

THE ELECTORAL OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

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PRESS RELEASE

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NORTHERN IRELAND SHOWING THE WAY FORWARD ON VOTER REGISTRATION

The individual method of voter registration adopted by the Electoral Office in Northern Ireland is being heralded as the way ahead for the rest of the United Kingdom. Northern Ireland Assistant Chief Electoral Officer, June Butler, put forward the proposals at the annual conference of the Association of Electoral Administrators, held in Reading today.

The conference learned about the benefits of individual voter registration as an alternative to the household registration system still used in England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland individual registration has been in place since the autumn canvass in 2002 when the changes were introduced to comply with the Electoral Fraud (NI) Act 2002.

The Assistant Chief Electoral Officer also explained to delegates, including Harriet Harman, Minister of State for Constitutional Affairs, how the Electoral Office in Northern Ireland combats electoral fraud by using the personal identifiers provided when a person first registers. The verifiers, such as National Insurance Number and date of birth, can later be used to confirm the identity of electors to help prevent multiple registration and to check any subsequent applications for electoral identity cards or applications for postal or proxy votes.

Conference delegates were also told about the high level of accuracy of the Electoral Register in Northern Ireland and of the outreach methods being used to ensure that everyone is included in the annual canvas and has secured their democratic right to vote.