Niall Bolger (Acting) Returning Officer
Clive Palfreyman Deputy Returning Officer
Peter Large Deputy Returning Officer
Kully Tumber Deputy Returning Officer
What we will cover today

Key Dates
Electoral Registration
Postal Votes & Proxy Votes
Integrity Matters
  • Reporting Allegations
Agents
Campaign Material
Polling Day
  • Tellers
  • Campaigning Outside Polling Stations
The Count
Candidates' expenses
Contacts
Key Dates

Last date to Register to Vote  midnight 26/11/19
Applications for postal vote or amending existing arrangement  5pm on 26/11/19
Issuing Postal Votes  Overseas  19/11/19
  Ordinary 1st batch  25/11/19
  Ordinary 2nd batch  29/11/19
Last date to receive New Proxy Vote Applications  5pm on 4/12/19
First day to issue replacement lost postal ballot papers  6/12/19 – 5pm on 12/12/19
Deadline to appoint Count and Poll Agents  5/12//19
Applications for Emergency proxy votes  5pm on 12/12/19
Day of Poll  7am – 10pm on 12/12/19
Verification and Counting of Votes  10pm 12/12/19
Return of Election Expenses  17/01/20
Electoral Registration

Deadline to register to vote at this election is 
Tuesday midnight 26 November 2019

Eligible residents can register online at www.gov.uk/registertovote
Electoral Registration forms can be also be downloaded from the above link.
Advise residents to return forms directly to Elections Office.
Residents should only register if they are not already on the electoral roll.

Poll cards were delivered to every eligible elector between 7 November– 14 November.

New registered electors will be sent, within one working day, a confirmation letter with details of their polling station and absent vote deadlines
Postal Votes

Deadline to return a postal vote application form or change existing voting method is 5pm on 26 November (27 November – by election)

Resident must be registered to vote

Application forms returned as scanned images attached to emails are accepted(pdf, jpeg not photos) (elections@hounslow.gov.uk)

Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.

Postal ballot papers for applications received up to
- 7 November will be posted 1st class on 25 November
- from 8 November – 26 November will be posted 1st class on 29 November
- (locals) 27 November will be posted 4 December

Electors not received postal pack. We can re-issue from 6 December to 5pm on 12 December
Proxy Votes

Deadline to return a proxy vote application form is 5pm on 4 December

Resident must be registered to vote

Proxy voters wishing to apply for a postal vote – deadline is 5pm on 26 November
Application forms returned as scanned images attached to emails are accepted. Jpg, pdf not photos (elections@hounslow.gov.uk)

Applications for an emergency proxy on medical or work related grounds if emergency occurs after 5pm on 4 December – application needs attesting by medical professional or employer and must be received by 5pm on Thursday 12 December.

Electors should not be encouraged to appoint a campaigner as their proxy. Proxy must be eligible to vote at the election and must be registered to vote.
Electoral Register and absent vote list to be only used for permitted purposes (fine of £5,000)
- to complete the nomination form
- to help you campaign
- to check that donations/loans are permissible.

After the election please securely destroy the register/absent voters list or return it to the Elections Office

Electoral Services will monitor closely levels of registration and applications for postal votes; if necessary, the Police will visit electors where there is any suspicion of electoral fraud or malpractice.

Code of Conduct for Campaigners (copies in your pack) should never
- touch or handle anyone else’s ballot paper
- Observe voters completing their ballot papers
- Handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot packs from voters
Reporting allegations

• Report to the Acting Returning Officer
• Ring the Police on 101
• Any crimes reported in relation to the election will be flagged up and dealt with centrally by a specialist unit
• List of offences in Part 4 (page 15) of the Guidance for candidates and agents
• If found guilty, as well as a criminal record, punishment can include a fine or even imprisonment
Postal Vote Opening

Opening Tuesday 4 December at 10am
The aim of this date is to test that the equipment is working properly and to provide training to the staff.
Daily openings from 5 December will start at 10am (except weekends which, if required, will be notified separately). All sessions will be held at Hounslow House except on polling day.

Polling Day
The first session on polling day will commence no earlier at 1:30pm at Brentford Leisure Centre, with a second session commencing at 7pm. Any postal votes returned at polling stations will be opened during the day with the remainder after 10pm.

Please note that some sessions may be cancelled, you are advised to telephone the Electoral Services Office on 020 8583 2840 to find out if a session is taking place.

As required by law, the signatures and dates of birth on all the postal vote statements will be checked against the original applications.

Postal vote ballot papers must be kept face down (before 10pm on polling day)– nobody must attempt to see how individual ballot papers have been marked. See Part 5 (pages 4 -8) of the EC guidance.
Agents

All Persons attending any event associated with the poll has a duty to maintain the secrecy of the ballot Secrecy of Proceedings Section 66 of RPA 1983

Election Agents
Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management. You will become your own agent by default if no-one is appointed.

Postal Vote Agents
Entitled to appoint one postal vote agent per candidate – right to observe but not to interfere with process – Appointments must be made before the start of each opening session.

Polling Agents
Entitled to appoint four polling agents per candidate but not more than one may be admitted into the polling station at the same time on behalf of the same candidate. Deadline to appoint is 5 December

Counting Agents
Entitled to appoint two counting agent per candidate to scrutinise the count -- but must not touch ballot papers. Deadline to appoint is 5 December
Campaign Material

• Please be considerate when choosing where to campaign; be pragmatic and ask permission where necessary
  • Fly posting will be removed and will be disposed of at a cost to the Council.
  • A number of fly posting has already been removed by Hounslow Highways.

• User imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
  • By law, an imprint must be added to campaign material to show who is responsible for printing it.
  • The most frequently reported campaign cases in previous years were failing to include printer, promoter and/or publisher details.
  • Must include the name and address of:
    • the printer of the material
    • the promoter (the agent)
    • who the material is being produced for (the candidate).
  • Please refer to EC guidance about web content and social 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.
Polling Day - Thursday 12 December

- Polling stations open from 7:00am to 10:00pm.
- Electoral Services office staffed from 6:00am to 9:00pm for any election or register queries.
- Polling Station Inspectors will visit stations throughout the day.
- Postal votes can be handed into polling stations for the appropriate area or delivered to the Hounslow House.
- Please don’t encourage voters to turn up at the close of poll.
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10:00pm can apply for a ballot paper.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10:00pm waiting to hand in a postal vote can do so after 10:00pm.
- Presiding Officer have been instructed, when asked, to give polling agents, election agents and candidates the number of people who have cast their vote at that point.
Guidance of the Conduct of Tellers in and around Polling Places (copy in your pack)

Please distribute copies to your party workers

Arrangements in place enable Tellers to politely request electors numbers from voters as they enter and leave the polling station

To come equipped with own chairs/facilities

Not to locate themselves in the polling place (ie building in which the polling station is located)

Tellers should never ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their elector number

On no account should Tellers obstruct, impede or intimidate voters entering the polling place. Tellers must be identifiable and should wear a rosette, displaying nor more than the name of the candidate or party.

‘Tellers ‘dos and don’ts’ guidance produced by the Electoral Commission will be displayed outside the polling place on polling day.
Campaigning outside polling stations

- Refer to Code of Conduct for Campaigners
- Must not campaign near polling stations that could be seen by voters as aggressive or intimidating
- Campaigners should keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.
- Presiding Officer is responsible for maintaining order in the polling place and you may be asked to move by staff or police if you are impeding voters’ access.
- If there are any issues on polling day which cannot be resolved with assistance from the Presiding Officer, please contact the Elections Office.

- We will contact the Election Agent/Candidate directly regarding any issues we cannot resolve.
The Count

Entry to count

You and your election agent are entitled to observe the count.
Two counting agent per candidate – deadline to appoint 5 December
One guest per candidate – please advise names to Kully.tumber@hounslow.gov.uk by 5 December
Entry to count will be by prior notice; anyone whose name is not on the list at the Count reception will not be allowed in

• Count Venue
  Brentford & Fountain Leisure Centre Venue 658 Chiswick High Road, Brentford, TW8 0HJ
  There are road works around Brentford Fountain Leisure Centre. The only access into the venue is via Capital Interchange Way off the A4

• Parking
  - The car park will be used for ballot box drop off and therefore no access to this carpark until 11:30pm
  12 minute walk
    Pay and display - Travel Lodge High Street, Brentford, TW8 0BD
    £6 (24hrs) to pre book a space ring 0344 332 1236
    Location point 2320
  
  Short walk
    On street parking on and around Stile Hall Gardens, Wellesley Road, Strand on the Green

  15 minute walk.
    Free parking at Morrisons 228 -246 High Street, Brentford, TW8 0AB. If you use the 237 or 267 Bus Route (5 stops) this should take 5 minutes.

The majority of the on-street bays nearby will not be restricted on the evening of 12 December. However, it is your responsibility to ensure you park in accordance with any restrictions. The council will not reimburse the cost of any car parking charges or Penalty Charge Notices incurred.
The Count

- Security Check in on arrival - you will be given a lanyard which must worn at all times.
- Once polling stations close ballot boxes arrive – last box usually in by 11:20pm.
- Historically results declared by 5am. This time count venue is smaller and less staff used but will try and aim to finish before 5am.
- Hall will be divided into two. One side Brentford & Isleworth the other half Feltham & Heston plus by elections. (Draft layout)
The Count Process

- 20 count teams
- Verification of ballot papers will commence as soon as the first ballot box arrives
- 3 stages to count – verification, sorting and then counting of votes
- **Verification** – verifying the number of ballot papers from polling stations and postal voters
- **Sorting** ballot papers by separating by Candidates and doubtful votes
- **Counting** number of votes for each candidate
- Ballot papers that have no marks at all will be deemed ‘void’ by the senior count supervisors.
- Doubtful papers will be adjudicated continuously during the count.
- Acting Returning Officer will consult with agents on provisional results.
- It is against the law to share any results (including provisional results) from the count until the Returning Officer has declared the final results.
- Once results have been declared, the elected candidate. There is a pack from Parliament to be given to the elected Parliamentary Candidate.
- Results will be published on the Councils website and social media accounts

**Secrecy of Proceedings**
All attendees must observe the provisions as to Secrecy prescribed in Section 66 of the RPA 1983
No filming allowed on the count floor (including from mobile phones, etc.)
Candidate spending

Please refer to the Electoral Commission guidance on Spending and Donations.

Limit on expenses:
• Electorate figures are published on the Council’s website.
• Even if you don’t spend any money, you must still submit a report.
• Returns made public by Acting Returning Officer
• Sample of returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission
• Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence
• No spending will be reimbursed

Election agents are responsible in law for the return of the declaration of expenses forms.

For guidance on specific questions on campaign expenditure please consult the Electoral Commission.
Contacts

Elections Office
  020 8583 2840 (candidates and agents)
  020 8583 2828 (public enquires)
  elections@hounslow.gov.uk
  www.hounslow.gov.uk/elections

Kully Tumber
  020 8583 2095
  Kully.tumber@hounslow.gov.uk

Electoral Commission Contacts
  London Team 020 7271 0567
  www.electoralcommission.org.uk
  London@electoralcommission.org.uk