**NAME**

**POSITION**

**ADDRESS**

By email to: **EMAIL ADDRESS**

**DATE**

Dear **NAME**

**Compliance with data protection and electronic marketing laws**

With campaigning now underway ahead of the General Election on 8 June 2017, I am taking the opportunity to remind campaigners from political parties of the need to comply with data protection and electronic marketing laws. You will find further guidance, and details of a briefing session to which your party is invited, below.

My office is the UK’s independent authority responsible for regulating compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003. Over recent years we have seen an increase in complaints from members of the public about the promotion of political parties, their candidates and their views during political campaigns. In particular, there have been concerns about, among other things, the use of surveys intending to gain support for campaigns now or in the future, the sending of unsolicited SMS messages, the use of automated calls and the sharing of personal data between national and local organisations.

In addition, I am aware of the potential use of data analytics and associated technologies by political parties for campaigning purposes. If you propose to utilise such methods as part of your campaigning activity, you will need to be careful to ensure that your use of personal data in this potentially privacy-intrusive manner is fully compliant with the DPA.

Engagement with the electorate is vital to the democratic process. But if a party fails to comply with the law they may face enforcement action as well as reputational damage to their campaign. We have updated our guidance on political campaigning to help you comply with the law. A copy is enclosed and the guidance is also available at: <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1589/promotion_of_a_political_party.pdf>

I would also like to invite you, or those best placed in your organisation to ensure compliance, to a briefing session for major political parties. The Deputy Commissioner, Rob Luke, will host this session in London on 4 May. The session will offer an opportunity to present our guidance and answer any questions raised.

While we recognise that this date may not be ideal given local elections, we were keen to hold the briefing at the earliest possible opportunity and we would ask that you send a representative of your party.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Denham

Information Commissioner