

Doubtful ballot papers – allowed votes

Suggested examples of allowed votes are provided here. All of these examples are based on the specific election rules. Ultimately the decision on any particular ballot paper rests with the Returning Officer.

References are to The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 and The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017. Rule references should be read, in respect of a second preference vote, with Rule 52(3) for local authority mayoral elections and Rule 55(3) for combined authority mayoral elections.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Grey as first preference and Miller as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(a) and combined authority mayoral (CAM) Rule 51(2)(a) – vote marked elsewhere than in proper place.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Boots as first preference and Williams as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(b) and CAM Rule 51(2)(b) – vote marked otherwise than by means of a cross.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Boots as first preference and Hood as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(a) and (b) and CAM Rule 51(2)(a) and (b) – vote marked elsewhere than in the proper place (in relation to the second preference vote) and otherwise than by means of a cross.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Jiang as first preference and Boots as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(a) and (b) and CAM Rule 51(2)(a) and (b) – vote marked elsewhere than in the proper place (in relation to the first preference vote) and otherwise than by means of a cross.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Jiang as first preference and Grey as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(b) and CAM Rule 51(2)(b) – vote marked otherwise than by means of a cross.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Boots as first preference and Miller as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(b) and CAM Rule 51(2)(b) – vote marked otherwise than by means of a cross (in relation to the second preference vote).

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Hood as first preference and Miller as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(a) and CAM Rule 51(2)(a) – vote marked elsewhere than in the proper place (in relation to the first preference vote).

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

1. Hood
2. Miller

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Allow for Hood as first preference and Miller as second preference. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(2)(a)–(c) and CAM Rule 51(2)(a)–(c) – vote marked elsewhere than in the proper place, otherwise than by means of a cross and by more than one mark.

Doubtful ballot papers – rejected votes

Suggested examples of rejected votes are provided here. All of these examples are based on the specific election rules. Ultimately the decision on any particular ballot paper rests with the Returning Officer.

References are to The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 and The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017. Rule references should be read, in respect of a second preference vote, with Rule 52(3) for local authority mayoral elections and Rule 55(3) for combined authority mayoral elections.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(b) and combined authority mayoral (CAM) Rule 51(1)(b) – more than one first preference given.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(d) and CAM Rule 51(1)(d) – ballot papers unmarked.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(c) and CAM Rule 51(1)(b) – voter can be identified.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(d) and CAM Rule 51(1)(d) – void for uncertainty as to the first preference vote. It is unclear whether the 1 in the second preference column is intended as a first preference vote or whether the voter used a 1 in the second column to indicate their second preference vote.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

None of the above

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(d) and CAM Rule 51(1)(d) – void for uncertainty as to the first preference vote.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(d) and CAM Rule 51(1)(d) – void for uncertainty as to the first preference vote. In this example, the cross in the second column could mean the voter intended to vote for Boots as their second preference and forgot to mark their first preference, or it could mean that they intended to vote for Boots as their first preference. It is therefore not clearly apparent whether the vote was intended as a first preference.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(d) and CAM Rule 51(1)(d) – void for uncertainty as to the first preference vote.

Election of the Mayor for (insert name of authority)

Vote once in column 1 for your first choice, and
Vote once in column 2 for your second choice

	Column 1 first choice	Column 2 second choice
BOOTS, Dusty 2 The Cottages, Anytown XY8 9JG The League of Line Dancers Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GREY, Earl (address in [relevant area]) The Mad Hatter's Tea Party Candidate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HOOD, Robin 6 The Heath, Anytown XY4 0BH The Forest Party Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JIANG, Mike 33 The Lane, Anytown XY6 3GD Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MILLER, Windy 21 The Grove, Anytown XY2 5JP The Alternative Power Forum Candidate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WILLIAMS, Rhys 3 The Road, Anytown XY3 4JN Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reject. Local authority mayoral Rule 48(1)(d) and CAM Rule 51(1)(d) – void for uncertainty as to the first preference vote. In this example, the inclusion of the candidate's name 'Hood' next to the cross against Grey casts doubt over who the voter intended to vote for as a first preference. As a result, no first preference vote is clearly apparent.