



Active Citizens Together Project

Activity 1. Welcome Warm-Up



What is the person sitting next to you called?

How long have they lived in the UK?

What do they like about living in the UK?

Activity 2 - Your Neighbourhood



1. What do you like about where you live?

2. What do you not like about where you live?

Create a picture or write a description of your perfect neighbourhood

Consider:

- Roads
- Buildings
- Trees
- People
- Anything else you would like to see?

Activity 3 - Voting and Elections Quiz¹



1. What do you need to do before you can vote in UK elections?

2. What are the three different ways you can vote?

1.

2.

3.

3. What is a ballot paper?

¹ Answers at the back of the workbook

4. How long is a polling station open on voting days?

5. Can an EU citizen resident living in the UK vote in a UK general election?

6. How will you know if an Election is taking place in your area?

You can read more about how voting systems work at:
<http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register-to-vote>



Activity 4 – Active Citizens and Mentors.

Olesia and Janina are talking about their neighbourhood. They are concerned that their older neighbours are lonely, more young people are involved in anti-social behaviour and there is a lot of litter on the streets.



What could you do to help with these problems?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Each one of us can make a positive difference to life in our neighbourhoods. If we work **together**, our communities can change for the better.

Mentors



Who is a mentor?

A mentor is a person who can help and guide you. You can follow in their footsteps. For example, by doing voluntary work in the community or becoming a local councillor.

We can try to find a 'mentor' to meet you. You can go and see what they do to improve their neighbourhood or local area. You will be able to learn more about being an active citizen from your mentor.

Here are some examples of the kinds of activities a mentor could introduce you to:

- Being a local councillor
- Being a school classroom assistant
- Being a charity shop volunteer
- Being a community worker
- Visiting older people
- Helping at a church
- Helping at a centre for homeless people

Local Councils

Local government and local authorities are the common name for local councils. They are made up of councillors (also called members) who are voted for by the public in local elections, and also paid council staff (officers) who deliver the council's services.

Councillors from different political parties make up the full council. The council is divided into individual groups called 'committees', which have responsibility for particular services including education and planning.

Who you choose to vote for is important because most councillors belong to different political groups (or 'parties'). So they have different political views and ideas about what they want the council to do for you, and how to do it.

There are different types of councils working together for local people.

Town and Parish Councils Provide:

- Money for local community groups
- Public toilets

District, Borough and City Councils Provide:

- Parks, Public Open Spaces and allotments
- Housing Advice & Information

County and Unitary Councils Provide:

- Schools
- Social Services for children, older people and carers
- Roads

You can find out much more about local councils on the Local Government Association website <http://www.local.gov.uk/> and you can go to see your own local councillor about anything you would like him or her to do for you or your area. You can find out from your local council office, information centre or library about where they have their local 'drop-in' meetings.

What is happening in your Community?



There are Volunteer Centres in most towns. They can find you ways to help others.



Community and Leisure Centres provide lots of activities for all age groups and are a good place to meet new people. Your local information centre will give you a list of these



Neighbourhood & Home Watch Schemes get neighbours together with the police and others to build safe and friendly communities.



Children's Centres offer families with young children support and activities such as cooking, dancing, music, messy play, singing



Churches can help to bring people together for support as well as worship.



Charity shops are in most towns. They often need helpers to either serve customers or sort out the items that people donate.




If you would like to know more, visit your **local library**

Activity 3 - Voting and Elections Quiz Answers



7. What do you need to do before you are allowed to vote in elections in the UK?



[Home](#) > [Citizenship and living in the UK](#) > [Voting](#)

Register to vote

Use this service to:

- register to vote
- update your name, address or other details on the electoral register

You need to be on the electoral register to vote in elections and referendums.

Registering takes around 5 minutes.

You'll need your National Insurance number (if you have one).

[Start now >](#)

Voting

[The electoral register and the 'open register'](#)

[Voting in the UK](#)

[More](#)

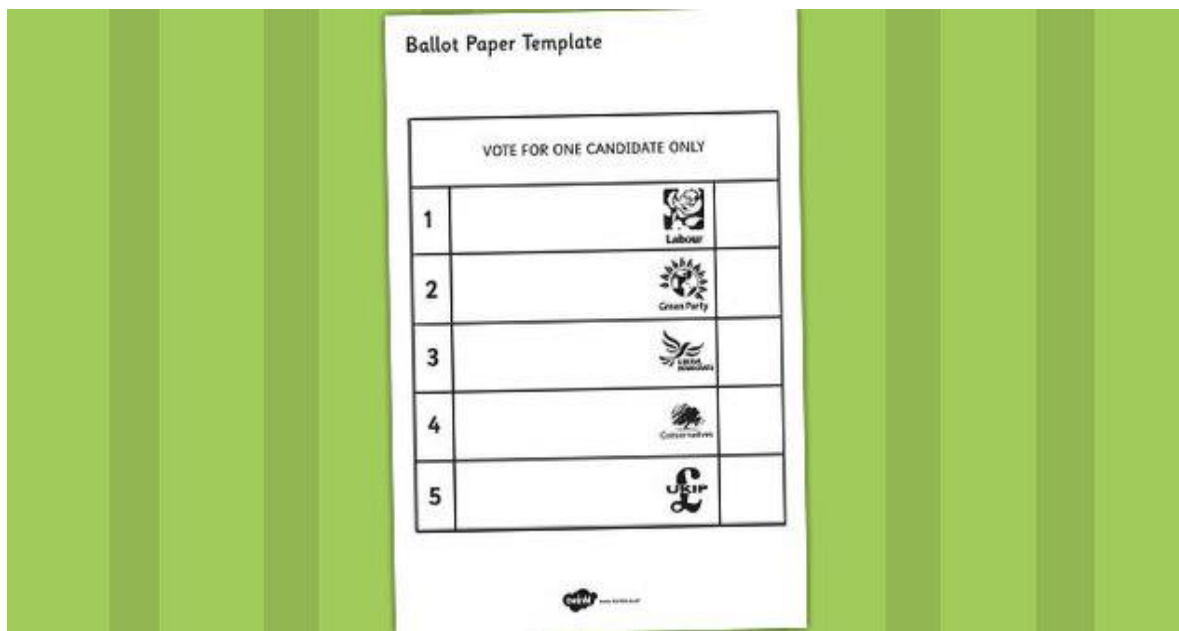
8. What are the three different ways that you can cast your vote?

1. In person, at a 'polling station' – these are usually public buildings like schools or local halls
2. By post
3. By proxy (Proxy voting means that if you aren't able to cast your vote in person, you can have someone you trust cast your vote for you.)

3. What is a ballot paper?

A ballot paper is a small sheet of paper with the names and political parties of the candidates taking part in the election printed on it.

You need to put a cross (x) in the box next to the name of the candidate for which you are voting.



4. How long is a polling station open on voting days?

7am to 10pm

5. Can an EU citizen resident in the UK vote in a UK general election?

EU Citizens are not able to vote in general elections. EU citizens can vote in Local and European Parliamentary elections.

6. How will you know if an Election is taking place in your area?

If you are registered to vote, you will receive a polling card telling you when an election is happening. This will tell you when and where you can vote.

Contact Details and More Information

If you have any questions about the ACT project, or want to talk to us about being a more active citizen, please do contact us and we will be happy to advise you further.

ACT Project Workers:



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More information about the ACT project can be found at:
<http://smp.eelga.gov.uk/migrant-workers/act-project.aspx>