

# **98-year-old Edinburgh woman 'unable to vote' after postal ballot delays**

**A 98-year-old Edinburgh woman has been turned away from her local polling station and rendered unable to vote after her postal ballot didn't arrive in time.**

Flora Kelsey said she had been denied what could be her last-ever opportunity to vote, having participated in every UK election in her lifetime since turning 21.

The Corstorphine resident applied for a postal vote but had still not received it by this morning.

She told the LDRS: "I feel I ought to vote for my country," adding: "I just feel my hands are tied, I don't know what to do now".

People across the UK have reported not being sent a voting pack despite requesting one, prompting several Scottish councils to establish facilities where anyone affected can have their pack re-issued and cast a ballot.

The Electoral Commission said earlier this week it was "not aware of any outstanding large-scale issues" while the postal affairs minister said there was "a resourcing issue" with Royal Mail.

Edinburgh City Council's emergency unit at the City Chambers was set up last weekend in response to the delays and is open

until 5pm today.

However Ms Kelsey said she felt unable to make the journey into the city centre.

“I don’t feel I can go very much further, I’m tired,” she said. “I don’t know what’s happened.

“We still think of our country. We’re not all dumb when we get to 90. We’ve done our best, we can do no more.”

In an attempt to exercise her democratic right the 98-year-old visited her local polling station, Corstorphine Library, accompanied by her grandson George.

After phoning the council for advice he was told to apply for an emergency proxy vote.

“I filled the form in, we brought it along and we’ve just been told that doesn’t work,” Mr Kelsey explained.

“Emergency vote by proxy, because she’s got a postal vote she’s been ticked off the register because she has to vote by postal vote.

“But now we’re stuck, we’ve been given two different numbers, each of which we’ve phoned twice today and it doesn’t seem as though there’s anything we can do.

“The chap said to get a replacement postal vote she would have to get into the City Chambers, I couldn’t go and pick it up on her behalf, and I think we’re giving up at this point.”

He said there were several residents at his grandmother’s nursing home who also hadn’t received their postal ballot.

Ms Kelsey said she has “always voted” and this election could be “my last opportunity to vote”.

Edinburgh Council was contacted for comment.

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter