

PRESS RELEASE FROM COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL

A Guide to Voting in the General Election

Cotswold District Council staff are election-ready – and have all the information you need if you're unsure about voter registration, postal voting and proxy votes.

Around 80,000 election poll cards have now been posted to all Cotswold District residents who are registered to vote. Anyone who has not received their poll card by Saturday 16 November should check that they are on the electoral register, as the Council is keen to ensure anyone entitled to vote does not miss out.

This check can be done by emailing elections@cotswold.gov.uk or calling **01285 623002**.

Electoral Registration Officer Nigel Adams, says: "People sometimes turn up at polling stations only to find out they are not able to vote as they are not on the register. Often it is because they have changed address and not realised that they need to re-register. Also, some think that paying council tax automatically adds them to the electoral register – but this is not the case.

"It is important to contact us as soon as possible if you have not received a poll card by 16 November."

The deadline to register to vote at the election on 12 December is midnight on Tuesday 26 November.

Who needs to register?

If you are 18 or over and have never registered or voted before, or if you have recently moved address, then you will need to register.

You can even register if you are aged 17, but you will need to have turned 18 by the election date to be eligible to vote this time.

To register to vote, please visit www.gov.uk/register-to-vote - you will need your national insurance number and date of birth in order to complete the registration process.

Applications to register must be received by midnight on 26 November 2019.

If you are not sure whether or not you are registered, you should check by calling Cotswold District Council's Elections Team on **01285 623002** or by emailing them at elections@cotswold.gov.uk

What if I'm not available on 12 December?

If you are not able to visit your allocated polling station on Election Day to cast your vote, then you can ask for a postal or proxy vote.

Postal votes will be issued no later than 27 November, and will need to be returned by 10pm on Election Day.

To apply for a **postal vote**, electors should complete a [postal vote application form](#) and return it the Elections Team by 5pm on Tuesday 26 November. If you already have a postal vote arrangement in place for all types of election, then you do not need to re-apply – but if you are in any doubt, please check.

A guide on how to complete your postal vote will be included in your postal vote pack.

If you do not receive your postal vote pack, a replacement cannot be issued until Friday 6 December 2019. Replacement packs can only be issued after we have received confirmation of your identity. Please contact us as soon as possible to arrange this. You may need to visit the Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1PX, bringing photographic ID with you, to obtain a replacement postal vote rather than rely on another to be posted to you – this will depend on how close to polling day it is.

Electors may prefer a **proxy vote**, where someone else votes on their behalf. The person chosen as proxy must be eligible to vote at the election. To apply for a proxy vote, electors should complete a [proxy vote application form](#) and return it the Elections Team by 5pm on Wednesday 4 December. Again, if you already have a proxy vote arrangement in place for all types of election, then you do not need to re-apply – but you might wish to check.

More information on voting by post or proxy, including application forms, is available on <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/about-the-council/elections/> or alternatively you can contact the Elections Team on **01285 623002** or email elections@cotswold.gov.uk

Additional information can also be found on the Electoral Commission's website: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter>

Please remember:

Applications for voting by post must be submitted by 5pm on Tuesday 26 November 2019.

Applications for voting by proxy must be submitted by 5pm on Wednesday 4 December 2019.

Applications to change an existing postal or proxy vote arrangement must be submitted by 5pm on Tuesday 26 November 2019.

Can I vote if I live abroad?

You can register as an overseas voter for up to 15 years after you left the country, if you are a British citizen and you have been registered to vote in the UK within the last 15 years (or if you were too young to register when you left).

If you are serving in the armed forces abroad there is a special form you can fill out: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote-armed-forces>

Likewise, if you are a Crown servant and British Council employee working abroad: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote-crown-servants-british-...>

Who and what am I voting for?

Candidates wishing to stand for election, whether on behalf of a political party or as an independent, need to submit nomination papers to the Acting Returning Officer by 4pm on Thursday 14 November 2019. At 5pm on that day, a full list of those who will be standing for election in The Cotswolds Constituency will be published on Cotswold District Council's website.

It is down to candidates and parties to engage with voters and canvass support. Information may also be available through local party/candidate websites.

The Council cannot engage in any political activity and must remain neutral throughout – but we will provide regular factual updates in the run-up to election day, particularly in respect of key deadlines.