

Welcome to the third progress report on the new Lobbying Register, which will be with you after the Election in May. This is our penultimate update and covers:

- **User testing**
- **Progress and next steps**
- **What to expect**
- **Q&A**

User Testing

On 27 March we undertook a testing session with five volunteer organisations. Our thanks for their participation, which was much appreciated.

Users practiced submitting information returns and nil returns using the new system. The feedback provided was extremely useful and has helped our developers, Fortesium Ltd., to carry out further refinements.

Further ad-hoc testing sessions may be planned, and we continue to invite expressions of interest to help us test and evaluate the functionality of the system.

Please note your provisional interest at lobbying@parliament.scot using the subject title heading: LOBBYING REGISTER TESTING - NOTE OF INTEREST.

Progress and next steps

The new system build is in its final stages. The current system will stop operating from Friday 8 April.

The new system will then be phased in for all 1422 active registrants over the week of **Monday 11 May to Friday 15 May**, following the Scottish Parliament election on 7 May. More information is in the Q&A further below.

What to expect

The new system will provide a number of improvements to registrants and users.

- Simplified registration process for new organisations
- An option to add an extra email address for key reminders.
- An improved dashboard to help track activities and late submissions.
- New information return form with in-built automation to ensure minimal manual effort.
- New bulk information return option
- Enhanced searching, reporting, and data visualisation tools
- And, in future development, a text-checking algorithm to speed up advice for resubmitting information returns.

Q&A

Why is the lobbying register being updated?

The current contract for supply and provision of a Lobbying Register ends later this year. As part of a procurement process, we engaged in a competition last year for a new supplier. [Fortesium Ltd.](#) provided the successful bid for the build and supply of the new and improved system.

Have any of the 'regulated lobbying' rules changed?

No. However, you may wish to note that the Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments Committee stated in its Session 6 legacy report that evaluation of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016 will be an early priority for the Session 7 Committee.

Will my organisation need to re-register for this updated system?

No. We are working with Fortesium Ltd. to engineer a solution that will migrate all registered users to the new system. However, as part of the migration we will be seeking some additional organisational contact details as a means of aiding with communication and compliance responsibilities.

Is there anything that our organisation needs to do before this update happens?

We will be in touch during the week **Monday 11 to Friday 15 May** by email to tell you how to migrate easily and quickly to the new system. Please ensure that your registered email address is monitored regularly for any instructions.

For users with a statutory period deadline falling in late April and early May it would be beneficial if registrants could review whether any submissions to the register are required and submit in advance where possible.

We sometimes include weblinks in our information return forms, will these work in the new system?

Weblinks will not be live working links. If these are included, readers can copy and paste these into their own browsers to view. Broken links, or links to unverified sites/sources are at the discretion of users to view and are not the responsibility of the Lobbying Register Team.

PDF uploads? Why not?

As before, provision of links or uploads to reports etc. can be provided through including links, but access to these will be the responsibility of readers accessing these through a copy and paste function.

Why not an App?

The cost of developing an app for the new system was cost prohibitive. Please note that testing for the new register is being developed to ensure scalability that is suitable for mobile devices.

What are notifications under the system?

Notifications for submitting information returns, upcoming deadlines, and any breaches associated with your account will be issued via the system.

Can I change my screen view?

Yes, the updated Register has a dark mode if you prefer to work that way.

How do I know my statutory period dates, and will there be any changes to our reporting periods?

Current statutory periods are available to view on your current dashboard page and you will again be able to see these clearly on the new system. There are no changes to your reporting dates.

If you have any further questions, please email us at lobbying@parliament.scot.