newly eligible electors to register to vote straight away?

Our Registrar is very proactive and an individual registration forms are included in the pack for new citizens.

10. Will officers from Powys CC be visiting schools and colleges in the area to encourage over 16s to register to vote and over 14s to register as attainners (people who will soon turn 16) on the electoral register?

The Covid environment did not allow officers to visit schools and colleges. However, the Nation Children's Rights Day (November 20th 2020) was utilised to "launch" the right to vote campaign with promotion materials shared with all schools and campuses in Powys and various organisations such as Credu, Urdd, Young Farmers, Cadets, Pavo etc. An online campaign using the Senedd resources was promoted through social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram and also used more traditional platforms such as newspaper ads in County Times, Brecon and Radnor and My Town. Emails were sent to schools and colleges and offering bespoke informative sessions about the Senedd and the right to vote. A prize draw was used to promote the campaign and encourage young people to register.

Outreach activities were undertaken where possible in accordance with Covid restrictions. Mid Youth Powys Theatre were commissioned to produce a short video 'Unmute yourself' which was promoted online and used as a tool to encourage young people to register to vote.

<https://youtu.be/7b2dswUESWU>

<https://youtu.be/F-Qkllgxsuk>