

TOWN & PARISH ELECTION GUIDANCE

Thursday, 19 February 2026

Candidates are strongly advised to read the 'Guidance for Candidates and Agents' published by the Electoral Commission which is available online - www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-council-elections-england

KEY ELECTION DATES & TIMES	
9.30am, Thu 15 January 2026	Earliest time to: Deliver Nomination Papers
4pm, Fri, 23 January 2026	Latest time to: Deliver Nomination Papers
4pm, Fri, 23 January 2026	Latest time to: Withdraw Candidature
Tue, 3 February 2026	Latest time to: Apply to register to vote
5pm, Wed, 4 February 2026	Latest time to: Apply for a postal vote or to alter postal/proxy voting arrangements
5pm, Wed, 11 February 2026	Latest time to: Apply for a proxy vote (but see Polling Day)
Thu, 12 February 2026	Latest time to: Appoint counting and polling agents
Thu, 19 February 2026	POLLING DAY - 7am to 10pm (Applications to vote by emergency proxy close at 5pm)
Thu, 19 March 2026	Latest time to: Submit return of election expenses

COMPLETING A NOMINATION PAPER GUIDANCE

BEFORE COMPLETING A NOMINATION PAPER - Read Part 2 of the Electoral Commission Guidance for more information

NOTES	
- An error on a nomination paper may mean that the nomination will be invalid. - Please read these notes and those on the nomination paper carefully before completing the form. - A form CANNOT BE CHANGED once it has been formally submitted - <i>please ask for an informal check first.</i> <i>Submit the nomination papers as early as possible so there is time to submit another one if the first is invalid.</i>	

CANDIDATE NAME(S)	
Common errors include:	Abbreviating forenames and the use of initials
Notes:	'Commonly used, names must not be misleading, obscene or offensive. - The exact name as given (or the 'commonly used' name if provided) will appear on election notices and on the ballot paper.

DESCRIPTION (if any)	
Common errors include:	Using a title or prefix (Mr, Mrs etc) Using a political description without submitting an authorising certificate Using more than 6 words
Notes:	The description can be left blank.

SIGNATURES	
Common errors include:	Proposer and/or seconder are not electors for the specific town/parish/ward that the candidate is standing for. Where a Parish Council consists of a group of more than one parish, the proposer and seconder must be electors in the contested parish.
Notes:	- Signatures do not have to be in the same format as the name on the electoral register. - Signatures may be in full or just the initial(s) of the forename(s). - It is advisable to make a note of the addresses of those signing the form in case of issues with elector numbers.

ELECTORAL NUMBERS	
Common errors include:	Using the wrong register - the register in use was published on 2 January 2026 .

Notes:	- The Polling District letters can be found in the top right hand corner of the register. - The number is printed to the left of the elector's name. - A number of legal restrictions apply to the use of the information in the register.
---------------	--

HOME ADDRESS FORM

Common errors include:	Failure to give full address - the town and postcode must be included.
Notes:	- Home address is required - this may not be the address where the candidate is registered as an elector. The home address does not have to be made public. - All qualifications that apply should be completed. - Part 2 should only be completed if the candidate does not wish their home address to be made public.

CANDIDATE'S CONSENT TO NOMINATION

Common errors include:	Consent is not witnessed or witness does not state full name and address.
Notes:	- The nomination will be invalid if the candidate does not give consent. - There is no restriction on who can witness the form. - Candidates must meet at least one of the four qualifications but are advised to complete all of the qualifications that apply. - Read Part 1 of the EC Guidance for information on qualifications/disqualifications.

FALSE STATEMENTS ON NOMINATION PAPERS

It is a serious offence to include false information on nomination papers. A person who is found guilty of such an offence may be sentenced to imprisonment for up to a year, a fine, or both. In addition, if the candidate is subsequently elected, their election will be void.

DELIVERY OF NOMINATION PAPERS

- Completed nomination papers must be returned to our offices. Please ask for Electoral Services at Reception: Electoral Services, East Suffolk Council, Riverside, 4 Canning Road, Lowestoft NR33 0EQ Electoral Services, East Suffolk Council, East Suffolk House, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1RT - Nomination papers will be accepted between 9.30am and 4.30pm on any working day but must be delivered by 4pm on the last day to deliver nomination papers. - We strongly advise you to make an appointment in advance by calling 01502 523251 or emailing elections@eastsuffolk.gov.uk	
Notes:	As soon as possible after the nomination papers have been checked, a notice confirming whether or not the nomination is valid will be provided together with a 'Candidate Nomination Details' report. It is important that this is carefully checked for accuracy because the information shown will be used for the production of all subsequent statutory notices including, if the election is contested, the ballot paper.

NEXT STEPS AFTER CLOSE OF NOMINATIONS

After close of nominations a statement of all the nominations will be sent to candidates.
A candidate can withdraw at any time before **4pm on the last day to deliver nominations** by delivering a notice in writing to the Electoral Services team. The envelope must be marked '*For the attention of Electoral Services*'.

Contested Elections	- Campaign publicity is subject to a number of restrictions - Read Part 4 of the EC Guidance. - Further information about the poll and counting of votes will be sent to the candidates as soon as possible.
Uncontested Elections	As soon as possible after the close of nominations a notice of result will be published and sent to the candidates.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Declaration of election expenses	Read Part 6 of the 'Guidance for candidates & agents' published by the EC.
Website	www.electoralcommission.org.uk gives further information.
Helpline	For further advice call the Electoral Services team on 01502 523251 or email elections@eastsuffolk.gov.uk