

# 2022 Scottish local government elections: Supporting disabled voters

**March 2022**

This document has been created to support Returning Officers, Electoral Registration Officers, and their teams to ensure disabled voters can participate in the local government elections.

The Electoral Commission will be reporting on the steps that Returning Officers took to support disabled people to participate in the poll in their post-election report.

## Information resources for disabled voters

### Voting guides

The Electoral Commission has published guides with information on how to register, how to apply for a postal or proxy vote, and how to complete the ballot paper in [British Sign Language \(BSL\)](#), [Easy read and audio](#). Braille and audio CD versions of the voting guide are available on request by calling 0800 3 280 280.

### Guide for blind and partially sighted voters

The Commission has also published a [guide for blind and partially sighted voters](#) in partnership with RNIB Scotland, Sight Scotland and Guide Dogs Scotland, which explains the support voters can expect at the polling place.

### Postcode lookup tool

Voters can use the Commission's [postcode lookup tool](#) to find their polling place and the list of candidates standing in their ward before they go to vote. This is located on the Commission's website, and is compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 AA standard.

## Contact Scotland video relay service

Contact Scotland BSL is a video relay service, providing BSL video interpreting for calls in Scotland. The service is funded by the Scottish Government to enable Deaf people to make free calls to any Scottish services. Public sector organisations can also use the

service to call back the Deaf person if they are registered with Contact Scotland BSL. Find out more at [contactscotland-bsl.org](https://contactscotland-bsl.org).

## Resources to support polling station staff

### Understanding the experiences of disabled voters

A number of videos are available to support polling station staff training.

- [Ken](#), who is blind, shares his experiences of voting using a tactile voting device.
- [Hugh](#), who is visually impaired, talks about how polling station staff can improve the experiences of disabled voters.
- [Charlotte](#), who has a learning disability and William's syndrome, highlights the value of support provided by polling station staff.

### Polling station staff handbook

The Electoral Commission's [handbook for polling station staff](#) includes guidance on assisting disabled voters. The 'Equality issues' section (pp. 22-25) outlines how staff should support disabled voters. The polling station set-up checklist (pp. 47-49) should be completed prior to the poll opening.

### Training slides

Slides 20-22 of the [presentation for the training of polling station staff](#) from the Electoral Commission also cover providing support to disabled voters.

### Polling station accessibility checklist

Those responsible for setting up polling places can also use the Electoral Commission's [polling place accessibility checklist](#), to ensure the process is accessible for everyone voting in person.