

SCOTTISH ELECTIONS (REDUCTION OF VOTING AGE) ACT 2015

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Local authority duty to promote awareness and provide assistance

38. **Section 17(1)(a)** requires each of Scotland’s 32 local authorities to promote awareness of how to register as local government electors for “relevant young people”. This means those young people that are “looked after” by that council (who can be up to the age of 18). Legally, “looked after” children in these circumstances are children that:
- the council is providing living accommodation for because no-one has parental responsibility for the child, the child is lost or abandoned, or the person who had previously been caring for the child cannot provide suitable accommodation or care;
 - the council is required to supervise under a “supervision requirement” of a children’s panel or a sheriff;
 - the council has responsibilities for under a legal order, authorisation or warrant issued, in Scotland, by a children’s hearing or sheriff, or in the rest of the UK, by a court.
39. The “relevant young people” to whom the duties in this section apply also include persons to whom a local authority is providing continuing care or after care under section 26A or section 29 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.
40. **Section 17(1)(b)** requires each council to do things they think are needed to help these “relevant young people” to register to vote in the local government electoral register.