

Candidates and Agents briefing

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Working Together

Topics

- who's who
- key dates of the election timetable
- qualifications
- disqualifications
- nominations
- agents
- postal votes
- the poll
- counting of votes
- candidate spending
- contacts



Who's who

- The Returning Officer is the person responsible for running the elections. The Returning Officer is Arthur Charvonia.
- The Electoral Registration Officer is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is Arthur Charvonia.
- Assistant Director – Law & Governance and The Monitoring Officer is Emily Yule
- Corporate Manager – Electoral Services is David Connors
- Contact details are provided later



Election timetable

Publication of Notice of Election	Parishes: 12/03/2019 Districts: 26/03/2019
Nominations Commence	Parishes: 12/03/2019 Districts: 26/03/2019
Close of nominations	4PM 03/04/2019
Notification of appointment of election agent	4PM 03/04/2019
Publication of statement of persons nominated	By 4PM 04/04/2019
Deadline for applications to register to vote	12/04/2019
Deadline for new postal vote applications / changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications	5PM 15/04/2019
Publication of notice of poll / Situation of polling stations	Not later than 24/04/2019

Election timetable (cont'd)

Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	5pm 24/04/2019
Appointment of counting and polling agents	25/04/2019
Polling day	02/05/2019
Deadline to apply to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or if unexpectedly called away because of employment or service	5pm 02/05/2019
Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends	5pm 02/05/2019
Alterations to register to correct clerical error	9pm 02/05/2019
Return of election expenses	Parish: 30/05/2019 District: 07/06/2019

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Specific Dates

Event	Despatch
Stage 1 Poll Card	25/03/2019
Stage 1 Postal Vote	12/04/2019
Stage 2 Postal Vote	18/04/2019
Stage 2 Poll Card	23/04/2019
Postal Vote Opening	29/04/2019-02/05/2019
Verification	02/05/2019-03/05/2019
Count	03/05/2019



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, or national of an EU member state.
- 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



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).
- 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**



Submitting nomination papers

- The documents that must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm 03/04/2019 are:
 - the nomination form
 - their home address form
 - the consent to nomination
- Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm 03/04/2019
 - 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

- Take care when completing your nomination papers, as mistakes may invalidate your nomination
- Complete nomination papers early and arrange for us to provide an informal check
- The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination **must be delivered by hand** and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means.



Nomination form

- Include your full name
- Optional: use commonly used name box(es) if commonly known by a name other than actual name and wish to use it instead. But you cannot use your first name as a commonly used name to exclude your middle name.
- Description field – 3 options:
 - leave blank
 - Independent
 - party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Nominating Officer

Nomination form

- Subscribers: 10 subscribers are required.
- Must sign & print their names. Check details of subscribers against electoral register.
- Only ask subscribers to sign after completing the name, address and description fields on the form.
- Data protection requirements



Home address form

- Part 1 of the home address form must state:
 - your full name and home address in full
 - your qualifying address, or, where you have declared on your consent to nomination that you meet more than one qualification, your qualifying addresses
 - which of the qualifications your qualifying address or addresses relate to (a, b, c and/or d)
 - the full name and the home address in full of the witness to your consent to nomination



Home address form (cont.)

- Part 2 of the home address form must be completed if you do not want your address to be made public:
 - The name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (if your home address is in the UK),
 - if you live outside the UK, the name of the country in which your home address is situated.



Consent to nomination form

- Must include:
 - name
 - which area standing in
 - confirmation of qualification(s) that apply (at least 1, but select all that apply)
 - date of birth & signature
 - date of consent
 - witness' name and signature



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 4pm 03/04/2019



Emblem request form

- Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper
- Emblem request form must be submitted by 4pm 03/04/2019
- Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required



Election agent

- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management.
- Notification of appointment must reach the RO by 4pm - 03/04/2019. Form is included in nomination pack.
- You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed.



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 25/04/2019
 - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session. We will give 48 hours' notice.



Access to electoral register/absent voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
 - earliest, on 12/03/2019 for Parish Elections and 26/03/2019 for District Elections if you, or others declared yourself a candidate
 - once you or others have declared yourself a candidate after this date / date you submit your nomination papers
- Make **written** request to the ERO – forms are available from the office / are included in your nomination pack.



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



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 12/04/2019.
- Individuals can apply to register online at **<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>**. It only takes a few minutes.



Registration (Cont.)

- 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.



Absent voting

- If you are encouraging people who don't have a postal (or proxy) vote to apply for one, make sure you explain that they will only qualify for one in time for the elections if they are (or will be) registered in time to vote at the elections.



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

- 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



Code of conduct for campaigners

- 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.



Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 06:30 am to 10:30 pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
- for queries relating to election finance issues, contact the Electoral Commission (contact details shown later)
- 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 the electoral area to which they are relevant 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 count will be held in: Wherstead Park, The Street, IP9 2BJ.
- The Returning Officer will communicate details of Verification and Count to Candidates and Agents following the close of nominations, this will include numbers of Counting Agents
- Candidates, election agents, counting agents and one other person appointed by the candidate are entitled to attend.



Spending issues



Candidate spending

- Defined as certain expenses 'used for the purposes of the candidate's election' during the regulated period.
- Responsibility of **election agent**
- Limit on expenses:
 - £740 + 6 pence per elector in ward/division on register in force on 26/03/2019
 - reduced for joint candidates
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)



Candidates' spending returns

- District - Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election
- Parish – Returns due 28 days after the day of the election
- 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



Contacts



Contacts

- Elections Office:
 - 0300 123 4000
 - Elections@BaberghMidSuffolk.gov.uk



Questions



Thank you

