

2019 Elections Candidates Briefing

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Topics

- Who's who
- Key dates of the election timetable
- Electoral Register / Absent Voting Lists
- Postal votes
- Polling Day, Verification and Count
- Candidate spending
- Contacts
- Questions and Answers

Who's Who?

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

Key Dates/Events

- Midnight Friday 12th April – last date to Register to Vote
 - On line www.gov.uk/register-to-vote
- 5pm Monday 15th April – last date for new Postal Vote applications
- 5pm Wednesday 24th April – last date for Proxy Vote applications

Key Dates/Events

- Thursday 25th April - Appointment of counting and polling agents
- Thursday 2nd May - Polling day 7am to 10pm
- Thursday 2nd May - 5pm deadline to apply to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or if unexpectedly called away because of employment or service.
- Thursday 2nd May - 5pm replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends.
- Thursday 2nd May - 9pm alterations to register to correct clerical error.
- Thursday 30th May - Return of Town / Parish election expenses
- Friday 7th June - Return of District election expenses

Electoral Register / Absent Voters List

- Candidates are entitled to receive a free copy of the full electoral register and the lists of people voting by post or proxy ('the absent voters' lists') for the ward/division that they are contesting
- Only use data for permitted purposes!
 - to help you campaign
 - to check that donations/loans are permissible
- Must only be used for electoral purposes
- Make a written request to the ERO - forms are available at www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk

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 **12th April 2019**.
- Registration has changed from a household to an individual system. Individuals can now also register online at **<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>**. It only takes a few minutes.

Registration

- When discussing registering to vote with individuals, you will need to make them aware that they will need:
 - their National Insurance number,
 - date of birth and address to register.
- 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 if they are (or will be) individually registered in time to vote at the elections.
- They will be registered individually if they applied to register by Midnight Friday 12th April.

Campaign Do's 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.
 - No permission to use District Council land or buildings
 - No permission to use public highways, lamp posts, barriers etc.
- 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

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 conform fully 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 Contd ...

- 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 packs from voters.
- Campaigning outside polling stations:
 - Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.
- Tellers
 - Make sure that your tellers understand that they may must not impede an elector's access to the polling station
 - Best practice is for electors to be approached on the way out of the polling station

Postal Votes

- 1st Despatch – 11th April
- 2nd Despatch – 18th April
- Opening commences 9.30am Tuesday 16th April and will continue from 9.30am Monday to Friday up to and including Polling day on 2nd May 2019.
- Saturday sessions will be added if necessary.
- To attend email ro@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Polling Day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm.
- Office open 7am to 9pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election.
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10pm can apply for a ballot paper.
- Postal votes can be handed into polling stations within the constituency or delivered to the Town Hall, Matlock until 10pm.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in postal vote can do so after 10pm.

The Verification and Count

- 2nd May from 10pm – Verification of all votes cast, Wirksworth Leisure Centre
- 2nd May – Counting of votes cast in District Council Election proceeding until result declared (most likely in early hours of 3rd May, Wirksworth Leisure Centre
- 3rd May – Counting of votes cast in Town / Parish Council election from 2pm, Town Hall, Matlock

The Verification and Count

- Verification and count model by 3 teams
- Stage 1 – empty contents of each box for each election, sift and count contents. Verify that number inside box corresponds with ballot paper account.
- Stage 2 - repack Town / Parish papers for Friday.
- Stage 3 - begin to sort and count District papers.
- Stage 4 - agree rejected ballot papers.
- Stage 5 - discuss provisional result with agents.
- Stage 6 - If no reason to recount declare result.

Hand outs

1. List of contested parishes and 1st March electorate
 2. List of contested Wards and 1st March electorate
 3. Count Team Ward Allocations
- Also available at www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Spending Issues

- 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 1st March 2019
- Must get and keep receipts over £20 (£10 for Town / Parish Council Elections)

Spending Returns

- Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election.
- Parish/Town Council elections, returns are due 28 calendar days after the day of the election.
- Even if the election was uncontested or the candidate did not spend anything – not allowed to sit or vote on the Parish/ Town Council if late, until spending return is completed and submitted.
- 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 by Council or Electoral Commission.

Contacts

- Elections Office - Single Point of Contact
 - E mail – electoral@derbyshiredales.gov.uk
 - Information and downloads www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk
 - Telephone 01629 761335
 - Election day 7am to 9pm
- DCC Highways Department
 - E mail – highways.hub@Derbyshire.gov.uk
- Electoral Commission contacts
 - 0333 103 1928 in England

Thank you for your time

Any questions?