

*These notes refer to the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011
(c.14) which received Royal Assent on 15 September 2011*

FIXED-TERM PARLIAMENTS ACT 2011

EXPLANATORY NOTES

SUMMARY

4. The Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 provides for fixed days for polls for parliamentary general elections. The polling day for elections will ordinarily be the first Thursday in May every five years. The first such polling day will be on 7 May 2015. The Prime Minister will be able to defer, by statutory instrument, the polling day for such parliamentary general elections to a day not more than two months later than the scheduled polling day.
5. The Act also makes provision to enable the holding of early parliamentary general elections. The trigger for such general elections would be either a vote of no confidence in the Government, following which the House of Commons did not pass a motion of confidence in a Government within 14 days, or a vote by at least two-thirds of all MPs in favour of an early election.
6. The Queen does not retain any residual power to dissolve Parliament, which will occur automatically under the provisions in the Act.