

LWA GUIDE TO THE 2024 UK GENERAL ELECTION



The upcoming UK General Election will determine who the next Members of Parliament (MPs) will be to sit in the House of Commons. One MP will be elected to represent each constituency in the UK; in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The political party with an overall parliamentary majority (more elected MPs than all the other parties combined) following an election, forms the UK Government.

When will it be held?

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak must call the next UK General Election to be held **before 17th December 2024** at the latest. This date marks exactly five years since parliament first met after the last General Election, in 2019.

Food, Farming and Devolution

It's important to note that **food and farming and devolved issues in UK law and policy**. This means that while the UK Government is responsible for food and farming in England, the governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are responsible for food and farming policy in their respective nations.

However, this does not mean that the next UK Government and MPs elected to the House of Commons won't be relevant in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. "Reserved" topics are proposed and legislated for by the UK Government and House of Commons on behalf of all four UK nations, and these include **trade policy, welfare benefits and some taxation**. So for issues such as trade rules, new trade agreements and welfare - the outcome of the UK General Election will still impact citizens in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Put simply:

- If you are a member in **England**, the UK General Election will be a chance to elect MPs who will be able to shape all areas of law and policy in England - **including food and farming**.
- If you are a member in **Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland**, the UK General Election will be a chance to elect MPs who will be able to influence areas of law and policy such as trade, tax and welfare - **but you'll have to wait until the next Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Ireland parliamentary elections to elect MPs who will be able to shape food and farming policy in your respective nation**.

When will devolved governments have their next elections?

The next Northern Ireland parliamentary election is due to take place in January 2025, and Scotland and Wales are due to have their parliamentary elections in May 2026. We will be mobilising around these elections nearer the time.