

Voter Awareness Month

Voting: A Right. A Responsibility. A Choice.

Foreword from the Assistant Parliamentary Registrar Mica Trott

Voter Awareness Month Returns This April

For many Bermudians, their first connection to democracy begins long before Election Day often in a classroom, a community hall, or a simple conversation about why voting matters. Helping to create those moments is a key part of the Parliamentary Registry's work.

While the Registry is best known for administering elections, its role extends well beyond the ballot box. Through school visits, public information sessions, and community partnerships, the Registry works to bring the electoral process to life and make it accessible to people of all ages.

Voter Awareness Month shines a light on these efforts, particularly those aimed at young people who are preparing to become eligible voters. By introducing students to how elections work and why participation matters, the Registry helps remove uncertainty and builds confidence well before their first opportunity to vote.

That outreach doesn't stop with future voters. Registered voters are also encouraged to stay informed, keep their details up to date, and understand how their individual participation plays a role in shaping Bermuda's democratic life.

By meeting people where they are and keeping the conversation going year-round, the Parliamentary Registry continues to strengthen connections with the community fostering trust, understanding, and a sense of shared responsibility in Bermuda's democratic journey.

A Steady Hand at the Polls



Before a single ballot is cast, before results are announced, there are individuals entrusted with one of the most critical responsibilities in Bermuda's democracy. Returning officers, appointed as Justices of the Peace, are charged with executing the writ of election and ensuring that every vote is conducted and counted in accordance with the law.

For nearly two decades, Freddie Evans JP has carried out that duty with quiet consistency. Since 2008, he has stood at the center of the voting process, overseeing polling stations and safeguarding the integrity of each ballot cast.

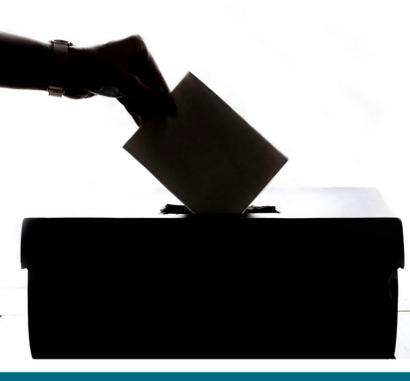
His journey began in a classroom. As a civics teacher, he taught students how government works, but he wanted to experience it firsthand. "I wanted to see it up close in person. I wanted to be part of it," he recalled. That curiosity became a calling.

On Election Day, Evans leads with calm authority. From opening polls on time to supervising the count, every step falls under his watch. "It's a responsibility to the country," he said. "Our whole mission is to open on time, deliver every ballot in a purposeful manner, and ensure every vote is counted properly."

Much of the work goes unseen. He ensures voters are properly identified, in the correct location, and free from influence. Each decision is guided by one principle that every voter must be able to act according to their own conscience.

Accuracy is non negotiable. If numbers do not align, the process begins again. "It might take a little longer, but we can make sure that we're accurate."

In that careful, steady work lies a simple truth. Voting is a right. It is a responsibility. It is a choice.



ARE YOUR VOTER DETAILS UP TO DATE?

Visit www.elections.gov.bm to check your details today!

MYTH BUSTERS Understanding "Ordinary Residence"

Parliamentary Election Act 1978 (Section 2)

WHAT DOES "ORDINARY RESIDENCE" MEAN?

Under the law, your ordinary residence is generally the place where you:

- live and sleep as part of your normal, everyday life; and
- intend to return to when you are away.

This determines both your eligibility to be registered and the constituency in which you are registered.

Residence is not based on convenience or connection — it is based on where you actually live.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Myth 1: "I can register in any constituency I choose."

Fact: You must be registered in the constituency where you are ordinarily resident — that is, where you live and sleep as part of your normal routine.

Myth 2: "If I live between two places, I can choose one for voting."

Fact: Your residence is determined by where you live and sleep the majority of the time.

Myth 3: "If I study, travel, or work overseas, I lose my residence."

Fact: Temporary absence does not automatically change your residence. If Bermuda remains your home and you intend to return, your status may remain unchanged.

Myth 4: "If I visit Bermuda often, I am still resident."

Fact: Frequent visits do not establish residence. What matters is where you actually live on a day-to-day basis.

Myth 5: "If I move overseas but still have ties to Bermuda, I am still ordinarily resident."

Fact: Residence is based on where your life is centred. If you have relocated your home — including your household or family — overseas, Bermuda is no longer your place of residence, even if you return periodically.

Myth 6: "I can register using a temporary address."

Fact: Temporary accommodation (such as lodgings or similar arrangements) does not establish residence unless you have:

- lived there continuously for at least 10 days before the qualifying date; and
- intend to remain there indefinitely.

HOW IS RESIDENCE DETERMINED?

Your place of residence is based on:

- where you live and sleep
- where your family lives (if applicable)
- where you intend to return when away
- where your daily life is centred

Your Voice, Your Choice: A New Generation Steps Up

It is often said that young people are not interested in politics. In Bermuda, the numbers appear to support that claim, voters aged 18 to 29 consistently represent the lowest levels of registration and turnout.

But Sophia Tessitore has never seen herself in that narrative.

"I've always been passionate about Bermuda," she said. "I just wanted to be part of the solution."

That instinct to speak up rather than sit back led her, at just 21, into the political space. There was no traditional path behind her, no titles, no guarantees, just a deep interest in the issues shaping Bermuda's future and a belief that her voice mattered.

By 24, that belief carried her further. Sophia became the youngest candidate in Bermuda's 2025 General Election, representing the One Bermuda Alliance in Constituency 21.

Her decision to run was not driven by certainty of outcome, but by something quieter and more deliberate: the idea that democracy works best when people step forward.

"Even if I didn't win, I wanted to give people an option," she said.

In a country where elections can be decided by just a handful of votes, that choice matters.

"Every person really does count," she said. "It's the most essential civic act we have."

And yet many people, particularly younger voters, still hesitate, unsure whether they know enough or whether their participation will truly make a difference.

Sophia understands that hesitation, but challenges it directly.

"Your voice matters," she said. "Even if you don't feel it now, one day it will."

Because democracy is not something that simply happens around us; it is something we choose to take part in.

For Sophia Tessitore, the youngest candidate in Bermuda's 2025 General Election, democracy in action is not complicated.

"It's using your voice. It's showing up. It's participating."

As Bermuda observes Voter Awareness Month, her message serves as a simple reminder: participation begins with the belief that your voice matters, and the decision to use it.



ARE YOU 17 OR 18?

Show us what voting means to you.

Whether you see it as a **right**, a **responsibility**, or a **choice**—we want to hear your perspective. Create a 15–45 second TikTok and join the conversation.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD.

HOW TO ENTER

- ✓ Post your video to TikTok.
- ✓ Use the hashtag: **#RightResponsibilityChoice**
- ✓ Tag us: **@parliamentaryregistrybda**

WIN an iPad

(Open to residents of Bermuda aged 17–18)



Scan to Enter & Learn More
Official Rules & Details



The Parliamentary Registry has Moved!

New Location
Belair 42 Victoria Street, Hamilton
Located in the two-storey building on the corner of Victoria & Parliament Street

