

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

The
Electoral
Commission

Information

City of Wolverhampton Council

Bilston North By Election on 31 October 2024

The Electoral Commission

Who's who



- **The Returning Officer** is the person responsible for running the elections. The Returning Officer is Tim Johnson.
- **The Electoral Registration Officer** is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is Tim Johnson.

Who's who

The Electoral Commission

Three Deputy Returning Officers (DRO) appointed:



David Pattison
DRO/Chief
Operating Officer



Surjit Tour DRO-
Deputy Monitoring
Officer



Laura Gittos
DRO/Head of
Governance

Who's who – DRO's to receive Candidate Nominations

The
Electoral
Commission



Alice Peacock
Deputy Electoral
Services Manager



Sara Roberts
Senior Electoral
Services Officer

Election timetable

The Electoral Commission

Publication of Notice of Election	9am Monday 30 September
Nominations commence	10am Monday 30 September
Close of nominations	4pm Friday 4 October
Notification of appointment of election agents	4pm Friday 4 October
Publication of statement of persons nominated	By 4pm Monday 7 October
Deadline for applications to register to vote	Midnight Tuesday 15 October
Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or postal proxy vote applications	5pm Wednesday 16 October
Publication of notice of poll/situation of polling stations	By Wednesday 23 October
Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	5pm Wednesday 23 October
Deadline for Voter Authority Certificates	5pm Wednesday 23 October
Appointment of counting and polling agents	Thursday 24 October
Polling day	Thursday 31 October

Election timetable (cont'd)

Deadline to apply to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or if unexpectedly called away because of employment or service	5pm Thursday 31 October
Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends	5pm Thursday 31 October
Alterations to register to correct clerical error	9pm Thursday 31 October
Return of election expenses	Thursday 5 December

Qualifications

- Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated **and** on polling day:
 - be at least 18 years of age
 - be a British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights
- Also at least one of the following:
 - Registered local government elector for local authority area
 - Occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the local authority area during the whole 12 months preceding nomination
 - Principal or only place of work (including unpaid) during last 12 months in local authority area
 - Lived in the local authority area during the last 12 months

Qualifications - EU nationals

- Changes came into force on 7 May 2024, where EU citizens will only be able to stand at local government elections if they are a **qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights.**
- A person is a qualifying EU citizen if they are a citizen of a country with which the UK has a bilateral Voting and Candidacy Rights (VCR) treaty and are resident in the UK with any form of leave to remain, or do not require such leave.
- Qualifying countries: **Denmark, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Spain**
- EU citizens with retained rights are citizens of an EU country with which the UK does not have a bilateral Voting and Candidacy Rights (VCR) treaty but they have been legally resident in the UK since before the UK left the EU on 31/12/2020 (the Implementation Period Completion Date – IPCD)
- Further guidance can be found on the EC website:
- www.electoralcommission.org.uk/EU

Disqualifications

A person **cannot** be a candidate if they:

- are **employed by the local authority** or hold a paid office under the authority (including joint boards or committees). Candidates may be ‘employed by the local authority’ if they work at certain schools, fire services, police or health services
- are subject of a **Bankruptcy Restrictions Order** (or interim restrictions order) in England or Wales
- have been sentenced to a term of **imprisonment** of three months or more (inc. suspended sentence) without option of a fine, during the 5 years before polling day
- are serving a disqualification due to being found guilty of a **corrupt or illegal practice** by an election court
- hold a **politically restricted post**
- are subject to the **notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003**

Office Term

The elected candidate will be elected to the remainder of the term in the office held by the vacancy until 2026.

Equality of votes

- If there is an equality of votes (a tie), after at least 2 recounts, by law the Returning Officer must decide between candidates by lots. The names of each candidate will be written on paper and put in to ballot box and shuffled.
- The Returning Officer will draw out one piece of paper and read out the name of the candidate. An additional vote is given to that candidate.

Submitting nomination papers

- The documents that must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm – **Friday 4 October**
 - Nomination form
 - Home address form
 - Consent to nomination
- Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm – **Friday 4 October**
 - A certificate authorising the use of a party name/ registered description on the ballot paper
 - A written request to use one of the party's emblems on the ballot paper (optional)

Submitting nomination papers safely

- Contact Electoral Services to book an appointment for in person checks/delivery of nomination papers – candidates@wolverhampton.gov.uk / 01902 55 5050
- **Appointments every half hour weekdays between 10am – 4pm**
- Appointment rooms on ground floor will be used for nominations – near rear of Civic Centre.
- Must hand over in person to one of the nomination team

Informal checks

- Encourage all candidates to take up opportunity of an **informal check** before you hand it in.
- Candidate, election agent or someone you trust can deliver your nomination paper for you.
- **Minor corrections** can be made, or a new nomination pack can be issued.
- **Must make appointment for informal check in advance**

Form 1a – Nomination paper (header)

The division or ward in which the candidate is standing should be added here.

This section should be completed by RO staff when the form is **formally submitted**

Number the form sequentially in order of delivery/processing. Where an agent has brought in several forms the same electoral area, ask them in what order they want them to be processed.

1a – Nomination paper		Office use only			
Local government election in England		Date received	Time received	Initials	No
*ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS / A COUNCILLOR for the					
electoral division/ward of the	Bilston North				
county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate	Wolverhampton				
Date of election:	31 October 2024				

The name of the council should be given here.

E.g., if the candidate is standing for a ward in Southmarsh District Council, 'Southmarsh' should be added here.

If the candidate has put the council's name in full this would not invalidate the nomination.

It has not been pre-printed; the date of the election should be given.

Should be deleted as necessary, e.g., if there is more than one vacancy in the division/ward.

The Electoral Commission

- Do not use tippex. If you make a minor mistake, cross out and initial.

Form 1a – Nomination paper (Candidate's details)

The Candidate's details section must be completed in full before any electors sign the nomination paper

Full names must be added here – no initials.

Prefixes (e.g., Sir) or suffixes (e.g., Snr) must not be used.

It is not vital that this is completed
Titles will not appear on the ballot paper or other notices.

Should be deleted as necessary.

We, the undersigned, being local government electors for the said electoral division/ward, do hereby nominate the under-mentioned person as a candidate at the said election

Candidate's Details		
Candidate's surname	<i>Smith</i>	Mr/Ms/MISS/ Ms/Dri/Ottrer
Other forenames in full	<i>Joseph</i>	
Commonly used surname (if any)		
Commonly used forenames (if any)	<i>Jo</i>	
Description (if any) Use no more than six words (see note 5)	<i>Gold party candidate</i>	

The description may be left blank.

OR the candidate could use the description 'Independent'.

OR - for political party candidates, they would need to enter the registered party name or description as authorised by the party. This must be as registered with the [Electoral Commission](#), and must match **EXACTLY** with the description authorised on Form 2 – the Certificate of Authorisation.

It is important to read the [EC guidance](#) if a description is used.

This is optional.

If the candidate is commonly known by a different name to their actual name, this/these should be entered here.

The commonly used name will then appear on the ballot paper and the Statement of Persons Nominated instead of the actual name.

Usually, you will take the commonly used name at face value, but it may be rejected if it is obscene or offensive, or its use could mislead or confuse electors.

It is important to read the [EC guidance](#) if a commonly used name is used.

The Electoral Commission

Form 1a – Nomination paper (subscribers)

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	<i>S Jones</i>	<i>Sarah Jones</i>	AE	123
Seconder	<i>T Jones</i>	<i>Tom Jones</i>	AE	124

The candidate should include the polling district reference and elector number from the register in force when the Notice of Election (NOE) is published.

- Ensure subscribers only complete form once the candidate details including description completed.
- We can assist with elector numbers if completing prior to accessing register
- Candidates can subscribe up to the number of vacancies in ward (one)

Form 1b – Home address form (header)

This section should be completed by RO staff when the form is **formally submitted**.

1b – Home address form		Office use only			
Local government elections in England		Date received	Time received	Initials	No
*ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS / *A COUNCILLOR for the					
Bilston North		*electoral division/ward of the			
*county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate		Wolverhampton			
Date of election:		31 October 2024			

The division or ward in which the candidate is standing should be added here.

The name of the council should be given here.
E.g., if the candidate is standing for a ward in Southmarsh District Council, 'Southmarsh' should be added here.

It has not been pre-printed; the date of the election should be given.

Form 1b – Home address form (Part 1)

All candidates must complete Part 1 of Form 1b

This should be the actual full name (rather than commonly used name). Check it is the same full name as given in Form 1a.

The home address of the candidate must be given here:
- in full and without any abbreviations - it must be their current home address - it must not be a business address (unless they run a business from their home)

For further information see the [EC guidance](#).

Part 1 (to be completed by all candidates in England)	
Full name of candidate	Joseph Smith
Home address (in full)	1 Forest Lane Southfold, S99 1ZW
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 Forest Lane Southfold, S99 1ZW
(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	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) my principal or only place of work during the preceding 12 months has been in the *county/district/London borough named above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr Jo's Medical Practice 1 High Street, Northfold, S99 2AB
(d) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months resided in the *county/district or London borough named above	<input type="checkbox"/>
Witness details	
Full name of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form	Sidney Jackson Brown
Full home address of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form	3 Forest Lane Southfold, S99 1ZW

The full address should be written next to **each** of the qualifications which apply.

If applicable, a different address may be used for each qualification.

Must match the information given on Form 1c.

There are no restrictions on who can be a witness, but the same person will need to witness Form 1c.

Form 1b – Home address form (Part 2)

Candidates who do not want their home address printed on the ballot paper must complete and sign Part 2 of Form 1b.

Part 2 should be submitted whether it is completed or not.

Part 2: To be completed only if you do not wish your home address to be made public.

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.

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:

Wolverhampton

(insert name of relevant area)²

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:

J. Smith

Date:

30 September 2024

If either of the two boxes above have been completed the form must be signed and dated.

The relevant area is the county/district/London borough in which the home address is situated.

1c – Candidate's consent to nomination	Office use only			
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	Recd

*You must declare that you meet at least one of the listed qualification(s) below and may declare more than one qualification if applicable. To do this, strike through any that do not apply. Any qualification(s) that apply must match the information given on your home address form.

Date of election:	31 October 2024			
I (name in full):	Joseph Smith			
hereby consent to my nomination as a candidate for election as councillor for the:	Clearvale	*electoral division/ward		
of the county/district/London borough of:	Southmarsh			
I declare that on the day of my nomination, I am qualified and that, if there is a poll on the day of election, I will be qualified to be so elected by virtue of being on that day or those days a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of a Member State of the European Union, who has attained the age of 18 years and that:				
*a. I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the county/district/London borough named above; or				
*b. I have during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day, or those days, occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the area named above; or				
*c. my principal or only place of work during those 12 months has been in the county/district/London borough named above; or				
*d. I have during the whole of these 12 months resided in the county/district or London borough named above.				
I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, sections 80 or 81A of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 (copies of which are printed overleaf), and I do not hold a politically restricted post, within the meaning of Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, under a local authority, within the meaning of that Part.				
Note 1: A candidate who is qualified by more than one qualification may complete any of those which may apply.				
Note 2: Disqualifications set out under s.81A of the Local Government Act 1972 only apply to a person who is subject to any relevant notification requirements, or a relevant order, made on or after 28 June 2022.				
Date of birth:	23/04/1991			
Signature:	<i>J Smith</i>			
Date of consent:	30 September 2024			
Witness: confirm the above-mentioned candidate signed the declaration in my presence.				
Witness (name in full):	Sidney Jackson Brown			
Witness's signature:	<i>S J Brown</i>			

The candidate must strike through any qualification that does not apply, leaving at least one not struck through.

The qualification (s) which apply must match the information given in Part 1 of Form 1b.

This should be the actual full name (rather than commonly used name) as given in Form 1a.

The candidate must sign here, and the date should not be earlier than 1 month before the deadline for nominations.

Candidate must be 18 or over on the **date of submitting the nomination paper.**

This must be the same person who witnessed Part 1 of Form 1b.

Certificate of authorisation

- Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person authorised to act on their behalf)
- The certificate may:
 - allow the use of the party name or a particular description
 - allow candidate to choose whether to use the party name or any of the descriptions registered with the Electoral Commission
- Must be submitted by **Friday 4 October 2024, 4pm**
- Check registered parties and descriptions on the political database:
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/>

Form 2 – Certificate of authorisation

For party candidates only

2 – Certificate of authorisation	Office use only			
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No

Details of candidate to be authorised and the allowed description/party name			
Ward/ division -name:	<i>Clearvale</i>	Date of election:	<i>31 October 2024</i>
The candidate (name in full):	<i>Joseph Smith</i>		
Name of political party:	<i>Gold party</i> <small>Political party registered with the Electoral Commission</small>		
I hereby certify that the candidate may include the following registered description or party name in their nomination form:	<i>Gold party candidate</i>		
Note: it is an offence to sign this form if you are not the party's registered nominating officer or authorised to do so by the party's registered nominating officer			
Signature of party's registered Nominating Officer (or person authorised by the registered Nominating Officer):	<i>H Robertson</i>		
Name of person signing this form:	<i>Hugh Robertson</i>		
Date:	<i>30 September 2024</i>		

If the candidate is authorised to use a specific registered description or the party name, it should be written here. **Must match description on Form 1a.**

Or, if the candidate is authorised to choose, it should say 'any registered description or the party's name as registered with the Electoral Commission'

Check the [EC website](#) for descriptions.

Must be signed by the party's Nominating Officer or someone authorised by them – no need to check authority granted.

Form 3 – Emblem request form

For party candidates only

(To request an emblem as registered with the EC)

3 – Request for a party emblem	Office use only			
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No

Candidate's request for use of an emblem			
Ward/division name:	<i>Clearvale</i>	Date of election:	31 October 2024
Candidate name in full:	<i>Joseph Smith</i>		
I request that the ballot paper shall contain, against my name, the following registered emblem (please identify which emblem if the party has registered more than one):			
Emblem to be used (Please use name or description as on the Electoral Commission's website):	<i>Gold medal - England version (ID 999)</i>		
Candidate's signature:	<i>J Smith</i>		
Date:	30 September 2024		

This should be the name as registered with the EC e.g., "Emblem for use in England" or "Emblem ID 999".

Must be signed by the candidate.

Joint candidates

- Nominated by **more than one party**
- May use registered joint descriptions
 - must be supported by certificate of authorisation **from each party**
- May use one emblem of one of the parties but there are no joint emblems

Form 4 – Agent notification form

Optional – if a candidate does not appoint an agent they will become their own agent by default.

Pleas note there is no prevision in the legislation for the address given to **not** be disclosed – if you are your own agent or for a candidate this will be disclosed.

4 – Notification of an election agent			
Local government elections in England		Date received	Time received
Ward/division name	Clearvale		
Date of election:	31 October 2024		
Candidate's notification of their election agent			
I, (Candidate name in full):	Joseph Smith		
Hereby declare that the name and address of my election agent is:			
Agent's name:	Emma White		
Agent's address (in full):	10 Marine Road, Whitecoast, W12 3AB		
The office address of my election agent to which all claims, notices, legal process and the other documents may be sent is:			
Agent's office address (in full):	Gold Party Office, 8 Main Street, Northfold, S99 3XY		
Candidate's signature (or of person authorised to act on behalf of candidate):	J.Smith		
Date:	30 September 2024		
Confirmation of acceptance by election agent			
I [agent named above] confirm my acceptance as the election agent for the above named candidate. I understand that I must carry out my duties according to law. I understand that there are penalties if I fail to fulfil my duties according to law.			
Agent's signature:	EB White		
Date:	30 September 2024		
Agent's other details in case of query (optional – will not be published)			
Home telephone:	01742 555555		
Work telephone:	01742 444444		
Mobile telephone:	09777 444444		
Email address:	3bwhite5544@goldpartymail.co.uk		

Must be signed by both

Must be signed by both

Must be a physical address, within the council area, or in a constituency within the local government area, or in a district, borough, Welsh county/ county borough adjoining it.

The agent's office address will appear on the Notice of Election Agents

Useful to collect this information in case of query or follow up contact.

Other agents

- Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on your behalf:
 - You must give notice in writing of any people appointed as polling and counting agents by Thursday 24 October.
 - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session. We will give 24 hours' notice.

Access to electoral register/absent voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
 - earliest, on last **date to publish Notice of Election (Monday 30 September 2024)**
- Make written request to the ERO – forms are available from the office / are included in your nomination pack.
- **Entitled to one copy** – so please specify either Paper, PDF or Excel.
- Also entitled to alteration notices (published on **04/10/24, 18/10/24 and 24/10/24**)

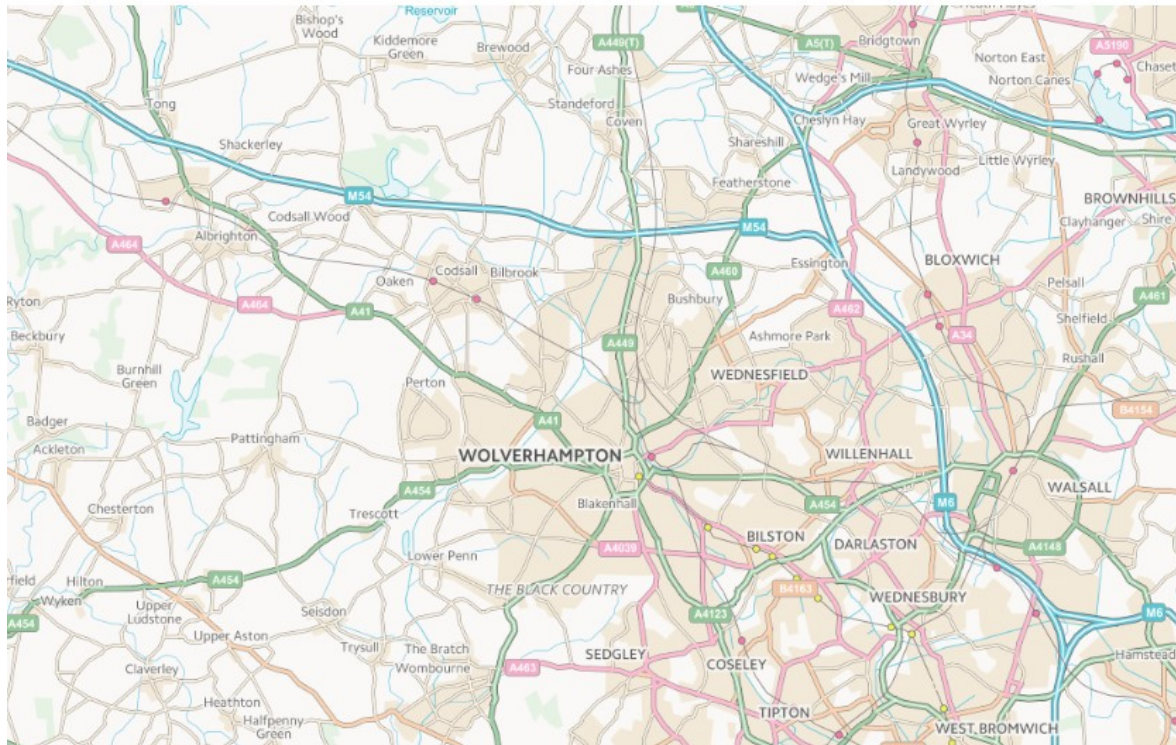
Access to
electoral
register /
absent voting
lists

- Only use data for permitted purposes!
 - to complete the nomination form
 - to help you campaign
 - to check that donations/loans are permissible

Electoral maps • <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/>

ELECTION MAPS

NO BOUNDARIES OVERLAID
Select a boundary to get started



Registration

- As a candidate you are uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote.
- You should encourage people to register as soon as possible.
- The deadline for applying for the election is before midnight **Tuesday 15 October 2024**.
- Individuals can apply to register online at **<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>**. It only takes a few minutes. Alternatively, they can call Customer Services on: **01902 55 1177**

Registration

- When discussing registering to vote with individuals, you will need to make them aware that they will need to provide:
 - their National Insurance number
 - date of birth and address
- People who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance number can still register, but they may need to provide further information. If so, they will be contacted by the ERO.

Apply for postal vote/proxy vote

- The deadline for applying for a postal vote is 5pm **Wednesday 16 October 2024.**
- The deadline for applying for a proxy vote is 5pm **Wednesday 23 October 2024.**

Links

- <https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote>
- <https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote>
- If electors require a paper form, they can contact Electoral Services on 01902 55 1177 or Electoral.Services@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Poll cards

- Initial dispatch date: 4 October 2024
- Second dispatch date (for people who registered after 27 September up to 15 October): 18 October 2024

Postal votes

- Currently there are **1,584** postal voters in the Bilston North ward
- A video to assist electors to complete postal pack will be available on website: Wolverhampton.gov.uk/elections
- Initial dispatch date (for postal voters who had applied by 2 October): 11 October, to land on doorsteps on 12 October 2024
- Second dispatch date (for postal voters who had applied by 16 October): 18 October to land on doorsteps on 19 October 2024.

Postal vote opening sessions

- Only candidate, agent, postal vote agents entitled to attend
- Let Electoral Services know which sessions you will be attending 24 hours in advance
- If a session is stood down Electoral Services will inform candidates and agents

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday 29 October	10am – 2pm	Committee Room 5-Ground Floor Civic Centre
Wednesday 30 October	10am – 2pm	Committee Room 5-Ground Floor Civic Centre
Thursday 31 October	Final opening session to start at 8pm	Committee Room 5-Ground Floor Civic Centre

Voter ID

- Electors will be required to show valid ID in in order vote at the polling station.
- A full list of valid ID, how to apply for free ID, and further information can be found on the council website
- <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/your-council-and-meetings/elections-and-voting/voter-id>
- Electors who require support in applying for a free Voter ID (Voter Authority Certificate) can attend the Civic Centre.
- Officer is available between 2 Oct and 23 Oct 2024
- Opening times are between 10am-3pm for VAC support.

Postal Vote Handling rules

The Electoral Commission

- Electors are now required to complete a **postal vote return form** when handing in postal votes at the polling station or the Civic Centre. This form must be handed over to polling staff or a member of electoral services.
- Electors can hand in a **maximum** of 5 packs plus their own.
- Exceeding this number will result in the pack(s) being **rejected**.
- If a form is not completed the law now requires that the postal pack(s) is **rejected**.
- Electors will be informed that the postal vote has been rejected as part of the normal notification process within **3 months of the close of poll**.

For staff use only:		Date and Time:	Location:
Postal vote return form			
Please read the information on page 2 before completing this form. Your postal vote (s) will be rejected if you do not complete this form in full.			
Section 1			
1. Are you handing in your own postal vote?			Yes/No
2. Are you handing in the postal votes of other electors? (if 'No' go to question 3)			Yes/No
a. If 'Yes', how many other electors? (max. per poll is 5 plus your own - see note 1 on page 2)			
3. Are you a political campaigner? (see note 2 on page 2) (if 'No' go to question 4)			Yes/No
a. If 'Yes', and you are handing in the postal votes of other electors, do the postal votes all belong to close relatives or to people for whom you provide regular care?			Yes/No
4. How many envelopes containing postal votes are you handing in? (including your own, if applicable)			
Section 2			
5. Name			
6. Address			
7. If you are handing in the postal votes of other electors, please provide a reason why			
8. I declare that in total I have not handed in postal votes for more than the permitted number of electors, either at any polling station or to the Returning Officer, at this/these poll(s) and that to the best of my knowledge I am: (delete (a) or (b) as appropriate)			
(a) not a political campaigner for whom it is an offence to handle certain postal votes or			
(b) a political campaigner and have only handed in my own postal vote and/or that of a close relative, or someone for whom I provide regular care.			
9. Signature		10. Date	
Section 3 To be completed by the Relevant Officer			
I, (insert name)....., being the Relevant Officer at the following location(add polling station name or council offices):			
A. am satisfied that this form has been completed properly and provides the information as required. I do not suspect that more than the permitted number of postal votes have been handed in, nor do I suspect that the individual named above is a political campaigner committing an offence by handing in the postal votes. Therefore the postal vote(s) handed in is/are to be accepted (tick if applicable for all postal votes handed in) <input type="checkbox"/>			
B. reject the attached postal vote(s) because the person handing it/them in: (tick all reasons that apply)			
i. did not fully complete the postal vote return form (incomplete)			<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. handed in postal votes on behalf of more than the permitted number of electors			<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. was a political campaigner not permitted to handle the postal votes			<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. did not complete the postal vote return form (left behind postal voting document)			<input type="checkbox"/>
Total number of postal votes rejected			<input type="text"/>
If you have accepted the individual's own postal vote(s), please tick here			<input type="checkbox"/>

Postal Vote Handling rules for campaigners

- Campaigners are not permitted to hand over postal votes packs unless it is their own or five other people that are either close relatives, or someone they provide regular care for.
- Any postal votes handed over by a campaigner that does not fall into the above requirements will be rejected.
- Electors will be contacted after the election to inform them that their vote has been rejected.
- All candidates and agents are encouraged to read the Electoral Commission guidance for further information.

Personal safety

- If you do not want your home address to be made public, complete part 2 of the home address form.
- There is no provision in the legislation for the same option to apply for election agents – so if candidate is their own election agent there is a risk home address is made public. The agents must provide an office address so that all documents can be sent to it – often the home address.
- Agents may wish to consider using a local political party office or an office especially set up for the election to get around this if they do not want their home address to be made public.
- Imprints on campaign material must include name and address of printer/promoter. It is possible for the candidate to use a PO box address or other mailbox service for this purpose.

Campaigning dos and don'ts

- Do use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- 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.
- Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).

Code of conduct for campaigners (1)

- Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, but their activities should not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.
- Electoral registration and absent vote applications:
 - Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law
 - Include the ERO's address for the return of forms
 - Ensure unaltered applications are sent to ERO within **two working days**.
 - Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.
 - Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
 - Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.
- Voter Authority Certificate Applications:
 - Should not handle paper based Voter Authority Certificate applications and should encourage electors to send them directly to the ERO

Code of conduct for campaigners (2)

- Postal ballot packs:
 - Never touch a postal ballot paper
 - Never observe electors completing their postal vote.
 - Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot pack from voters
- Campaigning outside polling stations:
 - You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including public spaces outside polling places.
 - Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.

Candidate spending

- Defined as certain expenses ‘used for the purposes of the candidate’s election’ during the regulated period.
- **Regulated period begins on Monday 30 September 2024**
- Responsibility of **election agent**
- Limit on expenses:
 - £960 + 8 pence per elector in ward/division on register in force on 1 September 2024.
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)

Candidates' spending returns

- **Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election – 5 December 2024.**
- Returns made public by **Returning Officer**
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the **Electoral Commission**
- Failure to submit a spending return is a criminal offence enforceable by police
- No spending will be reimbursed

Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 6am to 10.30pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
 - for queries relating to election finance issues, contact the Electoral Commission
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10 pm can apply for a ballot paper
- Postal votes – can be handed into polling stations within Wolverhampton or delivered to the elections office until 10pm.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in a postal vote can do so after 10pm.

Counting of votes

- The verification and count will be held in:
 - **The Atrium, Civic Centre (Ground Floor), St Peters Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1RG**
- Receipt of ballot boxes and final postal vote opening session on Thursday 31 October 2024 from 10pm until midnight.
- Count venue will open to candidates and agents from 9.30pm
The verification will commence from 10pm.
- We anticipate verification will be finished by 11:30pm.
- The count will start as soon as ward verification is complete.
We estimate the count will be finished by 1am at the latest.
- A letter inviting you to the count will be sent out a week to two weeks before the election. A lanyard will be issued on arrival.

Contacts

- **Elections office:**
 - Candidates@wolverhampton.gov.uk
 - 01902 555050 (number for candidates and agents only)
 - 01902 551177 (public number – customer services)
- **Electoral Commission:**
 - infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk
 - 0333 103 1928