

News Release



19 April 2024

Stay in the picture – and have your say on 2 May

People are being urged to remember their photo ID when they vote on 2 May.

And residents are being reminded to check they are aware of new rules around the submitting of postal ballots.

Voters will need to show photo ID at polling stations before they can receive their ballot paper for the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner elections.

Acceptable forms of ID include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK or EEA drivers' licence; some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass; and the new free Voter Authority Certificate. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo.

At polling stations, voters will be required to present ID to be checked by polling station staff. A private area will be available at the polling station for anyone who wants their photo ID viewed in private.

There are also some important new requirements around postal votes for elections. If a voter chooses to hand deliver their postal vote, rather than post it via Royal Mail, they will need to complete a Postal Vote Return Form. These forms will need to be completed with a person who has permission, from the Returning Officer, to receive the vote, either at a polling station, or staff in a specified council reception.

The number of postal votes that a person can hand in, on behalf of others, has also changed. Full information about the rule changes can be found on the [Electoral Commission website](#).

The council is urging people to submit their postal votes as early as possible.

Craig Westwood, director of communications at the Electoral Commission, said: "Anyone voting at a polling station in England will need to show photo ID before they can be given their ballot paper. Before you head to the polling station on Thursday 2 May, don't forget to check you have the ID you need to vote.

"Anyone concerned about showing their face at a polling station, because they wear a face covering for example, can ask to have their ID checked in private. They won't need to give a reason for their request or explain why they'd prefer privacy. Staff will be trained to handle requests for ID to be checked in private, discreetly and with courtesy."

The full list of accepted ID, along with more information about the new requirement, is available on the [Electoral Commission's website](#).

Rob Polkinghorne, Electoral Registration Officer for Cheshire East Council, said:
“With only a week to go, make sure you’re ready for the elections on 2 May. Check you’ve got an accepted form of photo ID and remember to bring it with you to the polling station on election day.

“If you need any help, you can contact the electoral services team on 0300 123 5016 or visit the Electoral Commission website at: electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections.”

If voters lose their ID, or their Voter Authority Certificate does not arrive in time for election day, they can appoint an emergency proxy to vote on their behalf up until 5pm on election day, 2 May. The person appointed as proxy, voting on someone else’s behalf, must have their own acceptable photo ID.

To appoint an emergency proxy, the relevant application form must be completed and returned to the Elections Office. For further information call 0300 123 5016.

ENDS

Photo captions:

- 1) Polling station image
- 2) Voting image
- 3) Voter photo ID poster

Notes to editors:

Police and crime commissioner elections are taking place in Cheshire East on 2 May 2024

- The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station, is a new requirement, introduced by the UK Government’s Elections Act.
- The legislation requires voters at polling stations to show an accepted form of photo ID before they receive their ballot paper. The requirement applies to local council elections in England, UK parliamentary elections, including parliamentary by-elections, and police and crime commissioner elections in England and Wales. It does not apply at local elections in Scotland or Wales, or elections to the Scottish Parliament or Senedd. The requirement already exists in Northern Ireland.
- The UK Government’s Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities is responsible for the voter ID policy and for the free voter ID application system. Enquiries relating to the application system or the policy itself should be directed to the Department.

- The Electoral Commission is responsible for ensuring voters are aware of the voter ID requirement, and for supporting local authorities with the process. Questions related to the public awareness campaign should be directed to the Electoral Commission.
- Local authorities are responsible for implementing voter ID at the local level.

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