Local and Parish Elections - Thursday, 4 May 2023

Are you ready to vote in the Local and Parish Elections?



Local and Parish Elections will be taking place on Thursday, 4 May. This is your chance to exercise your democratic right to vote for the candidate that you want to represent your community.

You may be wondering why you should bother voting in these elections. Local councillors can influence decisions made by the local authority on all manner of issues, not just the obvious ones like bins and potholes. They deal with a diverse range of issues, from transport to leisure, from waste to social care for the elderly, from benefits to business, to name but a few. These issues have an enormous impact on your community, which is why you're being encouraged to put your cross next to the candidate that you believe will best serve you, your family and your community. Here are some important dates and deadlines to consider so that you don't miss out on casting your vote.

Register to vote

Before you can vote, you need to be registered to do so – you can do this at https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. It only takes around five minutes and the deadline is **midnight on Monday 17 April 2023**. If you are already on the electoral role at your current address, you don't need to re-register for each election. If you're unsure, please ring 0300 300 8008 to check.

Want to apply for a postal vote?

The deadline to apply for a postal vote for the elections on 4 May 2023 is **5pm on Tuesday 18 April**. To do this, you must also be registered to vote by 11:59pm on Monday 17 April. You can apply for a postal vote at: https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/apply-vote-post

Apply for a proxy vote

If you know that you won't be able to get to the polling station on polling day, you can ask someone you trust to cast your vote for you. This is called a proxy vote and the person casting your vote is often referred to as your proxy.

The deadline to apply for a proxy vote for the elections in England on 4 May 2023 is **5pm on Tuesday 25 April**. You need to be registered to vote to apply for a proxy vote.

If you nominate a proxy, the person you choose to vote on your behalf will need to show their own photo ID to cast your vote. They will not need to show your ID.

The person voting on your behalf can either go to your polling station to cast your vote or can apply to vote for you by post. Find out more about proxy voting: https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/apply-vote-proxy

Bring your ID to the polling station

If you don't already have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for the free Voter Authority Certificate (VAC) but you'll need to do this by **5pm on Tuesday 25 April**.

For more information about voting in the 2023 Local Elections go to www.yourvotematters.co.uk/ and the Central Bedfordshire Council website.

When you get your poll card, make sure you are familiar with the polling station, as it may have changed. You can also keep up to date with the latest Central Bedfordshire information by joining the Council's Twitter and Facebook pages.

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