

# Candidates and agents Briefing

Horsham District and Parish Elections – 4 May 2023

Returning Officer – Jane Eaton

Deputy RO & Monitoring Officer – Lauren Kelly

Deputy RO & Democratic Services & Elections Manager –  
Aisha Nottage

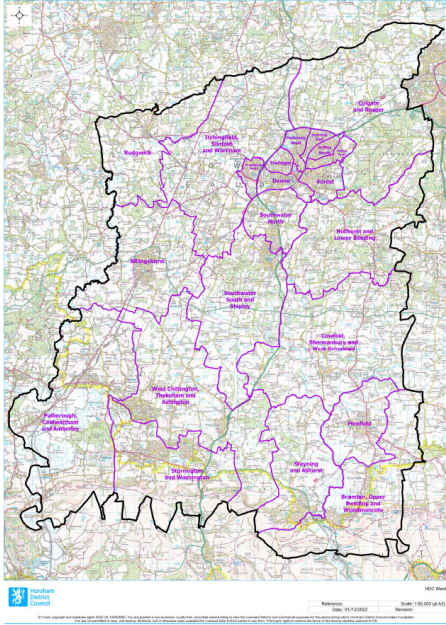
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## Topics

- The District Council
- who's who
- key dates of the election timetable
- qualifications
- disqualifications
- nominations
- agents
- postal votes
- voter ID
- the poll
- counting of votes
- candidate spending
- contacts

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# The Electoral Commission



## Horsham District Council

Local Government in West Sussex

- Horsham is one of 7 Districts/Boroughs
- 48 Councillors representing 20 wards
- 32 Parish Councils
- The centre of Horsham is unparished and represented by Neighbourhood Councils
  - The elections for the Neighbourhood Councils are later (15 June 2023)

# The Electoral Commission

## HDC provides...

- Refuse Collection & Recycling
- Leisure
- Services for the vulnerable
- Licensing
- Planning -
  - Development Control
  - Enforcement
  - Building Control
- Local Land Charges
- Council Tax Collection
- Housing Benefit Administration
- Electoral Services
- Environmental Health
- Street Cleaning
- Car Parks
- Parks and Open Spaces

**Specific Roles  
and Functions**

- Leader and Cabinet Members
- Policy development
- Scrutiny and holding the Cabinet to account
- Regulatory functions e.g. determining planning applications and licensing matters
- Auditing Council performance

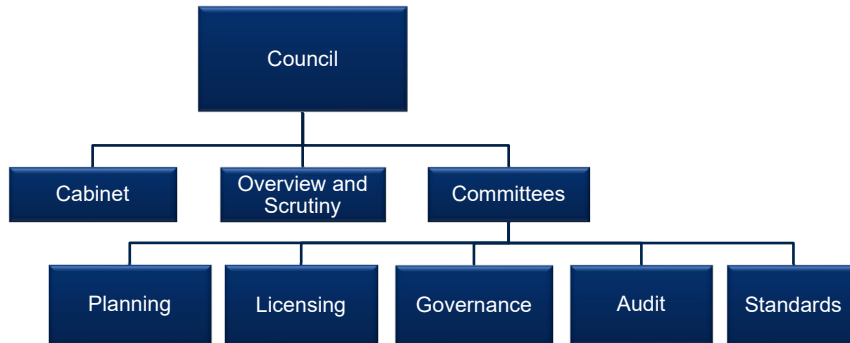
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**General  
role of  
Councillors**

- Representing your Ward
- Individual casework
- Representing the Council on outside bodies
- Bringing a non-expert perspective

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## Council Structure



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## Who's who

- **The Returning Officer** is the person responsible for running the elections. The Returning Officer is Jane Eaton.
- **The Electoral Registration Officer** is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is Jane Eaton.
- Contact details are provided later

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- 4 May elections**
- All District wards
    - One, two or three Councillors elected by voters of each ward
  - Term of office is 4 years
  - All Parishes
    - If more nominations are received, than there are seats for the parish, or the parish ward, a poll will be held on 4 May

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| District ward                          | Number of councillors to elect |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Billingshurst                          | 3                              |
| Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote   | 2                              |
| Broadbridge Heath                      | 2                              |
| Colgate & Rusper                       | 2                              |
| Cowfold, Shermanbury & West Grinstead  | 2                              |
| Denne                                  | 3                              |
| Forest                                 | 3                              |
| Henfield                               | 2                              |
| Holbrook East                          | 2                              |
| Holbrook West                          | 2                              |
| Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham       | 2                              |
| Nuthurst & Lower Beeding               | 1                              |
| Pulborough, Coldwaltham & Amberley     | 3                              |
| Roffey North                           | 2                              |
| Roffey South                           | 2                              |
| Rudgwick                               | 1                              |
| Southwater North                       | 2                              |
| Southwater South & Shipley             | 2                              |
| Steyning & Ashurst                     | 2                              |
| Storrington & Washington               | 3                              |
| Trafalgar                              | 2                              |
| West Chiltington, Thakeham & Ashington | 3                              |

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| Parish                          | Number of councillors to elect |                              |    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----|
| Amberley                        | 9                              | Rusper                       | 11 |
| Ashington                       | 11                             | Shermanbury                  | 7  |
| Ashurst                         | 7                              | Shipley                      | 11 |
| Billingshurst                   | 15                             | Slinfold                     | 11 |
| Bramber                         | 9                              | Southwater                   | -  |
| Broadbridge Heath               | 13                             | Southwater North parish ward | 8  |
| Coldwaltham                     | 9                              | Southwater South parish ward | 7  |
| Colgate                         | 9                              | Steyning                     | 15 |
| Cowfold                         | 11                             | Storrington & Sullington     | 15 |
| Henfield                        | -                              | Takeham                      | 11 |
| Henfield parish ward            | 13                             | Upper Beeding                |    |
| Small Dole parish ward          | 2                              | Small Dole parish ward       | 3  |
| Itchingfield                    | 11                             | Upper Beeding parish ward    | 12 |
| Lower Beeding                   | 9                              | Warnham                      | 11 |
| North Horsham                   | -                              | Washington                   |    |
| Comptons parish ward            | 1                              | Heath Common parish ward     | 6  |
| Holbrook East parish ward       | 5                              | Washington parish ward       | 5  |
| Holbrook West parish ward       | 4                              | West Chiltington             | 13 |
| North Horsham Rural parish ward | 1                              | West Grinstead               | -  |
| Roffey North parish ward        | 5                              | Dial parish ward             | 1  |
| Roffey South parish ward        | 3                              | Partridge Green parish ward  | 12 |
| Nuthurst                        | 11                             | Wiston                       | 7  |
| Parham                          | 7                              | Woodmancote                  | 9  |
| Pulborough                      | 15                             |                              |    |
| Rudgwick                        | 11                             |                              |    |

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|                    |  | The Electoral Commission |  |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Election timetable | Timetabled process:  | Deadline                 |  |
|                    | Publication of Notice of Election  | 24 March                 |  |
|                    | Nominations commence   | 10am, 24 March           |  |
|                    | Close of nominations   | 4pm – 4 April            |  |
|                    | Notification of appointment of election agents   | 4pm – 4 April            |  |
|                    | Publication of statement of persons nominated  | 4pm – 5 April            |  |
|                    | Deadline for applications to register to vote  | Midnight – 17 April      |  |
|                    | Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications | 5pm – 18 April           |  |
|                    | Publication of notice of poll/situation of polling stations                                      | 25 April                 |  |
|                    | Deadline for application for new proxy voter   | 5pm – 25 April           |  |

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Election  
timetable  
(cont'd)

| Timetable process:  | Deadline:   |
|---|---|
| Deadline for applications for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document | 5pm – 25 April  |
| Appointment of counting and polling agents  | 26 April  |
| Polling day   | 4 May – 7am to 10pm   |
| Deadline to apply to vote by emergency proxy  | 5pm – polling day   |
| Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends   | 5pm – polling day   |
| Alterations to register to correct clerical error   | 9pm – polling day   |
| Production of temporary Voter Authority Certificate   | 10pm – polling day  |
| Return of election expenses   | <b>Parish – 1 June 2023</b><br><b>District – 9 June 2023 (35 calendar days from result - if results declared 5 May)</b> |

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HDC  
Dates

| Process:   | Approximate dates:  |
|--|---|
| Poll Card Despatch (if registered by 8 March)  | 22 March 2023   |
| Postal Vote Despatch (if applied by 31 March)  | 18 April 2023   |
| Postal Vote Opening  | Full list of sessions will be shared with candidates & agents |
| Postal Vote Additions Despatch (if applied after 31 March, and by 18 April deadline) | 24 April 2023   |
| Poll Card Despatch (if registered after 8 March, and by 17 April deadline)           | 25 April 2023   |

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## Qualifications

- Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated **and** on polling day:
  - be at least 18 years of age
  - be a British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or national of an EU member state.
- Also at least one of the following:
  - Registered local government elector for local authority area [or parish for parish elections]
  - Occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the local authority area [parish] during the whole 12 months preceding nomination
  - Principal or only place of work (including unpaid) during last 12 months in local authority area [parish]
  - **District only** - Lived in the local authority area during the last 12 months
  - **Parish only** – Lived in the parish, during the last 12 months or within 4.8km of it

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## Disqualifications

A person **cannot** be a candidate if they:

- are **employed by the local authority** or hold a paid office under the authority (including joint boards or committees). Candidates may be 'employed by the local authority' if they work at certain schools, fire services, police or health services
- are subject of a **Bankruptcy Restrictions Order** (or interim restrictions order)
- have been sentenced to a term of **imprisonment** of three months or more (inc. suspended sentence) without option of a fine, during the 5 years before polling day
- are serving a disqualification due to being found guilty of a **corrupt or illegal practice** by an election court
- hold a **politically restricted post**
- are subject to the **notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003**

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### Submitting nomination papers (1)

- The documents that must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm on 4 April are -
  - the nomination form
  - their home address form
  - the consent to nomination
- Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm on 4 April –:
  - A certificate authorising the use of a party name/ registered description on the ballot paper
  - A written request to use one of the party's emblems on the ballot paper (optional)

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### Submitting nomination papers (2)

- Take care when completing your nomination papers, as mistakes may invalidate your nomination
- Complete nomination papers early and arrange for us to provide an informal check
- The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination **must be delivered by hand** and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means.

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### Nomination form (1)

- Include your full name
- Optional: use commonly used name box(es) if commonly known by a name other than actual name and wish to use it instead. But you cannot use your first name as a commonly used name to exclude your middle name.
- Description field – 3 options:
  - leave blank
  - Independent
  - party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Nominating Officer
  - **Parish only** - candidates may use any description up to six words, as long as it does not confuse with a registered political party name or description

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### Nomination form (2)

- Subscribers: 2 subscribers are required for elections
- Must sign & print and after their names. Check details of subscribers against electoral register
  - Independent candidates can obtain elector numbers by contacting Electoral Services
- Only ask subscribers to sign **after** completing the name, address and description fields on the form
- Data protection requirements

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### Home address form

- Part 1 of the home address form must state:
  - your full name and home address in full
  - your qualifying address, or, where you have declared on your consent to nomination that you meet more than one qualification, your qualifying addresses
  - which of the qualifications your qualifying address or addresses relate to (a, b, c and/or d)
  - the full name and the home address in full of the witness to your consent to nomination

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### Home address form (2)

- Part 2 of the home address form must be completed if you do not want your address to be made public:
  - The name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (if your home address is in the UK),
    - If you live in the Horsham district, this would be "Horsham"
  - if you live outside the UK, the name of the country in which your home address is situated.

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### Consent to nomination form

- Must include:
  - name
  - which area standing in
  - confirmation of qualification(s) that apply (at least 1, but select all that apply)
  - date of birth & signature
  - date of consent (not to be signed more than one calendar month before the deadline for submitting your nomination papers (deadline is 4 April))
  - witness' name, and signature
    - This must be the same person that signed the home address form

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### Certificate of authorisation

- Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person authorised to act on their behalf)
- The certificate may:
  - allow the use of the party name or a particular description
  - allow candidate to choose whether to use the party name or any of the descriptions registered with the Electoral Commission
- Must be submitted by 4pm on 4 April

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### Emblem request form

- Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper
- Emblem request form must be submitted by 4pm on 4 April
- Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required

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### Joint party candidates

- Nominated by **more than one party**
- May use registered joint party descriptions
  - must be supported by certificate of authorisation **from each party**
- May use one emblem of one of the parties but there are no joint party emblems

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- Election agent**
- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management.
  - Notification of appointment must reach the RO by 4pm – 4 April. Form is included in nomination pack.
  - You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed.

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- Other agents**
- Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on your behalf:
    - You must give notice in writing of any people appointed as polling and counting agents by 26 April.
    - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session. We will give 48 hours' notice.

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Access to  
electoral  
register/absent  
voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
  - earliest, on 27 March (the last date for the publication of notice of election) if you, or others declared yourself a candidate
  - once you or others have declared yourself a candidate after this date / date you submit your nomination papers
- Make **written** request to the ERO – forms are available from the office.

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Access to  
electoral  
register /  
absent voting  
lists

- **Only use data for permitted purposes**
  - to complete the nomination form
  - to help you campaign
  - to check that donations/loans are permissible

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- Registration (1)
- As a candidate you are uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote.
  - You should encourage people to register as soon as possible.
  - The deadline for applying for the election is 17 April, at midnight.
  - Individuals can apply to register online at <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>. It only takes a few minutes.

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Registration (2)

- When discussing registering to vote with individuals, you will need to make them aware that they will need to provide:
  - their National Insurance number
  - date of birth and address
- People who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance number can still register, but they may need to provide further information. If so, they will be contacted by the ERO.

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### Absent voting

- When talking to electors about voting by post or proxy, you should make them aware of the relevant deadlines and advise them to apply early.
- If you are encouraging people who don't have a postal (or proxy) vote to apply for one, make sure you explain that they will only qualify for one in time for the elections if they are (or will be) registered in time to vote at the elections.

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### Voter Identification

- Voters in this election will need to provide a form of accepted photographic ID if they wish to vote in person at a polling station.
- Voters will be able to present out of date photographic ID so long as the photograph is still a good likeness.
- If a voter fails to present a form of accepted photographic ID they will not be issued with a ballot paper.
- This includes those who act as a proxy for another person.

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Accepted forms  
of Voter ID

- Voters should be encouraged to check whether they have one of the forms of accepted photographic ID well in advance of the election
- If a voter does not have an accepted form of photographic ID, they can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate either online <https://www.gov.uk/voting-photo-id> or using a paper application form.
- Electors who are registered anonymously must have an Elector's Document to vote in person
- Any applications must be received by the ERO by 5pm on the 25 April.

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Accepted forms  
of Voter ID (1)

**International travel**  
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)  
Irish Passport Card

**Driving and Parking**  
Driving licence (issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state)  
A Blue Badge

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Accepted forms  
of Voter ID (2)

**Local travel**

Older Person's bus pass  
Disabled Person's bus  
pass  
Oyster 60+ Card  
Freedom pass  
Scottish National  
Entitlement card  
60 and Over Welsh  
Concessionary Travel  
Card

Disabled person's Welsh  
Concessionary Travel  
Card  
Senior SmartPass issued  
in NI  
Registered Blind  
SmartPass or Blind  
Person's SmartPass  
issued in NI  
War Disablement  
SmartPass issued in NI  
60+ SmartPass issued in  
NI  
Half Fare SmartPass  
issued in NI

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Accepted forms  
of Voter ID (3)

**Proof of age**

Identity card bearing the  
Proof of Age Standards  
Scheme hologram (a  
PASS card)

**Other Government  
issued documents**

Biometric immigration  
document

Ministry of Defence Form  
90 (Defence Identify  
Card)  
Nationality identity card  
issued by an EEA state  
Electoral Identity Card  
issued in Northern  
Ireland  
Voter Authority Certificate  
Anonymous Elector's  
Document

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### Campaigning dos and don'ts

- Do use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- 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.
- Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).

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### Code of conduct for campaigners (1)

- The Code of Conduct for campaigners was updated in January 2023
- Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, but their activities should not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.
- **Electoral registration and absent vote applications:**
  - Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law
  - Include the ERO's address for the return of forms
  - Ensure unaltered applications are sent to ERO within **two working days**.
  - Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.
  - Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
  - Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.
- **Voter Authority Certificate Applications:**
  - Should not handle paper based Voter Authority Certificate applications and should encourage electors to send them directly to the ERO

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## Code of conduct for campaigners (2)

- Postal ballot packs:
  - Never touch a postal ballot paper
  - Never observe electors completing their postal vote.
  - Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot pack from voters
- Campaigning outside polling stations:
  - You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including public spaces outside polling places.
  - Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.

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## Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 9am to 10pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
  - for queries relating to election finance issues, contact the Electoral Commission (*contact details shown later*)
- We will be using tablets in the polling station to mark the electoral register, as we did in 2021
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10 pm can apply for a ballot paper
- Voters in this election will need to present photographic ID in the polling station

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### Polling day

- Postal votes – can be handed into polling stations within the ward or delivered to the elections office until 10pm.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in a postal vote can do so after 10pm.

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### Counting of votes

- The count will be held at the Bridge Leisure Centre, Wickhurst Lane.
- We anticipate that verification will begin at 9.30am. Further information will be provided to candidates and agents following the close of nominations.
- Candidates, election agents, counting agents and one other person appointed by the candidate are entitled to attend.
  - There is a limit to the number of counting agents that can be appointed. This will be confirmed following the close of nominations.

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# Spending issues

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## Candidate spending (Part 3 EC Guidance)

- Defined as certain expenses 'used for the purposes of the candidate's election' during the regulated period.
- Responsibility of **election agent**
- Limit on expenses:
  - £806 + 7 pence per elector in ward/division on register in force on **27 March 2023**
  - reduced for joint candidates
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)
- **Parish** - the responsibility for accounting for election spending rests with the candidate. Parish council candidates must keep receipts for items over £10.

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### Candidates' spending returns

- Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election – 9 June, if the results are declared on 5 May
  - Parish elections deadline – 1 June (even if uncontested)
- Returns made public by **Returning Officer**
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the **Electoral Commission**
- Failure to submit a spending return is a criminal offence enforceable by police
- No spending will be reimbursed

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## Contacts

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Contacts &  
documents

Elections office

- 01403 215 126
- [elections@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:elections@horsham.gov.uk)

Electoral Commission contacts

– 0333 103 1928

Electoral  
Commission  
guidance

Parish - <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-council-elections-england>

District - <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/local-elections-england>

Updated Code of Conduct -  
<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/find-information-by-subject/electoral-fraud/electoral-fraud-responsibilities>

Quick Guide for handling postal votes -  
[https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/electoral\\_commission\\_pdf\\_file/Quick\\_guide\\_party\\_worker\\_E-and-W\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/electoral_commission_pdf_file/Quick_guide_party_worker_E-and-W_WEB.pdf)

Tellers Guide -  
[https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdf\\_file/Tellers-guidance-generic.pdf](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/pdf_file/Tellers-guidance-generic.pdf)

# Questions

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# Thank you

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