

The Electoral Commission

On Thursday 6 May 2021 residents in Welwyn Hatfield Borough will go to the polls to have their say on who represents them at the Borough, County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and Northaw & Cuffley Parish elections.

The elections will take place at a time when Covid-19 continues to present risks to public health. Depending on the infection rate, measures taken to control the spread of the virus may change as we approach May. This means we cannot currently answer all the questions you may have about how the election will be run. However, we are working hard with the Electoral Commission, the wider electoral community and public health authorities to help ensure you can stay safe when casting your vote next May.

We will update this page with further information as it becomes available. Further information can also be found on the website of the Electoral Commission at: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the election? What elections are taking place?

On Thursday 6 May, residents in Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council will be voting for Borough, County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and Northaw & Cuffley Parish elections. The elections for Borough and Police and Crime Commissioner will be held in May after being postponed in May 2020 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

How can I vote at the May 2021 elections?

There are a number of ways to have your say in May - you can vote in a polling station, by post, or by appointing someone you trust to vote on your behalf, known as a proxy vote.

How can I apply to vote by post or proxy?

To vote in the elections - either at a polling station, by post, or by appointing someone you trust to vote on your behalf as your proxy - you must first be registered to vote, which can be done online in just 5 minutes. You can register at: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

To then apply to vote by post you need to download, print and fill in a [postal vote application form](#). Once you have completed the form and signed it, you need to send it as soon as possible to the **electoral services team** by email at elections@welhat.gov.uk or by post The Campus Welwyn Garden City AL8 6AE. The electoral services team must receive your postal vote application form by 5pm, 11 working days before the poll.

If you're thinking about voting by post, you can apply to do this now. This will make sure your application is processed early, and your postal vote can be sent to you more quickly once the candidates for the elections are confirmed.

If you aren't able to cast your vote in person, you can ask someone you trust to cast your vote for you. This is called a proxy vote and the person casting your vote is often referred to as your proxy. The person voting on your behalf can either go to your polling station to cast your vote, or can apply to vote for you by post.

To apply for a proxy vote, complete the [form to vote by proxy](#), explaining why you can't get to your polling station in person.

How do I register to vote?

To vote in any election in the UK, you must be registered to vote. It takes 5 minutes to register and you can do this online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

If you're unable to register online, you can apply by post. You can download the relevant forms at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/register-vote-and-update-your-details

Is voting by post safe?

Yes, voting by post is safe and proven cases of electoral fraud are rare. When voting by post, you should mark your vote on the ballot paper in secret, and seal the envelope yourself.

You will also be asked to give your date of birth and signature when applying for a postal or proxy vote. This makes postal voting safe, because when you return your postal voting pack your signature and date of birth are checked against those you provided before to confirm your identity.

Your signature and date of birth are separated from your ballot paper before it is looked at or counted, so giving this information will not affect the secrecy of your vote.

How are you making polling stations safe?

We are putting arrangements in place to help ensure polling stations are safe places to vote. You can expect many of the measures you've become used to over recent months in shops and banks, such as hand sanitiser, floor markings and face coverings.

We will continue our discussions with public health authorities as we prepare for the elections to make sure we are following the most up to date guidance. We will continue to update this page as more information and guidance becomes available.

Will I need to bring my own pen or pencil?

Guidance in this area is still being developed, but you are always welcome to use your own pen or pencil. We are working with the UK's governments, members of the electoral community and public health authorities to help ensure polling station are safe places to vote at the May 2021 elections.

We will update this page with new information as it becomes available.

Is it safer to vote by post, instead of going in person?

We are working hard to ensure that polling stations will be safe places to vote in May, but you can choose to apply to vote by post or by proxy instead.

What should I do if I find out closer to the time that I need to self-isolate, or my area goes into a local lockdown?

We want to make sure that everyone who is entitled to vote is able to do so, regardless of the pandemic. We will be providing more information nearer the time on how you can vote if you need to self-isolate, or live in an area under local lockdown.

You do have different options for voting at the May 2021 elections – you can vote in person, by post or by proxy. You can find more information on: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter.