Template press release for local use

Voting safely at next year’s elections

On Thursday 6 May 2021 residents in <insert local authority> will go to the polls to have their say on who represents them at <insert election(s) here>

While <the election(s) is/are> not until May, we’re already making plans to help you stay safe while casting your vote.

There are a number of ways to have your say in the <election(s)> in May - you can vote in a polling station, by post, or by appointing someone you trust to vote on your behalf, which is known as a proxy vote.

 [Insert name], Electoral Registration Officer for [insert local authority], said:

“The elections next year are very important – they’re an opportunity to make your voice heard and have a say on who represents you on issues that directly affect day-to-day life here in <insert local authority area>.

“We’re thinking about these elections now so that, however you choose to cast your vote in May, you can do so safely. We’re putting arrangements in place to help you stay safe at the polling station; you can expect many of the measures you’ve become used to in shops and banks over recent months, such as hand sanitiser, floor markings and face masks. But you also have the option to apply to vote by post or by proxy.”

Ailsa Irvine, Director of Electoral Administration and Guidance at the Electoral Commission said:

“The choice on how to vote at next May’s elections is yours – you can have your say in person, by post or by proxy.

“If you’re thinking about voting by post, you can apply now. This will make sure your application is processed early, and your postal vote can be sent to you more quickly. It’s easy to apply and you can find out how by visiting the Electoral Commission website.

“You need to be registered to vote in order to have a say at the elections – the easiest way to register is online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)”

Residents can visit the FAQ page on the website at <insert link here> to find out more about the elections on 6 May 2021. The page will be updated with new information as it becomes available. Any residents who have questions can also contact their local elections team at <contact details for ERO>.

Ends

For more information contact <<insert details>>

Notes to editors

The Electoral Commission is the independent body which oversees elections and regulates political finance in the UK. We work to promote public confidence in the democratic process and ensure its integrity by:

* enabling the delivery of free and fair elections and referendums, focusing on the needs of electors and addressing the changing environment to ensure every vote remains secure and accessible
* regulating political finance – taking proactive steps to increase transparency, ensure compliance and pursue breaches
* using our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency and efficiency

For further information on elections in their area, how to register to vote, or how to apply to vote by post or by proxy, voters can visit [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter). This page will continue to be updated ahead of the polls.

The Commission was set up in 2000 and reports to the UK, Scottish and Welsh Parliaments.

Elections taking place in England, Scotland and Wales on 6 May 2021:

* Senedd Cymru / Welsh Parliamentary
* Scottish Parliamentary
* English local government elections (includes polls postponed from May 2020), including elections to county, district and parish councils
* Police and Crime Commissioners (polls postponed from May 2020)
* Combined Authority Mayoral (includes polls postponed from May 2020)
* Local Mayoral (includes polls postponed from May 2020)
* Mayor of London and London Assembly (polls postponed from May 2020)