



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
County Council Comhairle Contae
Dhún Laoghaire-Ráth an Dúin

General Election 2007

Making the Electoral Process Accessible to All



An information booklet for people with a disability and those who support them

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> Foreword

Every Irish citizen has a right to vote in elections in Ireland. However in order to exercise that right, you must be registered to vote, ie your name must be on the Electoral Register. A general election is planned for 2007. The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Disability Consultation Group in partnership with the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and St John of God Carmona Services, Dún Laoghaire, have developed this information booklet for Election 2007.

The booklet outlines the electoral process and gives relevant contact details. It is hoped that people with a disability and those who support them, such as carers, parents, disability service providers, can use the information to ensure that all citizens in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Constituencies get the opportunity to exercise their right to vote in the forthcoming general election.

> Introduction

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County is located between the outer suburbs of Dublin City and Dublin/Wicklow mountains on the east coast of Ireland. The county is divided into six electoral areas: Dundrum, Blackrock, Glencullen, Stillorgan, Ballybrack and Dún Laoghaire. Local elections are held every five years to elect councillors from these electoral areas. There are 28 Councillors

representing electors in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

TDs represent electors in Dáil Éireann. These Dáil Representatives are elected from constituencies when a general election is held. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is divided into two Constituencies: Dublin South and Dún Laoghaire.

> What you Can do Now

Check the Register

In order to vote, you must be registered.

So, firstly, please **check** if those in your care are registered on the **Register of Electors** which can be done as follows:

- > Check the website: **www.dlrcoco.ie** in the 'Voters register' section,
- > Enquire in your local Post Office, local library or Garda station,
- > Enquire in the County Council Offices - County Hall, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, or County Council Office Dundrum, Main Street, Dundrum (at the rear of The Bank of Ireland),
- > Telephone The Register of Electors Section: 01 2054880,
- > Email: **registerofelectors@dlrcoco.ie**

Register to Vote

County Council representatives have been making house-to-house enquiries over the last few months to check and up-date the **Draft Register of Electors 2007/2008**.

Anyone who has forwarded a Registration Form for the Register of Electors since February 2006 will be included on the draft Register.

If you have still not registered then please contact The Register of Electors Section on 01 2054880, to get a Registration Form (RFA). Or you can download forms on-line from our website www.dlrcoco.ie

Return it as soon as possible so that your name(s) can be included at your current address when the Draft Register is published on 1st November next.

The draft Register will be available for inspection at Garda Stations, Post Offices, Libraries and the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Council offices from this November.

The final register is published on 1st February 2007 and comes into effect on 15th February. It will remain in force for a year from that date and this is the register that will be used at the time of the General Election.

The deadline for inclusion for the Final Register is November 25, 2006.

So if someone is not registered, their details need to be submitted before this date.

Make Special Arrangements

There are a number of special arrangements which can be organised to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to exercise their right to vote.

- Voters with a physical disability can avail of a **postal vote** at home. (Please contact the Register of Electors Section on 01 2054880 and request Form PV1)
- Voters who reside in a nursing home, hospital or other residential care facility can arrange to have a **special vote**, where an officer will come to the residence and facilitate the elector in exercising his/her vote there. (Please contact the Register of Electors Section on 01 2054880 and request Form SV1)

Please note that Postal and Special Voters need to have their forms signed by a doctor and returned to the Register of Electors Section by 25 November, if making an application for the first time.

Also note that a form for a postal or special voter must be submitted each year to up-date the electoral register.

Please contact the Register of Electors Section on 01 2054880 if you require additional information or assistance with this.

- For voters with **literacy difficulties**, ballot papers are now printed with photographs and political emblems to help voters select their preferred candidate. There is also a large print copy of the ballot paper on display in every polling station to further aid voters.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council is obliged to ensure that each constituency has at least one polling station that is **wheelchair accessible**.

The Returning Officer has confirmed that all polling Stations within the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council area are wheelchair accessible with the exception of St. Colmcille's National School Ballybrack.

If your designated polling station is not accessible, you can apply in writing or by email (at least a week before the election) to the Returning Officer, to go to another polling station in the same constituency. If you are required to attend another polling station because of accessibility issues and transport will be barrier, please contact the Returning Officer.

Contact Details of the Returning Officer are as follows:

Telephone: **01 8603077**

Email:

info@dublincountyreturningofficer.com

Web:

www.dublincountyreturningofficer.com

You can also get **assistance** from a **Companion** or the **Presiding Officer** if you have a visual impairment, or other disability.

➤ The Month Before the Election

The Polling Station

Where you live determines where you vote. Each Street/Road is designated a particular polling station. Details of these polling stations will be available for

viewing on our website as soon as they have been approved.
See www.dlrcoco.ie

➤ Your Polling Card

As already stated you must be registered on the Electoral Register in order to vote. Everybody who is registered is issued with a polling card. Electors will receive polling cards by post that detail their Name, Address and Polling Station, approximately two weeks before the election. However in the event that the polling card does not arrive on time, the elector may bring an alternative proof of identification to vote, such as:

- (i) a passport,
- (ii) a driving licence,
- (iii) an employee identity card containing a photograph;
- (iv) a student identity card issued by an educational institution and containing a photograph,
- (v) a travel document containing name and photograph;
- (vi) a Bank or Savings or Credit Union book containing address in constituency;
- (vii) Temporary Residence Certificate card;
- (viii) a Garda National Immigration Bureau card;
- (ix) a cheque book;
- (x) a cheque card;

- (xi) a credit card;
- (xii) a birth certificate;
- (xiii) a marriage certificate.

Please note that items (ix to xiii) must be accompanied by a further document which establishes the address of the voter in the Constituency (for example, a gas or electricity bill).

> Polling Day

Arriving At The Polling Station

Polling stations can be busy places especially early morning and late evening. If you think any assistance will be required, it would be helpful to come between 10.00 am and 5.00 pm when the presiding officer will be in the best position to assist electors.

It would also be helpful to give the Returning Officer some advance notice if a number of electors who require assistance will be attending together. Contact the Returning Officer on 01 860 3077.

Voting

Please bring your Polling Card or alternatively, proof of identification (see the previous section), but please remember **you must be registered on the Electoral Register that is in force at the time to cast your vote.**

There will be a number of booths to ensure privacy, but there will also be at least one table and chair so that those

who have difficulty standing may sit down while casting their vote.

> Glossary

Companion: An elector with a disability may receive assistance from a companion of their choice. To act as companion, a person must be at least sixteen years old, must be neither a candidate nor an agent of a candidate and may not assist more than two electors at an election. The presiding officer must be satisfied that the companion fulfils these conditions.

Postal Vote: Where an elector has a physical disability or illness which prevents them from going to polling station and where the elector is living at home, they can vote by post by applying to be included in the Postal Voters List. An application must be made by 25th November to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and the first such application must be signed by a medical practitioner. Application Forms are available on the website or by contacting the County Council offices.

Polling Station: Each street/road is designated to a particular polling station. The Polling Station Scheme is approved by the County Sheriff and any requested changes need to be approved by the County Sheriff. Details of the polling scheme will be available on our website.

Proof of Identity: a passport, (ii) a driving licence, (iii) an employee identity card

containing a photograph; (iv) a student identity card issued by an educational institution and containing a photograph, (v) a travel document containing name and photograph; (vi) a Bank or Savings or Credit Union book containing address in constituency; (vii) Temporary Residence Certificate card; (viii) a Garda National Immigration Bureau card; (ix) a cheque book; (x) a cheque card; (xi) a credit card; (xii) a birth certificate; (xiii) a marriage certificate. Items (ix to xiii) must be accompanied by a further document which establishes the address of the voter in the Constituency (for example, a gas or electricity bill).

Presiding Officer: Presiding Officers are appointed by the County Sheriff and there is a Presiding Officer for each polling station. They ensure the correct running of the voting process and can assist voters when required.

Returning Officer: The Returning Officer is the person responsible for the conduct of an election in each constituency. In Dún Laoghaire the Returning Officer is the County Sheriff. You can contact the County Sheriff at:

Telephone: **(01) 8603077**

Email:

info@dublincountyreturningofficer.com

Web:

www.dublincountyreturningofficer.com

Special Vote: A person residing in a hospital, nursing home or similar

institution who has a physical disability or illness which prevents them from going to the polling station, can vote at the hospital/nursing home etc if they apply to be included on the Special Voters List which is drawn up each year as part of the Register of Electors. In order to be entered on this List an application must be made by 25th November to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council and the first such application must be signed by a medical practitioner. Application Forms are available on the website or by contacting the County Council offices.



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This information booklet was developed by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Disability Consultation Group in partnership with St John of God Carmona Services, Dún Laoghaire and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. Autumn 2006.

For more information please contact any of the bodies below or visit www.dlrcoco.ie

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown



Disability Consultation Group

The DCG is an Interagency Group established to support The Local Authority in the delivery and enhancement of its Services by advising and recommending on Key Strategies and Actions to achieve full access for all, as set out in the Barcelona Declaration

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