

## Westmorland & Furness Residents Encouraged to Confirm Voter Status Ahead of Elections

July 12, 2025

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Residents of Westmorland and Furness are being urged to check their voter registration details as part of an annual electoral canvass, ensuring they retain their democratic voice ahead of key local and national elections. Those who have recently moved house are especially at risk of falling off the register and missing their opportunity to vote.

The local authority has launched its yearly campaign to maintain an accurate and up-to-date electoral roll. The canvass is a statutory process conducted by councils across the United Kingdom (UK) to confirm who should be registered at each household. Linda Jones, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer at Westmorland and Furness Council, stressed the importance of engaging with any council communications: “It’s vital residents check their information to make sure they remain eligible to vote. Don’t lose your say,” she said.

The Electoral Commission has revealed that only 36 percent of individuals who have moved within the past year are correctly registered to vote, compared to 92 percent of long-term residents. This gap in registration puts recent movers at particular risk of disenfranchisement, especially in rural areas where population movement may be less visible. Jackie Killeen, Director of Electoral Administration and Regulation at the Electoral Commission, also highlighted the need for vigilance: “Residents should look out for council correspondence, by post or email, and respond promptly,” she advised.

The appeal comes at a time when local democratic processes are facing logistical and financial challenges. Westmorland and Furness Council, alongside Cumberland Council, has asked the UK Government to delay the region’s first mayoral election until May 2027. The councils argue this would align it with other local elections, improve turnout, and save approximately £1 million in public funds, a sensible approach in a time of budgetary pressure.

From a centre-right perspective, ensuring the integrity of the electoral register is a fundamental element of a functioning democracy. Civic responsibility should not be taken lightly, and neither should the

taxpayer's pound. The move to streamline elections and prevent duplicated costs is both fiscally responsible and democratically sound.

Residents can check or update their registration details at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) or by contacting the local electoral services team. In an era of political noise and shifting priorities, protecting the right to vote is a matter of principle, and one that begins with simply checking that your name is still on the list.