



# **County Council, District & Parish Elections - 7 May 2026**

## **Candidates and Agents Briefing**

# Session Overview – 7 May 2026

- Election Timetable
- Nominations
- Postal votes
- Voter ID
- Assistance for Disabled Voters
- Secrecy Requirements
- Campaign Dos and Don'ts
- Election Day
- The Count
- Candidate Expenses

- **5 County Divisions**
  - Church Crookham & Ewshot
  - Fleet Town
  - Hartley Wintney & Yateley West
  - Odiham & Hook
  - Yateley East & Blackwater

- **11 District Wards**
  - Blackwater & Hawley
  - Crookham East
  - Crookham West & Ewshot
  - Fleet Central
  - Fleet East
  - Fleet West
  - Hartley Wintney
  - Hook
  - Odiham
  - Yateley East
  - Yateley West

- **Parish Council Election**  
*(if contested)*
  - Church Crookham Parish Council
  - Elvetham Heath Parish Council
  - Fleet Town Council
  - Greywell
  - Long Sutton & Well
  - South Warnborough
- **54 polling stations**

**7 May 2026**

# Who's who

- The Returning Officer (RO) has overall responsibility for the running of the election
- Hampshire County Council Returning Officer – Gary Westbrook
  - Deputy – Daryl Phillips
- District Returning Officer – Daryl Phillips
  - Deputy – Graeme Clark, Vicci Pepper

# Election Timetable

<b>25 March 2026</b>	Notice of Election Published
<b>4pm, 9 April 2026</b>	Deadline for nominations
<b>20 April 2026</b>	Deadline for all applications to register to vote
<b>5pm, 21 April 2026</b>	Deadline for new postal votes Deadline to amend existing postal votes Deadline to amend existing proxy votes Deadline for postal votes for proxy voters
<b>5pm, 28 April 2026</b>	Deadline for new proxy votes Deadline for Voter Authority Certificate
<b>5pm, 7 May 2026</b>	Deadline for emergency proxy applications

# Local Government Candidate Qualifications

All Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated and polling day:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be either a British citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, an EU Citizen or a qualifying commonwealth citizen

At least one of the following:

- Registered local government elector in the area
- Occupied as owner or tenant of land or premises in last 12 months in the area
- Principal or only place of work in last 12 months
- Lived in the local authority area during last 12 months (**District**)
- *\*Lived in the parish/town or within 4.8km during those 12 months \* (Parish)*

# Nominations

- All Candidates must submit by **4pm, Thursday 9 April 2026**
  - Nomination Form
  - Consent to Nomination
  - Home Address Form
- Party Candidates must also submit
  - Certificate authorising use of party name
  - Request to use party emblem

# Submission of Nominations

- Informal checks of nomination papers:
  - Scanned copies of forms can be emailed for checking prior to the deadline
    - [nominations@hart.gov.uk](mailto:nominations@hart.gov.uk)
  - Feedback by email
  - *\*Not available on Thursday, 9 April 2026\**
- Delivery of final nomination papers:
  - From **Thursday 26 March between 10am – 4pm**
  - Must be delivered by hand
  - Please make an appointment at the Civic Offices by emailing or calling the team
  - All forms to be submitted at the same time

# Nomination Form

- Name
- Commonly Used Names
- Description
- **2** Subscribers from the Division/District must sign and print their names
- Subscribers must be on the electoral register at **1 March 2026**
- Candidate and description details must be completed **in full** before subscriber signs

# Nomination Paper

<b>1a – Nomination paper</b>	Office use only			
<b>Local government election in England</b>	Date received	Time received	Initials	No
*ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS / A COUNCILLOR for the				
	electoral division/ward of the			
county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate				
Date of election:				

<b>Ancells</b>	[ward of the] <i>if applicable</i>
parish of	<b>Fleet Town Council</b>

Parish

<b>Yateley West</b>	electoral division/ward of the
county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate	<b>Hart District Council</b>

District

<b>Odiham &amp; Hook</b>	electoral division/ward of the
county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate	<b>Hampshire County Council</b>

County

# Nomination Paper

Candidate's Details		
Candidate's surname		Mr/Mrs/Miss/ Ms/Dr/Other
Other forenames in full		
Commonly used surname (if any)		
Commonly used forenames (if any)		
Description (if any) Use no more than six words (see note 5)		

We, the undersigned, being local government electors for the said *electoral division/ ward, do hereby assent to the foregoing nomination *Delete whichever is inappropriate				
	Signature	Print name	Electoral number	
			Polling District	Elector Number
Proposer				
Seconder				

# Home Address Form

- Two parts to be completed
  - Part 1 (to be completed by all candidates)
  - full name and home address in full
  - qualifying address(es)
  - which qualification the address relates (a,b,c or d)
  - full name and address of witness on consent to nomination
- Part 2 to be completed if you do not want your home address made public
  - Name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (if within the UK)
    - For example, Hart (for all elections)
  - If you live outside the UK, the name of the country in which your home address is situated.
  - Signed by candidate

# Home Address Form – Part 1

You must complete Part 1

Only complete Part 2 if you do not wish your home address to be made public

Part 1: To be completed by all candidates in England	
Full name of candidate	
Home address (in full)	
Qualifying address: Add your qualifying address, or qualifying addresses (in full) to each of the relevant qualifications below (you can complete more than one qualification).	
Qualifications that apply (tick those which apply)	Address
(a) I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the *county/district/London borough named above	
(b) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the area named above	
(c) my principal or only place of work during the preceding 12 months has been in the *county/district/London borough named above	
(d) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months resided in the *county/district or London borough named above	
Witness details	
Full name of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form	
Full home address of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form	

# Home Address Form – Part 2

<b>Part 2: To be completed only if you do not wish your home address to be made public.</b>	
<b>Note: Please submit this part (part 2) of the home address form with your nomination papers, even if your home address is to be made public.</b>	
If you request that your home address is not made public then your address will not appear on the statement of persons nominated, notice of poll or the ballot paper. Instead the name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (or country, if outside the UK), as explained below, will appear on the statement of persons nominated, notice of poll and the ballot papers.	
Statement: I require my home address not to be made public	
The relevant area my home address is situated in:	<b>Hart</b> (insert name of relevant area) <sup>2</sup>
OR	
My home address is situated outside the UK. My home address is situated in:	(insert name of country)
Signature of candidate (only required where Part 2 above has been completed)	
Candidate's signature:	
Date:	

Deliver both Parts 1 and 2 with the nomination paper to the Returning Officer by no later than 4pm on the last day to deliver nominations

# Consent to Nomination

- Must include:
  - Candidate's name
  - Which area standing in
  - Confirmation of qualification(s) that apply
    - These should be the same as Home Address Form
  - Candidate's date of birth and signature
  - Name and signature of witness
    - These should be the same as Home Address Form

# Other Forms – Party Candidates Only

- **Certificate of Authorisation**
  - All party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/ description.
  - Party names/descriptions must be registered with the Electoral Commission and must match exactly
- **Emblem Request Form**
  - Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper
- If signed by a deputy a Deputy Nominating Officer (DNO) certificate must be supplied
- Without this, candidate cannot stand for the party
- Both forms must be submitted by **4pm, 9 April 2026**

# Election Agents

- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign, particularly the financial management
- Notification must be submitted by **4pm, 9 April 2026**
- You will become your own agent by default if you don't appoint one
  - Address published even if Home Address Form submitted as a candidate

# Access to Electoral Data

- **Electoral Register/Absent Voting Lists**
  - Access by candidates – once you officially become a candidate (**25 March at earliest**)
  - Make a written request / email to the ERO – a form is available
  - Can only be used for electoral purposes
  - Data copy or paper copy
- **Ward Boundary Maps**
  - Online maps available to view:
    - [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/)
    - [maps.hart.gov.uk/mycouncil.aspx](http://maps.hart.gov.uk/mycouncil.aspx)

# Electoral Registration

- Registration Deadline: 20 April 2026
- To register, electors must provide
  - National Insurance Number
  - Date of birth and address
- [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)
- Poll Cards – Posted on 25 March 2026

# Postal Votes

- No candidate or supporter should put themselves in a position where their honesty or integrity, or that of the candidate or party, can be questioned
- List of absent voters available – use it to avoid duplicate applications
- Check elector is registered
- If supporters help electors complete the application form, the section '*Have you had help completing this form*' must be completed
- Please encourage electors to send their postal vote back as soon as possible.
- Most applications are submitted online

# Postal Votes – Issue Dates

- **Mail out 1: 15 April**
  - Applications made up to 31 March.
- **Mail out 2: 23 April**
  - Applications made up to 21 April.
  - Combined pack HDC and HCC
  - Parish separate pack
- **Number of Postal Voters – 10,700**

# Postal Votes - opening Sessions

- Postal vote opening sessions at the Civic Offices

Date	
Monday 27 April	Tuesday 5 May
Tuesday 28 April	Wednesday 6 May
Wednesday 29 April	Thursday 7 May @ 4pm HLC
Thursday 30 April	Thursday 7 May @ 10pm HLC
Friday 1 May	

- Candidates and agents entitled to attend opening sessions. Candidates can also appoint agents to observe the process.
- Advise the Electoral Registration Team 24 hours in advance if anyone wishes to attend (sessions can get cancelled or finish early)

# Postal Vote Handling

- Elector to complete form if handing in a postal pack at the polling station
  - Form cannot be completed in advance, must be witnessed
  - 5 envelopes plus their own (6 max)
- Political campaigner
  - Can hand it their own and those of a close relative or someone for whom engaged in regular care  
*(spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild)*

# Proxy Votes

- A Proxy can be appointed until **5pm, 28 April 2026**
- An Emergency Proxy can be appointed after the deadline due to:
  - A medical condition, illness or disability
  - Occupation, service or employment arising after the
  - Voter Identification - original VAC is lost, stolen, destroyed or so damaged, being used for proof of ID for a different reason, photo ID had been applied for but not arrived

# Voter ID

- All electors voting in a polling station will be required to show photo ID, examples:
  - Passport, driving licence, blue badge, older person's bus pass, disabled person's bus pass, defence ID card
    - [Accepted forms of photo ID | Electoral Commission](#)
    - ID can be out of date as long as likeness of photo
    - Must be original ID
  - Voter Authority Certificate –
    - A4 paper form
    - Valid for around 10 years
    - Can move with elector
  - Anonymous Elector's Document (new document required every year)
  - Does not apply to postal voters

# Assistance for Disabled Voters

- Support and equipment provided for voters where needed
  - Extra chairs, ramps, pencil grips, additional lighting, reserved parking space, easy read formats of ballot paper
  - Polling station inspectors – provide a selection of coloured overlays for electors with dyslexia
- Companion can assist a voter at a polling station
  - Must be over 18
  - Complete declaration
  - Can go into the booth
- Presiding Officer is able to help a voter

# Secrecy Requirements

- The vote is secret:
  - Section 66 of RPA 1983
- Applies to:
  - Opening of postal votes
  - Anyone attending a polling station
  - Attendance at the verification and count
- Code of Conduct
  - The code applies to all campaigners and sets out agreed standards of appropriate behaviour before and during an election
  - [Code of conduct for campaigners | Electoral Commission](#)

# Campaign - dos and don'ts

- **DO** - use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites, social media and other digital media.
- **DO** - comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners.
- **DO** - make sure outdoor posters are removed 2 weeks after the election.
- **DO NOT** - produce material that looks like a poll card, poll card letter or any other material published by the Returning Officer.
- **DO NOT** - pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).
- **DO NOT** – put posters on public street lighting or street furniture.

# SPOC (Special Point of Contact) FEOA (Force Elected-Official Adviser)

- Election agent email addresses/candidate if own agent will be passed onto the SPOC
  - Please message if you do not want your email address shared

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/our-guidance/single-point-contact-spoc>

- Agents will be contacted about briefing sessions

# Polling Day

- Poll Cards will be issued on 25 March 2026
  - A4 enveloped letters
    - Lists acceptable ID - including Voter Authority Certificate
- Polling Stations open from 7am to 10pm.
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10pm can apply for a ballot paper
- New Polling Stations:
  - Dogmersfield C of E Primary School (D), part of Odiham District (replaces Catherine of Aragon/ part of Crookham Village WI Hall)
  - Crown Taverners Cricket Club (AM), part of Blackwater & Hawley District (replaces Meade Hall)

# Polling Station Requirements

- Tellers:
  - must remain **outside** the polling place building
  - must not block the entrances to the polling place
  - no more than one teller at a polling station for each candidate. Their behaviour and numbers should never be seen as intimidating
  - rosette/badge may display the name of a candidate and/or an emblem or description; the rosette/badge should not bear a slogan and must not be oversized
- Tellers have no legal status and voters have a right to refuse to give information
  - Tellers must not ask voters to re-enter polling station to ascertain elector number

# Verification and Count

- 10pm onwards, Thursday, 7 May 2026
- Hart Leisure Centre, Emerald Avenue, Fleet GU51 5EE
- Who can attend?
  - Candidate,
  - Candidate's Agent,
  - Appointed Counting Agents (number to be decided)
- **Deadline for attendee notification – 5pm, Wednesday, 29 April 2026**
- ID will be required to enter the hall and a pass issued on arrival must be worn at all times

# Verification and Count

- Verification of
  - Hart District Council
  - Hampshire County Council
  - Parish (following above)
- Count
  - Hart
  - Hampshire
  - Specific table for Parish

# Candidate Expenses

- Defined as certain expenses ‘used for the purpose of the candidate’s election’ during the regulated period.
  - £960 plus 8p per elector in ward/division
- Election Agent responsible for the returns.
- Must get and keep receipts
- **District/HCC Returns due by 11 June 2026**
- **Parish Returns due by 4 June 2026**
- **All candidates must submit a return**
- **Nil Returns must be submitted (Nil form)**

# Election Office Contacts

**Vicci Pepper, Electoral Services Manager**  
Vicci.pepper@hart.gov.uk; 01252 774077

**Elections Office:**  
[elections@hart.gov.uk](mailto:elections@hart.gov.uk) 01252 77 4077

**Informal Nominations check:** nominations@hart.gov.uk

**Website:**  
[www.hart.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/7-may-2026-county-district-and-parish-elections](http://www.hart.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/7-may-2026-county-district-and-parish-elections)

**Agents Information:**  
[www.hart.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/7-may-2026-information-candidates-and-agents](http://www.hart.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/7-may-2026-information-candidates-and-agents)

# Further information

- **Electoral Commission**

- Provides advice and assistance to all those involved in elections, including political parties and candidates
- <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent>
- infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk
- 0333 103 1928

# Any questions?



# What are the commitments for a County Councillor in Hampshire?

- Councillors must act in line with current legislation; national codes of conduct and standards; and the County Council's Constitution
- Depending which committees, panels and bodies a County Councillor is appointed to, the time commitment could be a few hours, or several days per week. As well as attending meetings, Members will need to set aside time to respond to casework and correspondence from their constituents.
- Meetings of the County Council and its committees and panels are held during office hours, at our offices in Winchester. Other less formal meetings are often held remotely, using Microsoft Teams
- Councillors receive an annual allowance, called the 'basic' allowance, and may claim for eligible travel expenses. Councillors who take on more challenging roles may also receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. The basic allowance for a County Councillor is currently £14,859 per annum.

# Key information for prospective County Councillors

- At the count, once the result of the election is announced, a letter will be given to the successful candidate from the County Council's Chief Executive. The letter will include a link to a member information form. It is **essential that this form** is completed by all newly elected councillors as soon as possible, and by **no later than 4pm on the day following election**. This is to enable us to have all arrangements, including payroll and IT access, in place for you at the time of induction.
- Members hold positions of trust and have wide access to the council's social care and education services. As part of our strategy for discharging its safeguarding obligations, all elected Members are required to undergo an **Enhanced DBS check** following election to the County Council.
- A **Register of Members' Interests** is maintained to comply with the Localism Act 2011. Members will be asked to supply details to be entered into the Register within 28 days of being elected or re-elected as a Councillor.
- **Hampshire County Council is a paperless Authority**. We have been running paperless meetings since 2017, and all Councillors are provided with a laptop to enable them to access meeting papers electronically, as printed papers are not provided. IT accessibility is crucial, and support can be provided to Members who are less experienced in IT.

# Key dates for prospective County Councillors

- **Induction** - A formal, in person induction, for all new and returning Members will be held at the County Council's Head Office Complex, Elizabeth II Court, in Winchester on **Monday 11 May 2026**. The induction is an important part of supporting newly elected Members to fulfil their role and will include briefings to support new and returning members, introductions to key officers, the issuing of IT equipment and access passes and the signing of a Declaration of Office.
- **Member Briefings** - The induction will be followed by regular Member briefings. These half day briefings, held remotely using Microsoft Teams, provide Members with an opportunity to explore and discuss policy and topical issues directly with the officers involved. There is an informal atmosphere where questions can be raised, and Members' views sought. Briefings are currently scheduled for **13 and 20 May and 5 and 12 of June**. They will cover key information to assist newly elected Councillors in their role.

# Devolution

In December 2024, the Government announced a significant reform programme for local government, with a view to devolving, or transferring, powers and funding from Whitehall to local areas.

On 6 February 2025, the Government announced that Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth and Southampton City Councils and Isle of Wight Council had been successful in their joint bid for inclusion on the Government's fast-track Devolution Priority Programme (DPP).

This change will bring significant investment and additional powers to improve economic growth, skills, transport and regional collaboration in the area.

A regular bulletin is keeping stakeholders abreast of key developments. To register to receive these Hampshire and the Solent, Mayoral Combined County Authority (HatS MCCA) updates direct to your inbox, please email [HatS.devolution@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:HatS.devolution@southampton.gov.uk) or visit <https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/governmentinhampshire/future-hampshire-solent/devolution>

# Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Central Government wants local government to be reorganised across the country. Hampshire County Council is committed to ensuring that LGR delivers the best outcomes for people, no matter where they live in the area.

Our final proposal was submitted to central Government on 26 September. Alternative proposals were submitted by a number of the district, borough and unitary councils across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The Government ran a public consultation from November to January, seeking views on the different proposals they'd received. The Government is expected to make a final decision in spring 2026 on how councils will be structured across our area in future.

Further information on LGR can be found on our website at:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/governmentinhampshire/future-hampshire-solent/local-government-reorganisation>

# Where can I find more information

This information is reproduced on the County Council's website, and will be update as required:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/electionsandvoting/candidates>

A wealth of information on the role of the County Council, including a link to the forthcoming calendar of meetings can be found on the County Council's Website:

[www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil](http://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil)

The Constitution sets out how the County Council works and how it makes decisions - the current version may be found at the below link.

<https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=620>

If you have any further queries, please contact us by email at

[members.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:members.services@hants.gov.uk)