

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

20 March 2023

Voters advised to be aware of changes at this year's local elections

Fenland residents are being advised to check their poll cards and be aware of changes at this year's local elections, which take place on Thursday 4 May.

Voters will now need to provide photo ID when voting at a polling station, some ward boundaries have changed, and the location of polling stations may also be different to previous years.

Poll cards are now being sent to all registered voters in the district ahead of the all-out elections, when residents will have the chance to elect who represents them at parish, town and district council level for the next four years (where wards are contested).

Voter ID

New legislation has been introduced by the Government which means that people voting at a polling station will need to show photo ID before being issued with a ballot paper.

Only certain forms of ID can be used. The acceptable forms of ID include:

- A passport issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state or a Commonwealth country
- A driving licence issued in the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state (this includes a provisional driving licence)
- A biometric immigration document
- An Older Person's Bus Pass
- A Blue Badge (disabled parking permit)

People can use expired photo ID, as long as polling station staff can recognise them from the photo. Photocopies of ID and screenshots of ID on phones will not be accepted.

The full list of acceptable photo ID will be set out on polling cards, and is available at: www.fenland.gov.uk/voterID

If a voter doesn't have an acceptable form of photo ID, they can [apply for a Voter Authority Certificate online](#). Anyone needing help applying for a Voter Authority Certificate can contact Fenland District Council on 01354 654321 or emailing elections@fenland.gov.uk

The deadline for applications for a Voter Authority Certificate is 5pm on Tuesday 25 April, but people are asked to apply as soon as possible if they do not already have an accepted form of photo ID.

Voter ID is not needed to vote by post, but voters do need to be registered for a postal vote – people are urged to apply as soon as possible and completed applications must be received

by the Council's Elections Office by 5pm on Tuesday 18 April. Please visit www.fenland.gov.uk/postalvote for more information.

Ward changes

The ward boundaries in Fenland have changed, following a review carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The district's revised political map has 18 wards and 43 councillors, compared with 24 wards and 39 councillors previously. The review also resulted in changes to some town council wards.

More information on the ward changes is available on the [Local Government Boundary Commission website](#).

Some people are now in a new ward and will be voting at a different polling station. Electors are urged to check their poll cards carefully to see if the polling stations they have previously used have changed.

Register to vote

People who are not already on the Electoral Register and want to vote in this year's local elections need to register to vote by Monday 17 April 2023. It is quick and easy to register online by visiting www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. People will need their date of birth and national insurance number.

Anyone wanting to check if they are registered to vote can contact Fenland District Council's Elections Office on 01354 654321 or email elections@fenland.gov.uk

Apply for a postal or proxy vote

Residents who are unable to attend the polling station to vote may be able to vote by post or by proxy (asking a trusted person to vote on your behalf).

- The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm on Tuesday 18 April 2023.
- The deadline to apply for a proxy vote is 5pm on Tuesday 25 April 2023.

You do not need voter ID to vote by post.

Further information

Please visit www.fenland.gov.uk/elections for further information, including:

- A full list of acceptable forms of voter ID at polling stations
- Applying for Voter Authority Certificate (if you do not have an acceptable form of voter ID)
- Registering to vote
- Different ways to vote
- Information about polling districts and wards in Fenland

A Fenland District Council spokesman said: "The changes at this year's local elections will affect every voter in the district, so we are working really hard to let people know about them in advance.

“On polling day, it is essential that residents take the correct voter ID with them to their polling station, otherwise our staff will not be able to issue them with a ballot paper and they could miss out on being able to vote.

“Please check in advance that you have one of the acceptable forms of ID, and if not, apply for a Voter Authority Certificate as soon as possible.

“We are also urging people to check their poll cards for details of their polling station because it may now be in a different location. If you don’t receive a poll card you will need to make sure you are registered to vote. Many people think they’re automatically registered because they pay council tax, but this isn’t the case.

“Voters also have the option to request a postal vote, but we are asking them to do it sooner rather than later so we can get it processed in good time.

“Collectively, the changes mean these will be the most complex set of elections ever held in Fenland, but our staff are doing all they can to make sure the process is as smooth as possible.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk