



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JB-PO-27-26

John Griffiths MS
Chair
Local Government and Housing Committee

John.Griffiths@senedd.wales

21 January 2026

Dear John,

On 17 December the Electoral Commission published its [evaluation report](#) of the Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) pilots which took place in Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Newport and Powys earlier last year. The pilots used local data matching to identify eligible electors for the local government register. In three areas electors were notified of an intention to be registered, and added if they did not opt out within a set period. I am very grateful to those authorities for co-producing and delivering these pilots with the Welsh Government.

The evaluation outlines the benefits of the approach piloted, including adding just over 14,500 new electors and 1,500 attainers (14-15 year olds who will be registered once they turn 16) to the local government register.

The evaluation also makes a number of recommendations for the future, including:

- timing the AVR process to align with the annual canvass (the annual check of the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers);
- reducing the length of the 60 day opt-out period;
- improving the efficiency of data matching software; and
- ensuring Electoral Registration Officers have appropriate resources to manage the process.

I issued a [Written Statement](#) on the evaluation on 17 December and I intend to bring forward secondary legislation to progress AVR and with the view to working towards implementation in time for the local elections in 2027. This includes regulations to abolish the edited register for local government elections in Wales, and an order to commence sections 3 and 4 of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act, which I will look to bring forward before the end of this Senedd term.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We will also continue to work with the UK Government, who announced in July their ambition to move towards automated registration. Considering the interaction of reserved and devolved registration processes will be a key part of that.

Overall, I am very pleased with how the pilots were conducted and the insight they have provided. I will consider the Electoral Commission's recommendations in detail over the coming months and continue to engage with electoral stakeholders to develop the most effective model for rolling out AVR across Wales. I would be happy to arrange a briefing for Members on AVR following this work if that would be useful.

This letter is also being copied to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayne Bryant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jayne Bryant AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Lywodraeth Leol a Thai
Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government