

FAQs on Māori wards for enquiries teams

Background

A recent law change means some local councils are reviewing their arrangements for Māori wards or constituencies.

The Local Government (Electoral Legislation and Māori wards and Māori Constituencies) Amendment Bill was passed on 30 July 2024.

Councils that established a Māori ward after 2021 without polling ratepayers will have to either hold a poll with the 2025 local elections or disestablish the ward. 45 councils are affected.

What is the Electoral Commission's role in this?

The Electoral Commission is not involved in running or overseeing local body elections or reviewing local body boundaries. We are not involved in decisions on local wards.

Our role in local elections is to keep the electoral rolls up to date and provide councils with electoral roll data when they hold their elections.

I'm on the Māori roll. Which ward will I vote in at the local elections?

If you are on the Māori roll and your local council has a Māori ward or constituency at the time of the 2025 local elections, you will vote for candidates in that ward or constituency.

If you are on the Māori roll and your council does not have a Māori ward or constituency, you will vote in the ward you live in.

I'm on the general roll. Which ward will I vote in?

If you are on the general roll, you will vote for candidates in the general ward you live in.

Can I change rolls?

If you're Māori, you can change rolls at any time except in the three months before a general election or the local elections. You can change from the Māori roll to the general roll, or from the general roll to the Māori roll.

Early next year, the Electoral Commission will write to enrolled voters who have identified themselves as Māori to let them know the deadline for changing rolls before the 2025 local elections.

Where can I find out more information?

If you have questions about wards in your area, please contact your local council or check their website.

A list of local council websites is available here:

<https://www.lgnz.co.nz/local-government-in-nz/councils-in-aotearoa/council-websites-and-maps/>

The Department of Internal Affairs has more information on the law change here:

<https://www.dia.govt.nz/maori-wards>

Clare [redacted] 13/11/2024 4:21 pm



LGNZ and Taituarā have a local elections website up and running now which is handy to point people to if we get enquiries. It includes key - dates and information on Māori wards - AND includes a list of councils running polls!

[Vote Local, Vote 25 | Pōti 25 - Local Elections - New Zealand](#)



Clare [redacted] 8/08/2024 5:18 pm



Here we go - Jarrod can you review these on Friday or Monday to make sure they're suitable for the enquiries team? Once we're happy with them, I'll share them with the wider team as they may also be useful for SEP and Rep Comm.

[Aug 2024 FAQs on Māori wards for enquiries teams.docx](#)



Friday 3:20 pm

Okay all edits to the websites we've done this afternoon are captured here as tracked changes: [2025 10 03 Links on Local Elections Information.docx](#) and if we need to put any back, this will be our guide 😊



Hmmm should we comment since we've been tagged?

Edited

"Kia ora - we love the enthusiasm for local elections, but local councils run their own local elections, so the best place to go if you have any questions is your local council, as they will have the information specific to local elections in your area.

If you want to check your enrolment, or update your details then we can definitely help with that! 😊 "

Jarrod [redacted] 3/09 2:34 pm



Could point people at votelocal or at LGNZ for the list of council websites

I mean we do have some information about local elections so it's not entirely off base

👍 ❤️ 😊 😊 🗨️ 3/09 2:35 pm

yeah I guess I want to make it clear specific info is best from your own council tho

Maybe I'll just DM them and they can decide if they want to update their post.



ok that went well 😊

From: [Leigh Deuchars](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: context
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:13:00 pm
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

The LGNZ and the LGNZ and Taituarā websites are the only websites where you can find a full list of councils and their contact details.

We have included links to the votelocal.co.nz website in previous local elections because it is helpful for voters, especially in the early stages of the local elections when there is not much information available from councils. People often don't know which council area they are in or how to contact their council.

We received a complaint from one member of the public in August. We felt making the information on councils and their contact details easily accessible was important, so we kept the links up at that point.

Now it's been raised again, we have reconsidered and have erred on the side of caution and removed the links. People wanting information on the local elections will need to contact their council or check their voting pack.

Leigh Deuchars (she/ her) | Deputy Chief Executive Strategy, Governance and Development | **Electoral Commission** | **Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri** |
PO Box 3220 | 34-42 Manners Street | Wellington | | [vote.nz](#) | [elections.nz](#)





Re: [Electoral Commission] "Communications" assignment: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

From Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Date Tue 9/2/2025 11:03 AM

To Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Okay, sounds good. I suspect [REDACTED] won't be satisfied with our response ([REDACTED] wants us to remove the link, after all). We might need to think about what we say next.

From: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 11:00 AM

To: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: [Electoral Commission] "Communications" assignment: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Hi Jarrod, I suggest a slight rewrite of the first par – is it clearer? Also adding 'electoral officers' to the second, as that is very handy. Clare

Kia ora [REDACTED]

Local elections are run by local councils, and our role in them is limited to enrolment. We appreciate that there is some confusion about our role which is why we provide links to other sites. The best source of information about any individual local election is the local council's website, but it's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council.

Instead, to help voters who may come to us to seek information about the local elections, we have provided links to votelocal.co.nz, a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government Professionals Aotearoa. This website includes detailed information about the local elections, and contact information for each council and electoral officer. It also lists all of the councils which are holding polls on Māori wards.

We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain. If you have concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, you may contact the administrators of that website.

Ngā mihi

From: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 2 September 2025 10:35 am

To: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Subject: Re: [Electoral Commission] "Communications" assignment: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Hello! Just circulating this again, as we haven't yet gone back to [REDACTED].

I note that there's been a similar complaint in the media about Western Bay of Plenty District Council's posts (which Warwick Lampp says are fine): [Act MP criticises Western Bay of Plenty District Council Māori ward posts – Te Ao Māori News](#)



[Act MP criticises Western Bay of Plenty District Council Māori ward posts – Te Ao Māori News - teaonews.co.nz](#)

Act MP Cameron Luxton claims the Western Bay of Plenty District Council is campaigning on social media to keep its Māori ward.

www.teaonews.co.nz

Let me know what you think.

J

From: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 10:19 AM

To: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Subject: Fw: [Electoral Commission] "Communications" assignment: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

How about something like:

Kia ora [REDACTED]

Local elections are run by local councils, and our role in them is limited to enrolment. However we appreciate that there is some confusion about our role - and although the best source of information about any individual local election is a local council's website, it's impractical for us to provide information about every single one of these elections or contact information for every council.

Instead, to help voters who may come to us to seek information about the local elections, we have provided links to votelocal.co.nz, a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government Professionals Aotearoa. This website includes detailed information about the local elections, and contact information for each council. It also lists all of the councils which are holding polls on Māori wards.

We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain. If you have concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, you may contact the administrators of that website.

Ngā mihi

From: Support <enquiries@vote.nz>

Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 9:23 AM

To: Grace Chiang <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; Jarrod [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>;
Clare [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; Jessie [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>;
Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; Hanna [REDACTED]
<[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; Grace [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>

Subject: [Electoral Commission] "Communications" assignment: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

##- Please type your reply above this line -##



This ticket ([#159298](#)) has been assigned to group 'Communications', of which you are a member.

Jarrold [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:23 GMT+12

Private note

I think the complaint is for us, unfortunately! His complaint is that we have provided a link that he believes isn't neutral. I will discuss a response with the team.

Matthew [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:03 GMT+12

Private note

Removing complaint tag as it's not for us

[REDACTED]

Aug 27, 2025, 07:28 GMT+12

We flagged this comment because the From and Reply-to in the messages don't match.
[Learn more](#) about Reply-to addresses

Name: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

From site: elections.nz

Subject: Election advertising

Type: Complaint

Message:

I notice your webpage <https://vote.nz/local-elections/about/local-elections-2025/> contains a link 'About Māori wards and constituencies' which links to <https://www.votelocal.co.nz/maori-wards-and-constituencies/>. This page acknowledges that this issue 'has sparked differing opinions within communities'. However it then gives only reasons why Māori wards provide 'an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori' and 'guarantee Māori representation on a local authority and contribute to Māori participation in council decision-making'. The information is entirely advocating in support of Māori wards and makes no attempt to address any reasons why Māori wards should not be supported. Plainly, information provided by the Electoral Commission, should be either neutral, or at least balanced; not advocating for one particular viewpoint. This link needs to be taken down immediately. Please contact me regarding it.

Need help?

Get in touch with us and we'll help you find what you're looking for.

[Contact us](#) →





You are an agent. Add a comment by replying to this email or [view ticket in Zendesk Support](#).

Ticket # 159298
Status Open
Requester [REDACTED]
CCs -
Followers -
Group Communications
Assignee Hanna [REDACTED]
Priority Urgent
Type Question
Channel By Mail

This email is a service from Electoral Commission. Delivered by [Zendesk](#)

[ZYW0LN-6WK0M]Ticket-Id:159298Account-Subdomain:ecsupport

From: Hanna [REDACTED]
To: Clare [REDACTED], Suzanne Knight-Tirau
Subject: FW: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 1:41:42 pm
Importance: High

From: Support <enquiries@vote.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 1 October 2025 10:52 am
Cc: Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Subject: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]
Importance: High

##- Please type your reply above this line -##



You are a follower on this request (159298). Reply to this email to add a comment to the request.

[Click here to view the ticket](#)

Bindi [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Oct 1, 2025, 10:51 GMT+13

Request [#163239](#) "Escalation to EC : Electoral Com..." was closed and merged into this request. Last comment in request [#163239](#):

To Whom it May Concern,

Please be advised we have received the following enquiry which requires escalation:

**** Escalation Type:**** Electoral Commission

TelnetID: 15617111

First Name: [REDACTED]

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Nature of Enquiry:

Would like to make a complaint

Believes our website is linking to information that is bias, don't think it's appropriate to link votelocal.co.nz.

Jarrold [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Sep 25, 2025, 14:43 GMT+12

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

Thank you for your feedback. We have nothing further to add to our previous response.

We won't be making changes to our website at this time.

Kind regards

Jarrold

-

[REDACTED]

Sep 25, 2025, 11:42 GMT+12

Jarrold, response required ASAP.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 2 September 2025 11:42 am

To: 'Support' <enquiries@vote.nz>

Cc: 'Cameron.Luxton@parliament.govt.nz' <Cameron.Luxton@parliament.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

To spell it out:

1. You have a responsibility to ensure free and fair elections. Any information you provide needs to be factual and unbiased. Surely you agree?
2. Your site links directly to Taituarā's webpage that promotes a one-sided view of the Maori ward issue—ie it provides voters with opinions on why they should support Maori wards but provides no opinion on the other side. This is not just information that I happen to find somewhere on their website, it is what you link to directly and therefore give credence to.
3. If it is agreed that you should provide only completely unbiased information, you have a responsibility to either (a) take down the link ASAP, (b) provide an alternative link to opinions opposing Maori wards or, (c) amend the information to provide a balanced view of the fors and againsts. I suggest the former is the only viable option.

Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sep 2, 2025, 11:42 GMT+12

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

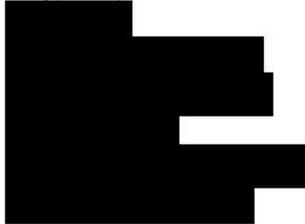
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Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,



Jarrold [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Sep 2, 2025, 11:05 GMT+12

Dear [REDACTED]

Local elections are run by local councils, and our role in them is limited to enrolment. We appreciate that there is some confusion about our role, which is why we provide links to other sites. The best source of information about any individual local election is the local council's website, but it's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council.

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We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain. If you have concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, you may contact the administrators of that website.

Kind regards

Jarrold

-

Jarrold [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:23 GMT+12

Private note

I think the complaint is for us, unfortunately! [REDACTED] complaint is that we have provided a link that [REDACTED] believes isn't neutral. I will discuss a response with the team.

Matthew [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:03 GMT+12

Private note

Removing complaint tag as it's not for us

[REDACTED]

Aug 27, 2025, 07:28 GMT+12

We flagged this comment because the From and Reply-to in the messages don't match. [Learn more](#) about Reply-to addresses

Name: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

From site: elections.nz

Subject: Election advertising

Type: Complaint

Message:

I notice your webpage <https://vote.nz/local-elections/about/local-elections-2025/> contains a link 'About Māori wards and constituencies' which links to <https://www.votelocal.co.nz/maori-wards-and-constituencies/>. This page acknowledges that this issue 'has sparked differing opinions within communities'. However it then gives only reasons why Māori wards provide 'an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori' and 'guarantee Māori representation on a local authority and contribute to Māori participation in council decision-making'. The information is entirely advocating in support of Māori wards and makes no attempt to address any reasons why Māori wards should not be supported. Plainly, information provided by the Electoral Commission, should be either neutral, or at least balanced; not advocating for one particular viewpoint. This link needs to be taken down immediately. Please contact me regarding it.

Need help?

Get in touch with us and we'll help you find what you're looking for.

[CONTACT US](#)



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You are an agent. Add a comment by replying to this email or [view ticket in Zendesk Support](#)

Ticket # 159298
Status Solved
Requester [REDACTED]
CCs Electionenrol
Followers Bindi, Hanna [REDACTED], Jarrod
Group Communications
Assignee Jarrod [REDACTED]
Priority Urgent
Type Question
Channel By Mail

This email is a service from Electoral Commission. Delivered by [Zendesk](#)

From: [Natalie \[REDACTED\]](#)
To: [Clare \[REDACTED\]](#); [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#)
Cc: [Karl Le Quesne](#); [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#); [Anusha Guler](#); [Kristina Temel](#); [Leigh Deuchars](#); [Hanna \[REDACTED\]](#)
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:29:02 pm
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

A couple of minor suggestions for the media response so the response is all together:

MEDIA – our response

We provide information [on our website](#) about how and when to enrol for the local elections. The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so we don't provide information on the conduct of the elections or polls on our own website.

We advise people to contact their own council for more information. To make it easier for people, we provided links to external sites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls.

We have had a very small number of complaints about one of the links. Erring on the side of caution, we have taken the links down.

Natalie

From: [Clare \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:07 pm
To: [Natalie \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Subject: FW: ACT website complaint

From: [Leigh Deuchars](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:05 pm
To: [Clare \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Karl Le Quesne](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Kristina Temel](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Anusha Guler](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Cc: [Jarrod \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Hanna \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint

Have forwarded

From: [Clare \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:04 pm
To: [Leigh Deuchars](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Karl Le Quesne](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Kristina Temel](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Anusha Guler](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Cc: [Jarrod \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>; [Hanna \[REDACTED\]](#) <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint

Hi everyone

Bullet points below.

MEDIA – our response

We provide information [on our website](#) about how and when to enrol for the local elections. The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so for more information on council elections, we advise people to contact their council directly.

To make it easier for people to contact their council, we provided links to external sites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls.

We have had a small number of complaints about the links. Erring on the side of caution, we have taken the links down.

Should the Electoral Commission provide information on Māori ward polls?

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so we don't provide information on the conduct of the elections or polls on our own website.

Media - For the Minister – Leigh to provide

Does the Minister think it is acceptable for the EC to link to materials that appear to be attempting to influence voters?

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections. They receive a lot of questions about the local elections that they can't answer, so to make it easier for people to access information about the elections, they provided links to external sites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls. They have taken those links down. People wanting information on the local elections should contact their local council or check their voting papers.

Should the Electoral Commission provide information on Māori ward polls?

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so they don't provide information on the conduct of the elections or polls on their own website.

Additional background for stakeholders

The LGNZ and the LGNZ and Taituarā websites are the only websites where you can find a full list of councils and their contact details.

We have included links to the votelocal.co.nz website in previous local elections because it is helpful for voters, especially in the early stages of the local elections when there is not much information available from councils. People often don't know which council area they are in or how to contact their council.

We received a complaint from one member of the public in August. We felt making the information on councils and their contact details easily accessible was important, so we kept the links up at that point.

Now it's been raised again, we have reconsidered and have erred on the side of caution and removed the links. People wanting information on the local elections will need to contact their council or check their voting pack.

Clare

From: Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 11:07 am
To: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Kristina Temel <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint
Importance: High

Thanks Clare. I have had OAG contact me with a few questions. Who is the right person in comms for me to get a bit more background from?

From: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 9:37 pm
To: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Kristina Temel <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: ACT website complaint

Thanks Clare

Let's discuss in the morning the substance of the allegation and how we respond.

Karl

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 8:43:58 PM
To: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Subject: ACT website complaint

Kia ora Karl

So you are aware, ACT has made a post on X tonight saying it has complained to the Auditor General about a link we include in our vote.nz information on local elections. This is a link to the LGNZ and Taituarā website which has a list of councils holding Māori ward polls.

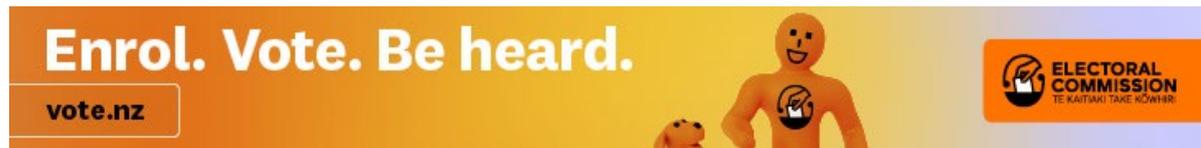
Link to ACT post: [ACT New Zealand on X: "Why is the Electoral Commission promoting pro-Māori wards messages on its website? https://t.co/7f92rKbSUB" / X](https://t.co/7f92rKbSUB)

We will let you know if we have any media enquiries or are tagged and asked for a response on social media. We recently had a public enquiry about this and could provide a similar response if required along these lines:

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections. We provide information [on our website](#) about how and when to enrol for the local elections. For more information on council elections, we advise people to contact their council. It's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council, so we have provided links to external websites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls. The links are clearly marked as external websites, and we are not responsible for the information they hold.

Clare

Clare [REDACTED] (she/her) | Senior Media and Communications Advisor | **Electoral Commission** | **Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri** | PO Box 3220 | Level 4, 34-42 Manners St, Wellington | Phone [REDACTED] | Mobile [REDACTED] | vote.nz | elections.nz





Fw: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

From Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Date Thu 9/25/2025 11:51 AM

To Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

See below for the reply I ran by legal - which amounts to:

"Thank you for your feedback. We won't be making changes to our website at this time."

We could also include "We have nothing further to add to our previous response."

J

From: EC Legal <legal@Elections.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 2:31 PM

To: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Cc: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Hi Jarrod,

That reply looks good.

Cheers
Dean

From: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, 2 September 2025 2:06 pm

To: EC Legal <legal@Elections.govt.nz>

Cc: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Subject: Re: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Kia ora koutou

We've had an enquiry/complaint from someone who is unhappy that we have linked from vote.nz to a page on votelocal.co.nz with information about Māori Wards.

The link in question is: [About Māori wards and constituencies - Vote 25 | Pōti 25](#)

06/10/2025, 14:09

Mail - Jarrod [REDACTED] Outlook

We have responded to [REDACTED] (see below) noting that we are not responsible for the content of websites run by other organisations, and that if he has concerns about the information on that website he should contact the administrators. He is not satisfied with this response, and I note that he has CC:ed Act's Cameron Luxton into his reply.

I'm proposing that rather than engaging with his arguments we respond quite simply with "Thank you for your feedback. We won't be making changes to our website at this time." However we just wanted to run this by you in case you had any concerns with this position, or with us continuing to link to the content above.

Ngā mihi

Jarrold

From: Support <enquiries@vote.nz>

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 11:42 AM

To: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@elections.govt.nz](mailto:[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz)>

Subject: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

##- Please type your reply above this line -##

VOTE NZ An official site of the
New Zealand Electoral Commission

This ticket ([#159298](#)) has been reopened.

[REDACTED]

Sep 2, 2025, 11:42 GMT+12

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

To spell it out:

1. You have a responsibility to ensure free and fair elections. Any information you provide needs to be factual and unbiased. Surely you agree?

2. Your site links directly to Taituarā's webpage that promotes a one-sided view of the Maori ward issue—ie it provides voters with opinions on why they should support Maori wards but provides no opinion on the other side. This is not just information that I happen to find somewhere on their website, it is what you link to directly and therefore give credence to.

3. If it is agreed that you should provide only completely unbiased information, you have a responsibility to either (a) take down the link ASAP, (b) provide an alternative link to opinions opposing Maori wards or, (c) amend the information to provide a balanced view of the fors and againsts. I suggest the former is the only viable option.

Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Jarrod [Redacted] (Electoral Commission)

Sep 2, 2025, 11:05 GMT+12

Dear [Redacted]

Local elections are run by local councils, and our role in them is limited to enrolment. We appreciate that there is some confusion about our role, which is why we provide links to

other sites. The best source of information about any individual local election is the local council's website, but it's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council.

Instead, to help voters who may come to us to seek information about the local elections, we have provided links to votelocal.co.nz, a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government Professionals Aotearoa. This website includes detailed information about the local elections, and contact information for each council and electoral officer. It also lists all of the councils which are holding polls on Māori wards.

We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain. If you have concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, you may contact the administrators of that website.

Kind regards

Jarrod

-

Jarrod [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:23 GMT+12

Private note

I think the complaint is for us, unfortunately! [REDACTED] complaint is that we have provided a link that [REDACTED] believes isn't neutral. I will discuss a response with the team.

Matthew [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:03 GMT+12

Private note

Removing complaint tag as it's not for us

[REDACTED]

Aug 27, 2025, 07:28 GMT+12

We flagged this comment because the From and Reply-to in the messages don't match.
[Learn more](#) about Reply-to addresses

Name: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

From site: elections.nz

Subject: Election advertising

Type: Complaint

Message:

I notice your webpage <https://vote.nz/local-elections/about/local-elections-2025/> contains a link 'About Māori wards and constituencies' which links to <https://www.votelocal.co.nz/maori-wards-and-constituencies/>. This page acknowledges that this issue 'has sparked differing opinions within communities'. However it then gives only reasons why Māori wards provide 'an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori' and 'guarantee Māori representation on a local authority and contribute to Māori participation in council decision-making'. The information is entirely advocating in support of Māori wards and makes no attempt to address any reasons why Māori wards should not be supported. Plainly, information provided by the Electoral Commission, should be either neutral, or at least balanced; not advocating for one particular viewpoint. This link needs to be taken down immediately. Please contact me regarding it.

Need help?

Get in touch with us and we'll help you find what you're looking for.

[Contact us](#) →



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You are an agent. Add a comment by replying to this email or [view ticket in Zendesk Support](#).

Ticket # 159298
Status Open
Requester [REDACTED]
CCs Cameron Luxton
Followers -
Group Communications
Assignee Jarrod [REDACTED]
Priority Urgent
Type Question
Channel By Mail

This email is a service from Electoral Commission. Delivered by [Zendesk](#)

[ZYW0LN-6WK0M]Ticket-Id:159298Account-Subdomain:ecsupport



Fwd: Escalation to EC : Electoral Commission

From Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Date Mon 9/29/2025 10:51 AM
To Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Cc Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Hi all

In response to Friday's email it appears that [REDACTED] has called Telnet - see below.

I need to let Bindi know that this should be merged with the other ticket. Not sure if we go back to [REDACTED] again or not.

Jarrold [REDACTED]

From: Support <enquiries@vote.nz>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 10:46:56 AM
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>
Subject: Escalation to EC : Electoral Commission

##- Please type your reply above this line -##

VOTE NZ An official site of the
New Zealand Electoral Commission

You are a follower on this request (163239). Reply to this email to add an internal note to the request.

[Click here to view the ticket](#)

Bindi [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Sep 29, 2025, 10:46 GMT+13

Private note

[Jarrod \[REDACTED\]](#) would you please be able to assist me with this ticket

Electionenrol

Sep 25, 2025, 16:05 GMT+12

To Whom it May Concern,

Please be advised we have received the following enquiry which requires escalation:

Escalation Type: Electoral Commission

TelnetID: 15617111

First Name: [REDACTED]

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Nature of Enquiry:

Would like to make a complaint

Believes our website is linking to information that is bias, don't think it's appropriate to link votelocal.co.nz.

Need help?

Get in touch with us and we'll help you find what you're looking for.

CONTACT US →



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You are an agent. Add a comment by replying to this email or [view ticket in Zendesk Support](#).

06/10/2025, 14:05

Mail - Jarrod [REDACTED] - Outlook

Ticket # 163239
Status New
Requester Electionenrol
CCs -
Followers Jarrod
Group Enrolment
Assignee -
Priority Urgent
Type Question
Channel By Mail

This email is a service from Electoral Commission. Delivered by [Zendesk](#)

[MNN1Z6-D45N1]Ticket-Id:163239Account-Subdomain:ecsupport



Fw: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

From Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Date Thu 9/25/2025 11:44 AM

To Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

[REDACTED] has come back to us requesting a response.

From: Support <enquiries@vote.nz>

Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 11:42 AM

To: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>

Subject: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

##- Please type your reply above this line -##

VOTE NZ An official site of the
New Zealand Electoral Commission

This ticket ([#159298](#)) has been updated.

[REDACTED]
Sep 25, 2025, 11:42 GMT+12

Jarrod, response required ASAP.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 2 September 2025 11:42 am

To: 'Support' <enquiries@vote.nz>

Cc: 'Cameron.Luxton@parliament.govt.nz' <Cameron.Luxton@parliament.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

To spell it out:

1. You have a responsibility to ensure free and fair elections. Any information you provide needs to be factual and unbiased. Surely you agree?
2. Your site links directly to Taituarā's webpage that promotes a one-sided view of the Maori ward issue—ie it provides voters with opinions on why they should support Maori wards but provides no opinion on the other side. This is not just information that I happen to find somewhere on their website, it is what you link to directly and therefore give credence to.
3. If it is agreed that you should provide only completely unbiased information, you have a responsibility to either (a) take down the link ASAP, (b) provide an alternative link to opinions opposing Maori wards or, (c) amend the information to provide a balanced view of the fors and againsts. I suggest the former is the only viable option.

Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Sep 2, 2025, 11:42 GMT+12

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

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3. If it is agreed that you should provide only completely unbiased information, you have a responsibility to either (a) take down the link ASAP, (b) provide an alternative link to opinions opposing Maori wards or, (c) amend the information to provide a balanced view of the for and againsts. I suggest the former is the only viable option.

Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Jarrod [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Sep 2, 2025, 11:05 GMT+12

Dear [REDACTED]

Local elections are run by local councils, and our role in them is limited to enrolment. We appreciate that there is some confusion about our role, which is why we provide links to other sites. The best source of information about any individual local election is the local council's website, but it's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council.

Instead, to help voters who may come to us to seek information about the local elections, we have provided links to votelocal.co.nz, a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government Professionals Aotearoa. This website includes detailed information about the local elections, and contact information for each council and electoral officer. It also lists all of the councils which are holding polls on Māori wards.

We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain. If you have concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, you may contact the administrators of that website.

Kind regards

Jarrold

-

Jarrold Baker (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:23 GMT+12

Private note

I think the complaint is for us, unfortunately! [REDACTED] complaint is that we have provided a link that [REDACTED] believes isn't neutral. I will discuss a response with the team.

Matthew [REDACTED] (Electoral Commission)

Aug 27, 2025, 09:03 GMT+12

Private note

Removing complaint tag as it's not for us

[REDACTED]
Aug 27, 2025, 07:28 GMT+12

We flagged this comment because the From and Reply-to in the messages don't match. [Learn more](#) about Reply-to addresses

Name: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

From site: elections.nz

Subject: Election advertising

Type: Complaint

Message:

I notice your webpage <https://vote.nz/local-elections/about/local-elections-2025/> contains a link 'About Māori wards and constituencies' which links to <https://www.votelocal.co.nz/maori-wards-and-constituencies/>. This page acknowledges that this issue 'has sparked differing opinions within communities'. However it then gives only reasons why Māori wards provide 'an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to

collaborate with Māori' and 'guarantee Māori representation on a local authority and contribute to Māori participation in council decision-making'. The information is entirely advocating in support of Māori wards and makes no attempt to address any reasons why Māori wards should not be supported. Plainly, information provided by the Electoral Commission, should be either neutral, or at least balanced; not advocating for one particular viewpoint. This link needs to be taken down immediately. Please contact me regarding it.

Need help?

Get in touch with us and we'll help you find what you're looking for.

Contact us →



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You are an agent. Add a comment by replying to this email or [view ticket in Zendesk Support](#).

Ticket # 159298
Status Open
Requester [REDACTED]
CCs Cameron Luxton
Followers –
Group Communications
Assignee Jarrod [REDACTED]
Priority Urgent
Type Question
Channel By Mail

This email is a service from Electoral Commission. Delivered by [Zendesk](#)

[ZYW0LN-6WK0M]Ticket-Id:159298Account-Subdomain:ecsupport



22 July 2025, 14:44



2025

Voter Translations - Vote 25 | Pōti 25



Kia ora koutou - do these translations need to include a para about Māori ward referenda? Ngā mihi <https://www.votelocal.co.nz/information-for-voters/voter-translations/>



VOTE 2025

Vote Local, Vote 25 | Pōti 25 - Local Elections - New Zealand

Kia ora [redacted] - the Electoral Commission do not run local body elections. If you have concerns about the content on that site you would need to contact LGNZ or Taituarā, who between them run [votelocal.co.nz](https://www.votelocal.co.nz).



awesome - thank you!

From: [Karl Le Quesne](#)
To: [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#); [Clare \[REDACTED\]](#); [Karen \[REDACTED\]](#)
Cc: [Kristina Temel](#); [Leigh Deuchars](#); [Natalie \[REDACTED\]](#); [Anusha Guler](#)
Subject: FW: Electoral Commission caught red-handed
Date: Monday, 6 October 2025 7:40:44 am

Mōrena

See below, for discussion today. I'll ask Karen to find us a time.

Karl Le Quesne

From: "Don Brash @ Hobson's Pledge" <hello@hobsonspledge.nz>
Date: 4 October 2025 at 5:25:55 AM AWST
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Electoral Commission caught red-handed



Debn Patrick --

This is a scandal. While Hobson's Pledge advertisements are shut down, while our supporters are harassed, while the media churns out hit piece after hit piece against us – another pro-maori wards group is given a megaphone by the Electoral Commission itself.

That lobby group is LGNZ. And let's be clear: LGNZ is nothing more than a lobby group like any other. It represents councillors who choose to pay their membership fees – not the people of New Zealand. Yet while our voices are silenced, their website is linked directly from the Commission's own website on Māori Wards.

This shocking development was brought to light by [ACT MP Cameron Luxton, who revealed that](#) the Electoral Commission's own website linked directly to an LGNZ page pushing Māori wards as "a good for democracy." The page carried no disclaimer that it was not endorsed by the Commission. Worse, it was dressed up in the Commission's own orange branding and stamped with "Vote 2025," making it look like official electoral advice rather than lobbyist propaganda.



And now, within just 24 hours of Cameron Luxton releasing his video, the Electoral Commission has quietly scrubbed the link from its website. They know they've been caught out.

Let's be clear: if the Electoral Commission can't be trusted to stay impartial, then the very foundation of our democracy is under threat.

New Zealanders deserve a fair debate and a fair vote - not interference from a government body meant to be impartial. That's why Hobson's Pledge has fired off the following legal letter demanding an immediate stop to this disgraceful behaviour:

Re: Assurance of impartiality in Māori wards referenda and review of Commission communications

I write on behalf of Hobson's Pledge to seek immediate reassurance from the Electoral Commission that it is acting with complete neutrality and fairness in relation to the current Māori wards referenda being held across New Zealand.

It has come to public attention, via MP Cameron Luxton, that material promoting Māori wards appeared on the Commission's website during a period in which many local authorities are conducting referenda on the matter (see link: <https://x.com/actparty/status/1973612028486099190>). We note and appreciate that the content appears to have since been removed. However, the episode raises serious concerns about how such material came to be published, and whether similar content remains in circulation elsewhere.

Background and concerns

The Electoral Commission's credibility rests upon its absolute impartiality. Even the perception of bias risks undermining confidence in the fairness of the democratic process, particularly when New Zealanders are being asked to vote on sensitive questions of representation and governance.

Section 11 of the Electoral Act 1993 and long-standing principles of administrative neutrality require the Commission not only to act impartially but also to be seen to do so. In this case, the publication of content appearing to favour one outcome of the Māori wards referenda is deeply troubling.

To restore confidence and ensure transparency, we respectfully request the following:

1. **Public assurance of neutrality:** *That the Electoral Commission confirm in writing that it is, and will continue to be, entirely neutral in all communications and actions relating to Māori wards and the associated referenda.*
2. **Confirmation of removal:** *That the Commission confirm all promotional or potentially biased material, including website pages, public statements, and social media posts, has been fully removed or corrected.*
3. **Independent review:** *That the Commission undertake (or permit) an independent review of its communications, content approval processes, and oversight mechanisms.*
4. **Accountability and prevention:** *That the Commission outline what accountability measures or internal processes are being taken to identify how the breach occurred, and what steps are being implemented to prevent a recurrence.*
5. **Disclosure of relevant guidance:** *That the Commission disclose any internal guidance, policy, or correspondence relating to Māori wards or local representation that informed its public communications.*

Hobson's Pledge seeks a fair, balanced, and transparent process. Public confidence in the Commission depends on visible accountability when errors occur. We trust that you will treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves and provide the requested assurances without delay.

We look forward to your written response.

Yours faithfully,

Don Brash

Trustee, Hobson's Pledge

We will not sit back while bureaucrats undermine the will of the people. The Electoral Commission must be forced to remember who they work for – ordinary New Zealanders.

Why is it that when Hobson's Pledge speaks up on the Māori wards debate, our voice is silenced, smeared, and censored by the media - yet another group has its website linked and effectively endorsed by the Electoral Commission? Why are our ads banned, our volunteers harassed, and our supporters ridiculed - while LGNZ is treated as though it speaks for the people? It doesn't. It speaks only for councillors who pay their fees.

If you agree, stand with us. Share this message. Speak up. And if you can, [donate today](#) so we can take this fight all the way, including in the courts if necessary.

Because if they get away with this, every referendum in this country will be at risk of manipulation.

New Zealand's democracy belongs to its people – not to bureaucrats, not to lobbyists, and certainly not to the Electoral Commission.

Sincerely,



Don Brash

Trustee

Hobson's Pledge

<https://www.hobsonspledge.nz/>

P.S: There's still time to make a difference on Māori Wards. [Donate here](#), or [purchase a banner or flyer](#) to put up in your community.



Hobson's Pledge Trust Unit 6, shed 24 143 Quay Street, Auckland Central, Auckland, 1010.
This email was sent to pdvanloghem@xtra.co.nz. To stop receiving emails, [click here](#).

Created with [NationBuilder](#), software for leaders.

From: [Media Enquiries](#)
To: [Karl Le Quesne](#); [Leigh Deuchars](#); [Natalie \[REDACTED\]](#); [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#)
Subject: FW: Request for comment - links on EC website
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 12:57:42 pm
Attachments: [~WRD0000.jpg](#)

FYI

From: Ethan Griffiths <ethan.griffiths@nzme.co.nz>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 10:17 am
To: Media Enquiries <media@Elections.govt.nz>
Subject: Request for comment - links on EC website

EXTERNAL EMAIL WARNING: Do not open any **attachments** or **links** until you are certain they are safe. Beware of **phishing** attacks, check the sender address. Always report emails you are not certain are safe.

Kia ora,

I'm getting in touch to seek comment from the Commission on the content of its website.

At this link on the EC's website, which details information about upcoming local elections, it states the following.

Māori ward polls

Some local councils that have Māori wards or constituencies will be holding polls at the 2025 local elections to ask voters whether or not they support keeping them.

[About Māori wards and constituencies \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

There is then a link to the votelocal.co.nz website. This website is not EC material and is not impartial or unbiased - it is run by LGNZ and Local Government Professionals Aotearoa.

On this site which the EC links to, there are comments surrounding Maori wards that don't appear to be impartial or unbiased. Such as:

Establishing Māori wards and constituencies provides an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori, fostering positive relationships and ensuring decisions benefit the entire community.

I'm wanting to know;

- Is it acceptable for the EC to link to materials that are attempting to influence voters?

Why doesn't the EC provide its own guidance on the Maori ward vote,

instead of relying on outside sites?

- Will this link be removed?

My deadline for this story is 2pm this afternoon.

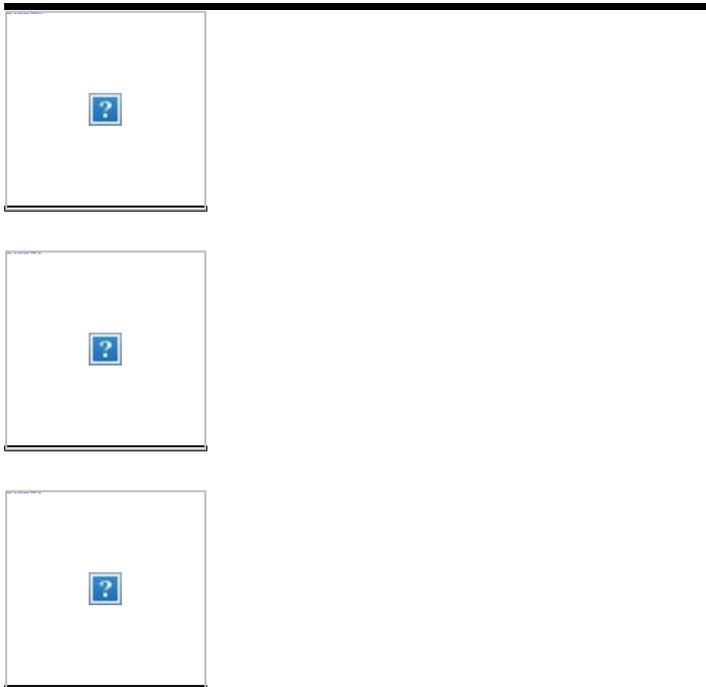
Thanks,
Ethan

ETHAN GRIFFITHS

Political Reporter | Newstalk ZB

M: [REDACTED]

E: ethan.griffiths@nzme.co.nz



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Any information contained in this e-mail in relation to an advertising booking are subject to, and should be read in conjunction with, our standard advertising [Terms & Conditions](#)

NZME Ltd / NZME Holdings Ltd / NZME Publishing Ltd / NZME Radio Ltd / NZME Educational Media Ltd

From: [Hanna \[REDACTED\]](#)
To: [Suzanne Knight-Tinirau](#); [Natalie \[REDACTED\]](#); [Leigh Deuchars](#); [Karl Le Quesne](#); [Anusha Guler](#)
Cc: [Clare \[REDACTED\]](#)
Subject: FYI: ACT Party post on X
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 4:58:26 pm
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Kia ora koutou,

Please see below:

 **ACT New Zealand** 
@actparty  ...

ACT forces Electoral Commission to remove link to pro-Māori Wards messaging

ACT Local Government spokesperson Cameron Luxton is welcoming the Electoral Commission's decision to remove a partisan link from its website after pressure from ACT, but says questions remain about why it was ever there, and why public concerns were brushed off until after voting had already begun.

Luxton wrote to the Auditor-General on Monday about this issue, and has raised concerns via ACT's social media channels.

"The Electoral Commission has finally done the right thing by removing the link on it's official website to one run by lobby group Local Government New Zealand's (LGNZ) that promotes pro-Māori wards messages. But it should never have been there in the first place," says Mr Luxton.

"LGNZ is a political lobby group that campaigns on political issues, including against the public's right to have a say on Māori wards.

"The LGNZ page wasn't neutral information. It argued in favour of Māori wards, saying: 'Establishing Māori wards and constituencies provides an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori, fostering positive relationships and ensuring decisions benefit the entire community.' That is a political judgment, not a factual explanation. Others can make those arguments if they wish, but it is not the role of the Electoral Commission to do so, directly or by proxy.

"Worse, the LGNZ page uses colours and branding similar to the Commission's own, and its domain name [votelocal.co.nz](#) closely resembles the Commission's [vote.nz](#). Voters clicking through from the Commission's website could easily be forgiven for thinking they're still on the official Electoral Commission page.

"What's most concerning is that a member of the public raised this issue with the Commission before voting opened – and was dismissed. The Commission said it wasn't responsible for the content of other websites, missing the obvious point that it was choosing to link to partisan material. Those concerns were left unanswered for weeks while voting was already underway.

"This raises serious questions. Why did it take outside pressure for the Commission to act? Why were earlier warnings ignored? How did such a basic breach of neutrality happen in the first place?

"That's why I've called on the Auditor-General not only to review the Commission's actions, but to conduct a wider inquiry to ensure this can never happen again.

"The integrity of our democracy depends on an impartial referee. The Commission must be beyond reproach – and right now, the public needs assurance that this was a one-off mistake, not a sign of deeper problems."

4:44 PM · Oct 3, 2025 · 206 Views

 2  2  15  

 **Post your reply** 

 **ReturnOfTezza Tin a cocoa car tower** @Tezza2023 · 5m  ...

When do the sackings occur at @ElectoralCommNZ? @actparty @NZNationalParty @nzfirst

    6  

Ngā mihi,
Hanna

Hanna [REDACTED] ([she/her](#)) | Senior Digital Advisor, Communications & Education | Electoral Commission | Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri
PO Box 190 | Level 4, 34-42 Manners Street | Wellington | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] | [vote.nz](#) | [elections.nz](#)

Vote.nz - Local elections 2025: Overview **page**

Have your say on who represents your community by voting in the 2025 local elections.

Local elections decide who represents us on our city, district, and regional councils.

The people elected to local councils get to make decisions about our daily lives and the future of our towns and cities. They set and collect rates, oversee town planning, and provide services like rubbish collection, parks and libraries.

In some parts of New Zealand, local elections are also held for local and community boards, licensing trusts, and some other organisations.

Local councils run the local elections, and our role is limited to enrolment. For more information about the local election in your area, contact your council.

[Council websites and maps \(Local Government New Zealand\)](#)

[Information for voters \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Māori ward polls

Some local councils that have Māori wards or constituencies will be holding polls at the 2025 local elections to ask voters whether or not they support keeping them.

[About Māori wards and constituencies \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Enrol to have your say

If you're on the electoral roll, you can vote in the local elections where you live.

You can enrol if you're 18 or older, a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, and have lived in New Zealand for more than one year continuously at some time in your life.

You can enrol or update your details online, or call and ask us on 0800 36 76 56 for help.

[Enrol or update online](#)

If you enrol after Friday 1 August

If you enrol or update your address after 1 August 2025, you won't get your voting papers sent to you in the mail. You'll need to contact your council's electoral officer.

The last day to enrol to vote in the local elections is Friday 10 October 2025.

[Electoral officers \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Māori roll or general roll?

If you're of New Zealand Māori descent, you can choose to enrol on the Māori roll or the general roll. The roll you choose may affect who you can vote for at local elections.

If you are enrolled and would like to change the roll you are on before the local elections, you need to do it by Thursday 10 July 2025.

[Māori roll or general roll](#)

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[Voting in local elections | Vote NZ](#)

Vote.nz - Local elections 2025: Voting in local elections [page](#)

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Local councils run the local elections

Local elections are run by local councils. Each local authority appoints an electoral officer to conduct its election.

If you are enrolled by 1 August, your local council will send you voting papers in the mail when it's time to vote.

The Electoral Commission's role is to make sure each council has up-to-date electoral roll information in time for the elections. We do not run or oversee the local elections.

[Council websites and maps \(Local Government New Zealand\)](#)

[information for voters \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Voting when you're on the unpublished roll

If you're on the unpublished roll, your name will not appear on the printed electoral roll. You need to apply to the electoral officer at your local council to get your voting papers, as they will not be sent to you in the mail.

[Electoral officers \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Voting from overseas

If you're overseas, you can enrol to vote in the local elections if you are a New Zealand citizen who has been in New Zealand within the last 3 years, or you're a New Zealand permanent resident who has been in New Zealand in the last 12 months.

Make sure you're correctly enrolled with an overseas postal address to get your voting papers. You can't download or return voting papers electronically for local elections.

[Enrol from overseas](#)

Voting when you own property in a council area, but don't live there

Each council has a ratepayer roll for people who pay rates on a property but live in another part of the country. In that situation, a person can vote in the area where they live, and the area where they pay rates.

To apply, contact the electoral officer for the local council area where you pay rates but do not live.

[Electoral officers \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

[Find out more about the local elections | Vote NZ](#)

Vote.nz - Find out more about the local elections

Local elections are run by local councils. Each council appoints an electoral officer to conduct its election.

The Electoral Commission's role is to make sure people are enrolled to vote and provide each council with electoral roll information that is up to date. We are not involved in the conduct or administration of local elections.

Your local council will have information about the elections in your area.

[Council websites and maps \(LGNZ\)](#)

At the local elections, candidates stand for election to a variety of roles including mayor, councillor, community board member or local board member.

[Information for candidates \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

[Information for Māori candidates \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Candidates can run election advertising and put election signs up.

Contact your local electoral officer if you have an enquiry about election advertising.

[Electoral officers \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

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Commented [HJ8]: Māori version was “[Ngā mahere me ngā paetukutuku kaunihera \(LGNZ\)](#) “

Commented [HJ9R8]: The rest were English

[What are local elections? | Elections](#)

Elections.nz - What are local elections?

In local elections, we choose who represents us on our councils. Local elections are run by local councils and are held every 3 years by postal vote. If you're on the electoral roll, you can vote in local elections where you live.

Local elections decide who has a say on local elections

Local elections decide who represents our local communities on local issues. Local elections are held for city, district, and regional councils.

In some parts of New Zealand, local elections are also held for local and community boards, licensing trusts, and some other organisations.

Local councils run local elections

Local councils do most of the work of running local elections. Our role is to:

- make sure each council has an up-to-date electoral roll in time for elections
- encourage people to enrol in time to vote.

If you're enrolled, your local council will send you voting papers in the mail.

Voting when you're on the unpublished roll

If you're registered on the unpublished roll, you need to apply to the electoral officer at your local council to get your voting papers.

Voting from overseas

If you're overseas, you can still take part in local elections. Just make sure you're correctly enrolled with an overseas postal address to get your voting papers. You can't download voting papers for a local election.

Voting when you own property in a council area but don't live there

If you own property within a local council area, but usually live outside this area, you can apply to go on the ratepayer roll. You can then vote in the area where you pay rates, and the area where you live.

Apply to get on the ratepayer roll

To apply, contact the electoral officer for the local council area where you pay rates but do not live. The electoral officer will send you a form to complete, sign and return so they can check you're eligible.

General or Māori roll?

The roll you are on may affect the way you vote in local elections.

If you choose the Māori roll, and your local council has a Māori ward or constituency, you will vote for candidates in the Māori ward or constituency. If you choose the general roll, you will vote for candidates in the general ward or constituency.

When can you choose rolls?

If you are Māori, and enrolling to vote for the first time, you choose which electoral roll you want to be on.

You can also change your roll type at any time, except:

- in the 3 months before a general election
- in the 3 months before local elections which are held every 3 years
- before a parliamentary by-election if the change would move you into the electorate where the by-election is being held.

If you're Māori and enrolling for the first time you can still choose either the Māori roll or the general roll.

[Find out more about the Māori roll](#)

How to make your choice

If you're happy with the roll you're on, you don't need to do anything. If you want to change the roll you're on, you can make the change online, by email, or by mail.

[Change your roll](#)

2025 local elections

The local elections are being held **on 11 October** 2025.

[Council websites and maps — Local Government New Zealand](#)

More information about local elections

Learn more about local government and local elections on the following sites.

[Local government in New Zealand — Local Government New Zealand](#)

[Local Elections — Department of Internal Affairs](#)

Commented [HJ10]: This links to the decommissioned website. Leave for now.

[Advice and complaints | Elections](#)

Elections.nz - Advice and Complaints page

There are different organisations you can contact if you have questions or concerns about an election advertisement.

Contact us about election advertising rules

We're responsible for making sure everyone follows the rules about promoter statements, authorisation of advertising and electoral finance.

You can complain to us about breaches of:

- election advertising and the election day rules under the Electoral Act
- requirements for election **programmes** under the Broadcasting Act.

You can also ask us for advice about election and advertising rules.

[Contact us about a question or complaint](#)

If we believe a person or group has committed an offence, we'll report the facts to the police. We can't enforce laws or prosecute offenders.

Sometimes, we may not report an offence if there's no public interest because it's so inconsequential.

Our role does not include regulating the content of campaign advertising, broadcasts or media activity. The Broadcasting Standards Authority, the Advertising Standards Authority and the Media Council all have roles in regulating of content (see below).

Contact the Broadcasting Standards Authority about broadcasting

The Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA) oversees broadcasting on TV and radio.

Election programmes must follow the Election Programmes Code

Election programmes on TV and radio, such as party and candidate advertisements, must follow the Election Programmes Code of Broadcasting Practice.

The BSA website has more information about the code, and how to complain under it:

[Learn more about the Election Programmes Code](#)

Third party programmes must follow broadcasting standards

Third party programmes about elections must comply with the relevant obligations in the Code of Broadcasting Standards in New Zealand.

If you think a programme has breached a standard, complain to the broadcaster first. If you can't resolve your complaint, you can go to the BSA.

The BSA website has more information about the standards and how to complain:

[Learn more about the broadcasting standards](#)

Contact the Advertising Standards Authority about other advertising

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) oversees advertising in all media other than TV and radio.

They'll review complaints about paid or boosted posts or ads on social media, but won't consider complaints about unpaid or organic posts.

Advertising must comply with the ASA Codes of Practice. The ASA website has more information about how the codes apply to election advertising:

[Advertising Standards Authority](#)

[ASA Guide on Election Advertising \(May 2023\)](#)

Contact the Media Council about editorial content

The New Zealand Media Council oversees its members, which include publications and news websites.

If you want to complain about editorial content, you must go to the publisher first. If you can't resolve your complaint, you can go to the Media Council.

The Media Council website has more information about its members, and how to complain:

[Learn more about the Media Council](#)

Contact local councils about election signs

If you have any questions or complaints about the placement of election signs, talk to the local council of the area the sign is in.

The Local Government New Zealand website has links to every council's website, where you'll find contact details:

[Find contact details for local councils](#)

Types of complaint

Example	Who to contact
No promoter statement	Electoral Commission
Candidate or party TV or radio ads	Broadcasting Standards Authority
Opinion piece in newspaper	Media Council
Signs up in my local area	Local Council

Example	Who to contact
Signs up on election day	Electoral Commission
Spending limits on election advertising	Electoral Commission
Content of print, outdoor, online paid advertising	Advertising Standards Authority
Unpaid personal political views online	Not regulated

[Contact us | Vote NZ](#)

Vote.nz - Contact us

The Electoral Commission runs parliamentary elections. We do not run or oversee local elections.

Questions about the local elections should be directed to your local council.

[Council websites and maps \(LGNZ\)](#)

If you have questions about your enrolment, you can call us on [0800 36 76 56](tel:0800367656) (or +64 9 909 4182 if calling from overseas), email us, or get in touch with us using the form below.

[Our approach to complaints](#) (elections.nz)

Frequently asked questions

I haven't received my voting papers for the local elections/how can I vote in the local elections?

Local elections are run by local councils, and the Electoral Commission's role in them is limited to enrolment. If you have questions about the local elections, you should contact your local council.

If you were enrolled at your current address by 1 August, your council will have sent your voting papers to you. They should have arrived between 9 and 22 September.

If you haven't received voting papers for the local elections, you need to contact your council's electoral officer to make a special vote.

[Electoral officers \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Your council may have information about where, when and how to make a special vote on their website.

[Council websites and maps \(LGNZ\)](#)

You need to return your voting papers by 12 noon on Saturday 11 October.

[Key dates \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

[Vote Local provide answers to frequently asked questions about the local elections here:](#)

[Voter FAQs \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Who runs the local elections/where can I complain about local elections?

Local elections are run by local councils. The Electoral Commission's role in them is limited to enrolment.

For more information about the local elections in your area, you should contact your local council.

[Council websites and maps \(Local Government New Zealand\)](#)

Why can't I find my enrolment online?

If you can't find your enrolment in our [online search](#), it doesn't necessarily mean you're not enrolled.

Some possibilities include:

- **The details you've provided don't exactly match our records**
If there's a small difference between the **information** we have on file and the information you've entered, the search might not find you. This can sometimes be due to your browser autofilling information in the wrong fields, or may also be due to spelling or formatting.
- **You've enrolled recently**
If you've recently enrolled or updated your details you won't be able to see your details online straight away. It takes time for us to manually check and process enrolments. We'll be in touch once your enrolment has been processed.
- **You're on the dormant roll**
If you've moved addresses since you last updated your enrolment, you may have been placed on the dormant roll. You need to update your address with us to find yourself in the search.
- **You're on the unpublished roll**
If you've chosen to go on the unpublished roll, you won't be able to search for your details. You can contact our unpublished roll team on unpublished.roll@elections.govt.nz

If you have any concerns about your enrolment please contact us so our enrolment team can investigate for you.

[Troubleshooting your enrolment](#)

What are the rules about election signs/how do I complain about election signs?

Under the Electoral Act 1993, election advertising may be published at any time, except on election day.

[Election signs](#) (elections.nz)

Councils may have their own rules about the placement of election signs. If you have questions or concerns about the placement of election signs in your area, you can contact your local council.

[Council websites and maps](#) (Local Government New Zealand)

[more accordions after this but they don't need editing so haven't copied these over here]

[Find your electorate on a map | Vote NZ](#)

Vote.nz – Find your electorate on a map

Your electorate is the voting area you live in. Every place in New Zealand is covered by both a general electorate and a Māori electorate. The voters in each electorate choose a member of Parliament to represent them.

[View map of general and Māori electorates](#)

[Opens in new tab](#)

Use this map to look up the Parliamentary electorate you're in, based on your address.

It does not show local council boundaries or wards/constituencies. [To find your local council area, you can check the information provided on the LGNZ website:](#)

[Council websites and maps \(LGNZ\)](#)

If you're enrolled to vote, you can check which local council and ward/constituency you're enrolled in by looking up your details:

[Enrol or update online](#)

Current electorates

Currently there are 72 electorates, including 65 general electorates and 7 Māori electorates.

[What to do | Vote NZ](#)

Vote.nz - What to do

Voting in a local election

In a local election, you vote for who you want to represent your local community. Local elections are held to elect members of city, district and regional councils.

If you're enrolled to vote, you can vote in local elections where you live.

Local elections are run by local councils every 3 years and held by postal vote.

The next local elections will be held in 2025.

[What are local elections?](#)

Contact your local council for more information

If you have questions or need help to vote in a local election, contact your local council.

[Council websites and maps \(Local Government New Zealand\)](#)

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[Facts about New Zealand elections | Vote NZ](#)

Vote.nz – Facts about New Zealand elections

Councils have their own rules about election signs

Although election advertising may be published at any time, councils and local authorities may have their own rules about the placement of election signs. To find out the rules in your area, you should contact your local council.

[Election signs](#) (elections.nz)

[Council maps and websites](#) (Local Government New Zealand)

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[Contact | Elections](#)

Elections.nz – Contact

The Electoral Commission runs parliamentary elections. We do not run or oversee local elections.

Questions about the local elections should be directed to your local council.

[Council websites and maps](#) (LGNZ)

If you have questions about your enrolment, please call us on **0800 36 76 56**, click the Help button, or get in touch with us using the email form or contact details on this page.

[Our approach to complaints](#)

Frequently asked questions

I haven't received my voting papers for the local elections/how can I vote in the local elections?

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If you haven't received voting papers for the local elections, you need to contact your council's electoral officer to make a special vote.

[Electoral officers \(votelocal.co.nz\)](#)

Your council may have information about where, when and how to make a special vote on their website.

[Council websites and maps](#) (LGNZ)

You need to return your voting papers by 12 noon on Saturday 11 October.

[Key dates](#) (votelocal.co.nz)

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Who runs the local elections/where can I complain about local elections?

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For more information about the local elections in your area, you should contact your local council.

[Council websites and maps](#) (Local Government New Zealand)

What are the rules about election signs/how do I complain about election signs?

Under the Electoral Act 1993, election advertising may be published at any time, except on election day.

[Election signs](#)

Councils may have their own rules about the placement of election signs. If you have questions or concerns about the placement of election signs in your area, you can contact your local council.

[Council website and maps \(Local Government New Zealand\)](#)

[more accordions after this but they don't need editing so haven't copied these over here]

[Guidance from other agencies | Elections](#)

Elections.nz - Guidance from other agencies

Local councils

If you have any questions or complaints about the placement of election signs, talk to the local council of the area the sign is in.

The Local Government New Zealand website has council boundary maps and links to all local councils.

Commented [HJ14]: Just this accordion.

[Election signs | Elections](#)

Elections.nz – Election signs

If you want to put up election signs for the general election or a by-election you need to be aware of the rules.

Local councils regulate election signs in their area

You should talk to your local council before you put up any election signs. Local councils are responsible for regulating when, where, and how election signs can be displayed. There is no fixed date in the Electoral Act when election signs are allowed to go up. Election signs can go up as soon as they are allowed to be displayed in the area you live.

[The Local Councils website can show you how to contact local councils.](#)

[Council contact list \(localcouncils.govt.nz\)](#)

Be aware council rules about election signage can apply to signs on both public and private land.

Election signs on or near state highways

Waka Kotahi must approve general election signs that will be placed on or next to state highways and signs must comply with the Waka Kotahi general election sign guidance. Further information is available [here](#).

What size election signs are allowed?

In the 9 weeks before election day the Electoral Act says you can have election signs that are up to 3 square metres in size. This supersedes any council rules about the size of election signs in this period.

This applies wherever you are in New Zealand, but you'll still need to follow your local council's application processes and rules about where you can put them up and how many you can have.

(image)

Total area = 3 square metres

This for example covers a standard billboard 1.2m x 2.4m.

It is not 3m² (metres squared) - which would be 3 x 3m and a total of 9 square metres.

Bigger signs can go up, and signs can go up sooner if the council allows this. Talk to your council if you want to have larger signs or put them up earlier.

The lettering of signs larger than 1.5 square metres that are on a road must be:

- 120mm in height if the speed limit is less than 70km per hour
- 160mm in height if the speed limit is more than 70km per hour

These requirements do not apply to lettering on registered party logos or promoter statements.

There are also rules that relate to road safety and the use of reflective material or illuminations, having moving parts or looking like traffic signs in the [Electoral \(Advertisements of a Specified Kind\) Regulations](#).

The rules in the Electoral Act

We are responsible for the rules in the Electoral Act.

These rules allow campaigning to start at any time, other than on election day.

Election signs need a promoter statement

If an election sign is an election advertisement it needs a promoter statement to be clearly displayed, with the name and address of the person that has instigated it. This rule provides transparency about who is responsible for election advertising.

[About election advertising](#)

Clearly displayed doesn't mean someone should be able to read the promoter statement from where the advertisement is ordinarily viewed. For example, people don't need to be able to read the promoter statement on a billboard while they're driving past. A person should be able to read the promoter statement if they stop to examine the billboard.

Getting written authorisation for candidate and party signs

You can only put up signs promoting a party or candidate with their prior written consent. This rule allows candidates and parties to decide who initiates advertising that encourages voters to vote for them. They also need to know about the cost of signs that are up in the three months before the general election as the cost of the signs that promote them count towards their expense limits.

You don't need written authorisation for advertising that encourages people not to vote for a candidate or party.

Paying someone to put up election signs

You can only pay someone to put up an election sign on their property, if displaying signs is part of their business.

This rule means people can't pay members of the public or businesses to put up signs on their land or property if they don't usually charge for this service.

The rules when voting starts

You can't display election signs within 10 metres of an advance voting place once voting starts.

All election signs need to be taken down or covered up by midnight on Friday, the day before election day.

You can't display election signs on election day.

Who should I contact if I have a question or want to make a complaint about election signs?

Signs up in my area

Local Council

No promoter statement

[Electoral Commission](#)

Is this sign election advertising?

[Electoral Commission](#)

Signs up on election day

[Electoral Commission](#)

Content of election signs and the rules about truth, accuracy, advocacy and offensiveness

[Advertising Standards Authority](#)

[How you can get more involved | Elections](#)

Elections.nz – How you can get more involved

Our democracy works better when all our communities are involved. You can take part in several ways.

Have your say by voting

If you're enrolled to vote, you get to have a say in general elections, local elections and referendums. Every vote is counted and that means your vote matters. Elections are your chance to have a say about who represents you on the issues that you care about.

It's easy to enrol and vote.

[Enrol, check, or update your details now](#)

Help your community have a say

You can help your community by encouraging them to enrol and educating them about what's involved with voting. The more people that participate in our democracy, the stronger it will be.

[Get posters and brochures for your community](#)

Work in elections

Year round, we employ people in various roles with different focus areas. Areas such as community engagement, policy and advice, project management, team leadership, and office administration. Casual roles come up regularly, especially for data entry.

[Current vacancies](#)

Get involved with a political party or start one

Every party operates differently, so if you want to get involved, contact the party you're interested in to find out how you can take part. You may be able to become a member, volunteer your time or make a donation.

[Find contacts in the Register of political parties](#)

Parties can be unregistered or registered. However, only registered parties can contest the party vote in a general election.

Interested in starting a political party?

[Guidance and rules for starting a political party](#)

Become a candidate

For a chance to represent your community in government, you can become a candidate in a general election. You need to be selected and then nominated by the political party you belong to, or you can stand as an independent electorate candidate.

If you want to stand as an independent candidate, you need to be:

- a New Zealand citizen
- enrolled on the general or Māori roll

- nominated by two people who are enrolled in the electorate you wish to stand in.

[Guidance and rules for candidates](#)

If you want to stand as a candidate in a local election, contact your local council about their candidate and nomination rules.

[List of council maps and websites - Local Government New Zealand](#)

Start a petition or have your say on our laws

There are lots of ways you can get involved in New Zealand's democratic process. If you feel strongly about an issue, you might want to:

- start or sign a petition
- seek a referendum
- make a submission to a select committee on a law before Parliament.

The New Zealand Parliament website has useful information on ways you can have your say.

[Have your say](#) - New Zealand Parliament



HOBSON'S pledge

moving forward
as one

3 October 2025

Mr Karl Le Quesne
The Electoral Commission
PO BOX 3220
Wellington 6140

By email: enquiries@elections.govt.nz; cc: Hon Paul Goldsmith, Hon Simon Watts

Dear Mr Le Quesne,

Re: Assurance of impartiality in Māori wards referenda and review of Commission communications

I write on behalf of Hobson's Pledge to seek immediate reassurance from the Electoral Commission that it is acting with complete neutrality and fairness in relation to the current Māori wards referenda being held across New Zealand.

It has come to public attention, via MP Cameron Luxton, that material promoting Māori wards appeared on the Commission's website during a period in which many local authorities are conducting referenda on the matter (see link: <https://x.com/actparty/status/1973612028486099190>). We note and appreciate that the content appears to have since been removed. However, the episode raises serious concerns about how such material came to be published, and whether similar content remains in circulation elsewhere.

Background and concerns

The Electoral Commission's credibility rests upon its absolute impartiality. Even the perception of bias risks undermining confidence in the fairness of the democratic process, particularly when New Zealanders are being asked to vote on sensitive questions of representation and governance. Section 11 of the *Electoral Act 1993* and long-standing principles of administrative neutrality require the Commission not only to act impartially but also to be seen to do so. In this case, the publication of content appearing to favour one outcome of the Māori wards referenda is deeply troubling.

To restore confidence and ensure transparency, we respectfully request the following:

1. **Public assurance of neutrality:** That the Electoral Commission confirm in writing that it is, and will continue to be, entirely neutral in all communications and actions relating to Māori wards and the associated referenda.
2. **Confirmation of removal:** That the Commission confirm all promotional or potentially biased material, including website pages, public statements, and social media posts, has been fully removed or corrected.
3. **Independent review:** That the Commission undertake (or permit) an independent review of its communications, content approval processes, and oversight mechanisms.



HOBSON'S *pledge*

moving forward
as one

4. **Accountability and prevention:** That the Commission outline what accountability measures or internal processes are being taken to identify how the breach occurred, and what steps are being implemented to prevent a recurrence.
5. **Disclosure of relevant guidance:** That the Commission disclose any internal guidance, policy, or correspondence relating to Māori wards or local representation that informed its public communications.

Hobson's Pledge seeks a fair, balanced, and transparent process. Public confidence in the Commission depends on visible accountability when errors occur. We trust that you will treat this matter with the seriousness it deserves and provide the requested assurances without delay.

We look forward to your written response.

Yours faithfully

Don Brash
HOBSONS PLEDGE

9 October 2025

Don Brash
Hobson's Pledge

By email: @hobsonspledge.nz

Dear Dr Brash

RE: LINK TO VOTE LOCAL – VOTE 25 | PŌTI 25 WEBSITE

Thank you for your letter of 3 October 2025.

The Electoral Commission is an independent Crown entity responsible for impartially administering the parliamentary electoral system in accordance with the Electoral Act 1993.

We take any complaints about our impartiality seriously.

For each electoral event we consider carefully what information we provide, including links to external information with a view to assisting electors and being impartial.

The Commission does not run or oversee local elections. Our role is to make sure people are enrolled to vote and provide each council with up-to-date roll information. We provide information [on our website](#) about how and when to enrol for the local elections.

We receive a lot of questions from members of the public about the local elections that need to be directed to local councils, who are responsible for local elections and referendums.

To make it easier for people to contact their council for more information, we provided a number of links to www.votelocal.co.nz/ and [Council websites and maps - LGNZ](#). It is clear by the way we link to content that it goes to external sites.

We have taken the same approach for previous local elections. We have also taken this approach for the information we provide on parliamentary elections to parties, candidates, third party promoters and the public, including on how to contact councils about their rules for when and where electoral signs in their area can go up for parliamentary elections.

In response to the concerns you have raised, we note we have not published any content that has promoted how voters should vote in referendums on the Māori wards and constituencies being held as part of the local elections.

Our websites link to a number of different external websites, including some websites containing political content, for example, the [Register of Political Parties](#) includes links to party websites. In our view this does not compromise the impartiality and neutrality of the Commission.

Prior to Cameron Luxton's post on X on Thursday 2 October, the Commission received one complaint on 27 August about the link from vote.nz to [About Māori wards and constituencies - Vote 25 | Pōti 25](#).

In response to that complaint, we explained that to help voters who may come to us to seek information about the local elections, we provided links to votelocal.co.nz, a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government Professionals Aotearoa. This website includes detailed information about the local elections and is a single site where electors can find contact information for every council's electoral officer and information on all of the councils that are holding polls on Māori wards.

We encouraged the complainant, if they had concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, to contact the administrators of that website.

Erring on the side of caution, following the second complaint made by Cameron Luxton last week, we have removed the specific link that was complained about. We have also removed links to the vote local and LGNZ websites from the page content of vote.nz and elections.nz.

I have looked into the way the original complaint was handled and have considered the public interest in finding accessible information on local elections. I am satisfied that there was no intent to influence the debate on Māori wards.

To assist voters we have published [a list](#) of local councils and their electoral officer contact details. This way electors can find this information if they come to the vote.nz website, and our enquiries and community teams can also point voters to their local council to, for example, arrange special votes.

Yours sincerely



Karl Le Quesne
Chief Electoral Officer

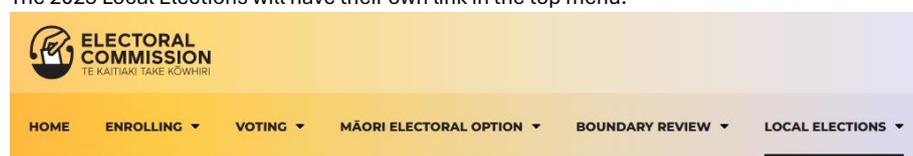
Local Elections 2025

vote.nz content

Homepage

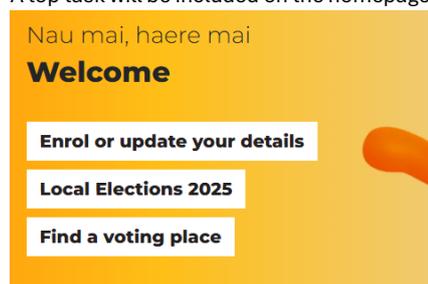
Top menu

The 2025 Local Elections will have their own link in the top menu:



Top tasks

A top task will be included on the homepage to direct people to local elections content:



Commented [SK1]: Can we make that Local elections 2025 - lower case e

Feature block

A feature block will also be included on the homepage:

Local Elections



Local elections are being held in 2025 to elect members of city, district and regional councils.

LOCAL ELECTIONS 2025

Section: About the local elections

Page: Local elections 2025

FROM

9 September 2025

TO

11 October 2025

Local elections are being held in 2025 to elect members of city, district and regional councils. Each local council runs its own local elections.

Have your say on who represents your community by voting in the 2025 local elections.

Local elections decide who represents us on our city, district, and regional councils.

The people elected to local councils get to make decisions about our daily lives and the future of our towns and cities. They set and collect rates, oversee town planning, and provide services like rubbish collection, parks and libraries.

In some parts of New Zealand, local elections are also held for local and community boards, licensing trusts, and some other organisations.

Māori ward polls

Some local councils that have Māori wards or constituencies will be holding polls at the 2025 local elections to ask voters whether or not they support keeping them.

[About Māori wards and constituencies](#) (votelocal.co.nz)

Enrol to have your say

If you're on the electoral roll, you can vote in the local elections where you live.

You can enrol if you're 18 or older, a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, and have lived in New Zealand for more than one year continuously at some time in your life.

You can enrol or update your details online, or call and ask us on 0800 36 76 56 for help.

[Enrol or update online](#)

If you enrol after Friday 1 August

If you enrol or update your address after 1 August 2025, you won't get your voting papers sent to you in the mail. You'll need to contact your council's electoral officer.

The last day to enrol to vote in the local elections is Friday 10 October 2025.

[Electoral officers](#) (votelocal.co.nz)

Commented [CP2]: I suggest we start with the 'you must be enrolled' message

Commented [SK3R2]: I agree that we start with the 'enrol to have your say' message and that the 'Māori roll or general roll' para moves down as part of that. However I think the paragraph on Māori wards should stay at the top before we talk about enrolment as it is a key feature of these elections for many councils.

Commented [CP4]: Fiona says this is midnight, Natalie wonders if it's COB, but either way, not midday. However, Vote Local says midday for candidate nomination AND roll closure. Perhaps we say 1 August for now and continue to seek clarification.

Māori roll or general roll

If you're of New Zealand Māori descent, you can choose to enrol on the Māori roll or the general roll. The roll you choose may affect who you can vote for at local elections.

If you are enrolled and would like to change the roll you are on before the local elections, you need to do it by Thursday 10 July 2025.

[Māori roll or general roll](#)

Commented [CP5]: Should we add this in here? I know it's elsewhere in the copy, but it is a key message.

Commented [SK6R5]: Its absolutely a key message so its worth emphasising

Page: Your enrolment pack

Everyone on the electoral roll will be sent an enrolment update pack in the mail in the first two weeks of April 2025.

When you receive your pack, open it, and check your details are correct, including your address and email, if you have one.

If they're correct, you don't need to do anything.

If you need to update your details or change the roll you're on, do it straight away to make sure your voting papers are sent to you.

You can update your details online using your New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport or RealMe verified identity, or by completing and returning the form in your enrolment pack.

[Enrol or update online](#)

If you don't receive an enrolment pack

If you don't receive an enrolment pack in the first two weeks of April, it means you're not enrolled to vote or your details are not up to date. Check and update your details to make sure you can vote.

[Enrol or update online](#)

Commented [CP7]: Delivery dates are from 1 - 11 April, so 'in early April' or 'first two weeks of April'.

Page: Māori roll or general roll?

If you're of New Zealand Māori descent, you can choose to enrol on the Māori roll or the general roll. The roll you choose may affect who you can vote for at local elections.

If you choose the Māori roll and your council has a Māori ward or constituency, you will vote for candidates in the Māori ward or constituency.

If you choose the general roll, or your council does not have a Māori ward or constituency, you will vote for candidates in a general ward or constituency.

No matter which roll you're on, you will choose from the same list of candidates when making your vote for mayor.

How to change your roll

If you would like to change your roll type in time for the local elections, you need to do so by **midnight, Thursday 10 July**. You can't change rolls in the three months before the local elections.

You can change your roll by completing and returning the form in your enrolment update pack. You can also change your roll online, or by completing and returning a printed enrolment form.

[Enrol or update online](#)

[Other ways to enrol](#)

If you change your roll after Thursday 10 July, the change will not be processed until after the local elections.

Commented [SK8]: I know this is repetitive but think we need to still emphasise this.

Page: Voting in local elections

Local councils run the local elections

Local elections are run by local councils. Each local authority appoints an electoral officer to conduct its election.

If you are enrolled by 1 August, your local council will send you voting papers in the mail when it's time to vote.

The Electoral Commission's role is to make sure each council has an up-to-date electoral roll information in time for the elections. We do not run or oversee the local elections.

Voting when you're on the unpublished roll

If you're on the unpublished roll, your name will not appear on the printed electoral roll. You need to apply to the electoral officer at your local council to get your voting papers, as they will not be sent to you in the mail.

[Electoral officers](https://www.votelocal.co.nz) (votelocal.co.nz)

Voting from overseas

If you're overseas, you can enrol to vote in the local elections if you are a New Zealand citizen who has been in New Zealand within the last 3 years, or you're a New Zealand permanent resident who has been in New Zealand in the last 12 months.

Make sure you're correctly enrolled with an overseas postal address to get your voting papers. You can't download or return voting papers electronically for local elections.

[Enrol from overseas](#)

Voting when you own property in a council area, but don't live **there**

Each council has a ratepayer roll for people who pay rates on a property but live in another part of the country. In that situation, a person can vote in the area where they live, and the area where they pay rates. To apply, contact the electoral officer for the local council area where you pay rates but do not live.

[Electoral officers](https://www.votelocal.co.nz) (votelocal.co.nz)

Commented [CP9]: I've rewritten this in the FAQs - is this clearer?

Each council has a ratepayer roll for people who pay rates on a property but live in another part of the country. In that situation, a person can vote in the area where they live, and the area where they pay rates.

To apply, contact the electoral officer for the local council area where you pay rates but do not live.

A list of electoral officers is available here:

<https://www.votelocal.co.nz/information-for-voters/electoral-officers/>

Commented [SK10R9]: Yes, I think this is good.

Section: Resources

Page: Resources to share

Help your whānau and community get enrolled and ready to have their say in the local elections.

Help get people enrolled

It's easy for people to enrol, check or update their details online using their New Zealand driver licence, New Zealand passport, or RealMe verified identity.

[Enrol or update online](#)

[resources to come]

Page: Find out more about the local elections

Local elections are run by local councils. Each council appoints an electoral officer to conduct its election.

The Electoral Commission's role is to make sure people are enrolled to vote and provide each council with electoral roll information that is up to date. We are not involved in the conduct or administration of local elections.

Your local council will have information about the elections in your area.

[Council websites and maps](#) (LGNZ)

At the local elections, candidates stand for election to a variety of roles including mayor, councillor, community board member or local board member.

[Information for candidates](#) (votelocal.co.nz)

Candidates can run election advertising and put election signs up.

Contact your local electoral officer if you have an enquiry about election advertising.

Electoral officers (votelocal.co.nz)

From: [Leigh Deuchars](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:09:00 pm
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)

Please delete everything not for the Minister! We were running so fast I didn't realise it was a chain

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:07 pm
To: Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Justice.PS <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint

EXTERNAL EMAIL WARNING: Do not open any **attachments** or **links** until you are certain they are safe. Beware of **phishing** attacks, check the sender address. Always report emails you are not certain are safe.

Thanks Leigh!



Private Secretary – Justice | Office of Hon Paul Goldsmith

Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Minister of Justice
Minister for Media and Communications
Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Paul Goldsmith, Parliament Buildings

From: Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:05 pm
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: FW: ACT website complaint

Here you go

From: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 2:04 pm
To: Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]>; Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]>; Kristina Temel <[REDACTED]>; Anusha Guler <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint

Hi everyone

Bullet points below.

MEDIA – our response

We provide information [on our website](#) about how and when to enrol for the local elections. The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so for more information on council elections, we advise people to contact their council directly.

To make it easier for people to contact their council, we provided links to external sites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls.

We have had a small number of complaints about the links. Erring on the side of caution, we have taken the links down.

Should the Electoral Commission provide information on Māori ward polls?

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so we don't provide information on the conduct of the elections or polls on our own website.

Media - For the Minister – Leigh to provide

Does the Minister think it is acceptable for the EC to link to materials that appear to be attempting to influence voters?

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections. They receive a lot of questions about the local elections that they can't answer, so to make it easier for people to access information about the elections, they provided links to external sites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls. They have taken those links down. People wanting information on the local elections should contact their local council or check their voting papers.

Should the Electoral Commission provide information on Māori ward polls?

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections, so they don't provide information on the conduct of the elections or polls on their own website.

Additional background for stakeholders

The LGNZ and the LGNZ and Taituarā websites are the only websites where you can find a full list of councils and their contact details.

We have included links to the votelocal.co.nz website in previous local elections because it is helpful for voters, especially in the early stages of the local elections when there is not much information available from councils. People often don't know which council area they are in or how to contact their council.

We received a complaint from one member of the public in August. We felt making the information on councils and their contact details easily accessible was important, so we kept the links up at that point.

Now it's been raised again, we have reconsidered and have erred on the side of caution and removed the links. People wanting information on the local elections will need to contact their council or check their voting pack.

Clare

From: Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 11:07 am
To: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]>; Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]>; Kristina Temel <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: ACT website complaint
Importance: High

Thanks Clare. I have had OAG contact me with a few questions. Who is the right person in comms for me to get a bit more background from?

From: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2025 9:37 pm
To: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]>
[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Kristina Temel <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: ACT website complaint

Thanks Clare

Let's discuss in the morning the substance of the allegation and how we respond.

Karl

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, October 2, 2025 8:43:58 PM
To: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]>; Suzanne Knight-Tinirau <[REDACTED]>
<[REDACTED]>
Cc: Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: ACT website complaint

Kia ora Karl

So you are aware, ACT has made a post on X tonight saying it has complained to the Auditor General about a link we include in our vote.nz information on local elections. This is a link to the LGNZ and Taituarā website which has a list of councils holding Māori ward polls.

Link to ACT post: [ACT New Zealand on X: "Why is the Electoral Commission promoting pro-Māori wards messages on its website? https://t.co/7f92rKbSUB" / X](https://t.co/7f92rKbSUB)

We will let you know if we have any media enquiries or are tagged and asked for a response on social media. We recently had a public enquiry about this and could provide a similar response if required along these lines:

The Electoral Commission does not run or oversee local elections. We provide information [on our website](#) about how and when to enrol for the local elections. For more information on council elections, we advise people to contact their council. It's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council, so we have provided links to external websites with lists of council websites and maps, contact details for electoral officers, and a list of councils holding polls. The links are clearly marked as external websites, and we are not responsible for the information they hold.

Clare

Clare [REDACTED] (she/her) | Senior Media and Communications Advisor | **Electoral Commission** | **Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri** |
PO Box 3220 | Level 4, 34-42 Manners St, Wellington | Phone [REDACTED] | Mobile [REDACTED] | vote.nz |
elections.nz



From: [Leigh Deuchars](#)
To: [Clare](#) [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: media query re EC website
Date: Friday, 3 October 2025 11:39:00 am
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

Have let [REDACTED] know we are meeting at 12.30. The reporter has asked for a response by 2

From: Leigh Deuchars
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 11:20 am
To: Clare [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Subject: FW: media query re EC website
Importance: High

Suggest you, me and Karl get our heads together

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 3 October 2025 11:03 am
To: Karl Le Quesne <[REDACTED]>; Leigh Deuchars <[REDACTED]>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>; Justice.PS <[REDACTED]>; Media - Justice <media@justice.govt.nz>
Subject: media query re EC website

EXTERNAL EMAIL WARNING: Do not open any **attachments** or **links** until you are certain they are safe. Beware of **phishing** attacks, check the sender address. Always report emails you are not certain are safe.

Hi Karl and Leigh,

We've had this media query re some info that you link to on your website, can you please provide some brief lines that we can use to respond?

Thanks,

Act's Cameron Luxton has [explained it succinctly here](#) - but details are below.

At [this link](#) on the EC's website, which details information about upcoming local elections, it states the following.

Māori ward polls

Some local councils that have Māori wards or constituencies will be holding polls at the 2025 local elections to ask voters whether or not they support keeping them.

About Māori wards and constituencies (votelocal.co.nz)

There is then a link to the votelocal.co.nz website. This website is not EC material and is not impartial or unbiased - it is run by LGNZ and Local Government Professionals Aotearoa (which campaigned against the law change forcing the referendums).

On this site, there are comments surrounding Maori wards that don't appear to be impartial or unbiased. Such as:

Establishing Māori wards and constituencies provides an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori, fostering positive relationships and ensuring decisions benefit the entire community.

I'm wanting to know;

- *Does the Minister think it is acceptable for the EC to link to materials that appear to be attempting to influence voters?*
- *Does the Minister expect the EC provide its own guidance on the Maori ward vote, instead of relying on outside sites?*



Private Secretary – Justice | Office of Hon Paul Goldsmith

Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
Minister of Justice
Minister for Media and Communications
Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations

Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]
Private Bag 18041, Parliament Buildings, Wellington 6160, New Zealand

Authorised by Hon Paul Goldsmith, Parliament Buildings

Jarrold [redacted] 12/02 5:07 pm

Hello! I've written a first cut of the web content for the local elections: [Local Elections 2025 web content - 2025-02-12.docx](#)



Largely a rewrite/reedit of the 2022 content with dates updated - but I'm suggesting we break out the Māori roll stuff onto a separate page.

Also I've separated the enrolment pack content onto it's own page as well.

17/02 6:15 pm

Jarrold [redacted] 12/02/2025 5:07 pm

Hello! I've written a first cut of the web content for the local elections: [Local Elections 2025 web content - 2025-02-12.docx](#) Local...

Hi Jarrod, this looks good. I've made a few suggestions mainly about repeating deadline dates. Suzanne and Richard. I was explaining to Jarrod today that we have a difference between Vote Local which says the printed roll closes at midday 1 August and our enrolment team - Fiona [redacted] says it's midnight. We need to double check this somehow, but in the meantime, I think we just say 1 August and don't put a time on it. Until we're sure. I might check with LGNZ.

WCC and Christchurch City Council say it like this **Friday 1 August 2025**: candidate nominations close at 12 noon, roll closes. I think candidate nominations close at midday, and the roll at midnight.

Richard [redacted] 17/02 6:25 pm



Thanks Clare. Perhaps check with Ross on the time rolls 'close'. I think it's an internal operational decision rather than legislated

Thursday, 20 February

Suzanne Knight-Tinirau 20/02 12:37 pm



Jarrold [redacted] 12/02/2025 5:07 pm

Hello! I've written a first cut of the web content for the local elections: [Local Elections 2025 web content - 2025-02-12.docx](#) Local...

Hi Jarrod, sorry for the delay getting back to you. I've read through all of this and tracked a few comments. It all looks good though. If you can update the copy with mine and Clare's changes I think it should be good to publish. Will you want banners or tiles for the campaign landing page?

Jarrold [redacted] 20/02 1:43 pm

Suzanne Knight-Tinirau 20/02/2025 12:37 pm

Hi Jarrod, sorry for the delay getting back to you. I've read through all of this and tracked a few comments. It all looks good though. If you...

Hello! As discussed I think we will want some graphics for the vote.nz homepage - ideally that will work within a circular shape as per the other homepage tiles. Do we know if the Local Elections 2025 lockup is available somewhere?

Jarrold [redacted] 20/02 3:08 pm

Local body pages all published now. I've swapped out the "find your electorate on a map" tile for a local elections tile, and repurposed the Māori Electoral Option tile to point to the section about roll choice for local elections.

I've also added some text to the "Find your electorate on a map" page noting that it can only be used to look up parliamentary electorates and linking to LGNZ. Just thinking of one particularly salty enquirer we had last time...

#159298 Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Submitted August 27, 2025 at 07:28
Received via Mail
Requester [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

CCs

Bindi [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>, Hanna [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>, Jarrod [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@elections.govt.nz>, Electionenrol <[REDACTED]>

Status	Type	Priority	Group	Assignee
Solved	Question	Urgent	Communications	Jarrold [REDACTED]

Total time spent (sec)	Time spent last update (sec)	Channel	Enquiry Type
453	111	Email	General enquiries

Sub Enquiry Type (General enquiries)

Electoral commission Website or information feedback

Alanbiss August 27, 2025 at 07:28

Name: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

From site: elections.nz

Subject: Election advertising

Type: Complaint

Message:

I notice your webpage <https://vote.nz/local-elections/about/local-elections-2025/> contains a link 'About Māori wards and constituencies' which links to <https://www.votelocal.co.nz/maori-wards-and-constituencies/>. This page acknowledges that this issue 'has sparked differing opinions within communities'. However it then gives only reasons why Māori wards provide 'an inclusive and democratic avenue for councils to collaborate with Māori' and 'guarantee Māori representation on a local authority and contribute to Māori participation in council decision-making'. The information is entirely advocating in support of Māori wards and makes no attempt to address any reasons why Māori wards should not be supported. Plainly, information provided by the Electoral Commission, should be either neutral, or at least balanced; not advocating for one particular viewpoint. This link needs to be taken down immediately. Please contact me regarding it.

Matthew [REDACTED] August 27, 2025 at 09:03

Internal note

Removing complaint tag as it's not for us

Jarrold [REDACTED] August 27, 2025 at 09:23

Internal note

I think the complaint is for us, unfortunately! [REDACTED] complaint is that we have provided a link that [REDACTED] believes isn't neutral. I will discuss a response with the team.

Jarrold [REDACTED] September 2, 2025 at 11:05

Dear [REDACTED]

Local elections are run by local councils, and our role in them is limited to enrolment. We appreciate that there is some confusion about our role, which is why we provide links to other sites. The best source of information about any individual local election is the local council's website, but it's impractical for us to provide contact information for every council.

Instead, to help voters who may come to us to seek information about the local elections, we have provided links to [votelocal.co.nz](https://www.votelocal.co.nz), a website maintained by Local Government New Zealand and Taituarā - Local Government

Professionals Aotearoa. This website includes detailed information about the local elections, and contact information for each council and electoral officer. It also lists all of the councils which are holding polls on Māori wards.

We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain. If you have concerns about the content provided by votelocal.co.nz, you may contact the administrators of that website.

Kind regards

Jarrold

-

September 2, 2025 at 11:42

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

To spell it out:

1. You have a responsibility to ensure free and fair elections. Any information you provide needs to be factual and unbiased. Surely you agree?
2. Your site links directly to Taituarā's webpage that promotes a one-sided view of the Maori ward issue—ie it provides voters with opinions on why they should support Maori wards but provides no opinion on the other side. This is not just information that I happen to find somewhere on their website, it is what you link to directly and therefore give credence to.
3. If it is agreed that you should provide only completely unbiased information, you have a responsibility **to either (a) take down the link ASAP, (b) provide an alternative link to opinions opposing** Maori wards or, (c) amend the information to provide a balanced view of the fors and againsts. I suggest the former is the only viable option.

Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,

[Redacted signature]

September 25, 2025 at 11:42

Jarrold, response required ASAP.

Regards,

[Redacted signature]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 2 September 2025 11:42 am

To: 'Support' <enquiries@vote.nz>

Cc: 'Cameron.Luxton@parliament.govt.nz' <Cameron.Luxton@parliament.govt.nz>

Subject: RE: [Electoral Commission] Re: Election advertising enquiry from [REDACTED]

Hello Jarrod, this rather belated response completely evades the point of my email. You say 'We are of course not responsible for any of the content on websites we do not maintain'. Yes, of course. But you **are** responsible for what you link to. Taituarā etc are free to express any opinions they want on **their** website. My concern relates to **your** website.

To spell it out:

1. You have a responsibility to ensure free and fair elections. Any information you provide needs to be factual and unbiased. Surely you agree?
2. Your site links directly to Taituarā's webpage that promotes a one-sided view of the Maori ward issue—ie it provides voters with opinions on why they should support Maori wards but provides no opinion on the other side. This is not just information that I happen to find somewhere on their website, it is what you link to directly and therefore give credence to.
3. If it is agreed that you should provide only completely unbiased information, you have a responsibility **to either (a) take down the link ASAP, (b) provide an alternative link to opinions opposing Maori wards or, (c) amend the information to provide a balanced view of the fors and againsts.** I suggest the former is the only viable option.

Please let me know what action you will take. Thanks.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Jarrold [REDACTED] September 25, 2025 at 14:43

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your feedback. We have nothing further to add to our previous response.

We won't be making changes to our website at this time.

Kind regards

Jarrold

-

Bindi [REDACTED] October 1, 2025 at 10:51

Request [#163239](#) "Escalation to EC : Electoral Com..." was closed and merged into this request. Last comment in request [#163239](#):

To Whom it May Concern,

Please be advised we have received the following enquiry which requires escalation:

**** Escalation Type:**** Electoral Commission

TelnetID: 15617111

First Name: [REDACTED]

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Contact Number: [REDACTED]

Email Address: [REDACTED]

Nature of Enquiry:

Would like to make a complaint

Believes our website is linking to information that is bias, don't think it's appropriate to link votelocal.co.nz.

Support Software by **Zendesk**