



# Parliamentary election on Thursday 4 July 2024

## Information for candidates and agents

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## Key dates –

### Thursday 30 May 2024

- Earliest date to officially become a candidate
- Earliest date to be supplied with a copy of the electoral register

### Friday 31 May 2024

- Publication of the Notice of Election
- First day for submission of nomination papers (from 10am)

### Friday 7 June 2024

- Deadline for submission of nomination papers (4pm)
- Deadline for appointment of election agents (4pm)
- Last date for withdrawal of a candidate (4pm)
- Publication of statement of persons nominated, Notice of Poll & Situation of Polling Stations (by 5pm)

### Tuesday 18 June 2024

- Electoral registration deadline

### Wednesday 19 June 2024 at 5PM

- Postal vote/postal proxy application deadline (5pm)

### Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 5PM

- Proxy vote application deadline (5pm)
- Deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate (5pm)

### Thursday 27 June 2024

- Deadline for appointment of counting agents
- Deadline for appointment of polling agents

### Thursday 4 July 2024

- Polling day (7am to 10pm)
- Deadline for replacement of lost or spoilt postal votes (5pm)
- Deadline for emergency proxy applications (5pm)
- Deadline for alterations to register for clerical errors (9pm)

### Friday 9 August 2024

- Deadline for return of election spending returns

## Acting Returning Officer (ARO)

1. Robin Porter (Chief Executive of Luton Borough Council) is the Acting Returning Officer for the Luton North and Luton South & South Bedfordshire Parliamentary Constituencies.

## Before you begin

2. Please read the guidance for Candidates and Agents produced by the Electoral Commission carefully on the [Electoral Commission website](#). Copies are included in the nomination pack.
3. A prepared, printed, nomination pack is available to any candidate upon request from [elections@luton.gov.uk](mailto:elections@luton.gov.uk). If you wish to collect a copy, please let us know or we can post one to you if you provide an address.
4. Alternatively, you can download your own nomination pack from the [Electoral Commission website](#).

## Notice of election

5. The Notice of Election will be published on **Friday 31 May 2024**.
6. The Notice of Election will be published on the council's website and the Town Hall noticeboard.

## Supply of the register

7. As a candidate, you may wish to have access to the electoral registers to assist you with the nomination process. This must be requested in writing. The register information will be supplied in data format unless you specifically request a printed copy.
8. The **1 May 2024** register will be used for nominations.
9. You can request registers by emailing [elections@luton.gov.uk](mailto:elections@luton.gov.uk) including those for Caddington and Eaton Bray if you are standing as a candidate in the Luton South & South Bedfordshire Parliamentary Constituency.

## Nomination process

10. Nominations will be accepted between **10am and 4pm** from **Monday 3 June 2024** until **Friday 07 June 2024**.
11. The **deadline for nominations** is **4pm** on **Friday 7 June 2024**. The deadline cannot be extended for any reason.
12. **10** subscribers are required on the nomination papers for this election. These can be from anywhere in the parliamentary constituency.
13. A deposit of **£500** is required.
14. The deposit will be accepted in cash, bankers draft (payable to 'Luton Borough Council') or, by electronic transfer. Electronic transfer is the preferred method for this election. The funds should be paid to:

Lloyds Bank  
60 George Street  
**LU1 2AP**

Sort Code **306676**  
Account No. **17256862**

Please quote ref: **YAR106/8220**

15. The deposit must be cleared funds for the nomination to be valid. The nomination is not valid until the deposit is received. It must be received by **4pm on Friday 7 June 2024**.
16. You can opt to submit your nomination paper without an informal check. However, this is risky because if you submit your nomination paper close to the deadline and there are issues, there may not be enough time to submit a new nomination paper(s).

### Informal checks

17. **You are welcome to have an** informal check of your nomination paper and the candidates address which can be sent to us electronically: [sam.freer@luton.gov.uk](mailto:sam.freer@luton.gov.uk)
18. If the informal check presents no issues, you'll be invited to submit your nomination paper **in person** formally.

### Delivery of nomination papers

19. Nomination forms and accompanying paperwork must be delivered in person for formal submission. Please make an appointment with [Jayne.Hughes@luton.gov.uk](mailto:Jayne.Hughes@luton.gov.uk) to bring in your nomination papers.
20. The nomination papers can be delivered only by the candidate the candidates agent (if appointed) or the proposer or seconder shown on the nomination form.
21. Papers should be delivered to:  
The Elections Office ([Debbie Janes](#) or [Sam Freer](#))  
Ground Floor  
Luton Council  
Town Hall  
Luton, LU1 2BQ  
  
On arrival at the Town Hall, please call Debbie Janes on 01582 546038 or Sam Freer on 01582 546088.
22. Please **do not** post your nomination papers or drop the off at the Town Hall Reception. Forms **cannot** be submitted electronically or by fax.
23. Once a nomination paper has been formally delivered, no changes can subsequently be made to it. If a candidate or agent later decides that they wish to make changes to it (for example the description), the only way this could be done is by withdrawing the candidature and submitting fresh nomination papers.

## Nomination paperwork

24. For a candidate to be validly nominated they must have submitted by 4pm on Friday 7 June 2024 a:
  - nomination form
  - home address form
  - consent to nomination form
  - the cleared deposit of £500
25. Candidates standing on behalf of a political party must also submit:
  - a certificate authorising the use of the party name or registered description on the ballot paper
  - written request to use one of the party's emblems (if you would like one to appear on the ballot paper)
26. The Electoral Commission Guidance for Candidates and Agents sets out all the requirements for standing as a candidate. Particular attention is drawn to the use of commonly used names and the use of party names, descriptions, and emblems.
27. Note that any information you provide on your nomination papers must be true to the best of your knowledge. It is an offence to provide a false statement on your nomination papers. Providing a false statement could invalidate your election and is also punishable by an unlimited fine and/or imprisonment.

## Home address form

28. You may either have your home address on the ballot paper or keep your home address private.
29. On the home address form you can request to keep your home address private by completing and signing Part 2 of the form. If so, your home address won't appear on either the ballot paper or the Statement of Persons Nominated
30. If keeping your home address private, you can use any of the following:
  - the UK Parliamentary constituency in which your home address is located, or
  - the relevant area in which your home address is located, or
  - if you don't live in the UK, the country in which your home address is located.
31. In all cases, you must complete Part 1 of the form with your full name and home address.

## Return of the deposit

32. Only those candidates polling 5% will be entitled to the return of their deposit.
33. Deposits will be returned to the candidate or agents in their original form (i.e., cash or bankers draft, or electronic transfer).
34. Please provide us with the details of the bank account you would like the deposit returned to.

## Postal vote arrangements

35. The first run of postal votes to be dispatched on Thursday 18 June 2024.
36. Postal votes will be opened every working day from **Monday 24 June 2024** until **Wednesday 3 July 2024** in two sessions, Luton South & South Bedfordshire from **9am to 12 Noon** and Luton North from **1pm until 4pm** in:  
  
Committee Room 3  
Luton Council  
Ground Floor  
Town Hall  
Luton  
LU1 2BQ
37. Volumes will dictate how closely these times can be adhered to.
38. On polling day, **Thursday 4 July 2024**, postal votes will be opened **from 4pm** at the count venue. Please let us know if you intend to be present so that security staff can be notified.  
**Inspire Sports Village**  
Butterfield Green Road  
Hitchin Road  
Luton  
LU2 8DD
39. The deadline for the appointment of postal is immediately prior to the start of the opening session. Please advise if you plan to attend (particularly on Thursday 4 July 2024 Inspire) so that access can be arranged.

## Voter ID

40. 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.
41. 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.
42. Voters should be encouraged to check whether they have one of the forms of accepted photographic ID well in advance of the election
43. 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/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate> or using a paper application form.
44. Applications must be received by the ERO by **Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 5PM**.



## Changes to postal vote handling and secrecy

### Political campaigners not handling postal votes

45. Political campaigners will be banned from handling postal votes, except where the postal vote is their own, that of a close family member, or someone they provide regular care for.
46. They are not banned from handling postal votes if they do so in the course of their usual duties (for example, if they work for Royal Mail).
47. A political campaigner is defined in legislation as:
  - a candidate at the election
  - an election agent of a candidate at the election
  - a sub-agent of an election agent at the election
  - employed or engaged for the purposes of that person's activities as a candidate
  - a member of a registered political party and carries on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome at the election
  - employed or engaged by a registered political party in connection with the party's political activities
  - employed or engaged by a person within paragraphs (a) to (f) to carry on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome at the election
  - employed or engaged by a person within paragraph (g) to carry on an activity designed to promote a particular outcome at the election
48. If found guilty of handling postal votes as a campaigner, a person could face a fine and/or imprisonment up to two years.

### Limits on handing in postal votes at polling stations

49. There will be a limit on the number of postal votes a person can hand in at a polling station – they will not be allowed to hand in **more than five postal ballot packs for other electors plus their own**.
50. If a person hands in more than five postal ballot packs for other electors, all the postal votes (other than their own) will be **rejected**.
51. If there is reason to suspect that a person has already handed in the maximum number of postal votes on any previous occasion at the election, any subsequent postal votes handed in will be **rejected**.
52. Rejected postal votes will not be included in the count.

## Completion of postal vote documents form

53. Anyone handing in postal votes will need to complete a **'return of postal voting documents' form**. If a form is not completed the postal vote will be rejected. Rejected postal votes will not be included in the count
54. The person handing in the postal vote(s) will need to complete the form with their name, address and the reason for handing in other people's postal votes (where appropriate).
55. They will also need to complete a declaration that they are not handing in more than the permitted number, and that they are not a political campaigner.
56. Polling Station or council staff will assist with the completion of the form if required.
57. After the election, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) will write to electors who have had their postal votes rejected, telling them why.
58. Staff will be available to assist in completing forms to receive postal votes between 9 am and 5 pm at the Customer Services Centre, Upper George Street, Town Hall, Luton LU1 2BQ.
59. On polling day electors will be assisted by staff at the Town Hall polling station from 7am until close of poll at 10pm

## Postal votes which are 'left behind'

60. Postal votes will not be accepted if they are simply left at a polling station or any other council building.
61. If a person hands in postal votes without completing the return of postal vote documents form, the 'left behind' postal votes will be rejected.
62. After the election, the ERO will write to electors who have had their postal vote rejected because they were left behind.

## What does this mean for you?

63. Make sure anyone supporting the election campaign understands what a campaigner is and is aware of the limitations on handling postal votes.
64. Tell them they can only handle other people's postal votes if they are a close relative or someone they provide regular care for.
65. If you are handling any postal vote application forms, make sure you continue to follow the Electoral Commission's Code of Conduct for campaigners.
66. Be aware that suspicious handling of postal votes by campaigners will be reported to the police.
67. Please encourage postal voters to return their postal vote via the Royal Mail system in plenty of time.
68. If they have missed the post, let them know they can still hand it in at a polling station before 10pm on polling day but will be required to complete a form.

69. Inform electors of the limit on handing postal votes in at polling stations and council offices – five, plus their own.
70. Tell them they must complete a form when handing in postal votes, but election staff will be available to help. Any left behind at a polling station without a completed form will be rejected.
71. Ensure electors know postal votes left in council buildings will be classed as 'left behind' and will be rejected.

## Verification and count

### Count venue

72. The verification and count will be held at close of poll on **Friday 4 July 2024** at  
Inspire Sports Village  
Butterfield Green Road  
Off Hitchin Road  
Luton  
LU2 8DD

### Attendance at verification and count

73. Candidates and election agents are entitled to attend the verification and count. The candidate may invite one additional person (their guest) and counting agents may be appointed to attend the count on your behalf.

### Counting agents

74. The number of agents that a candidate may appoint for the count will be calculated and advised after the close of nominations.
75. The deadline for the appointment of counting agents is **Thursday 27 June 2024**.

### Adjudication of doubtful ballot papers

76. Doubtful ballot papers will be open to scrutiny by candidates and agents.
77. Doubtful ballot paper adjudication will take at the desk in front of the control table.

### Recounts

78. Recounts can be requested but may take place only at the Acting Returning Officer's discretion.

### Count venue specifics

79. Candidates and agents attending the count will be required to display a badge to enter the Count Venue.
80. Badges will be provided to the Candidate's Election Agent who will be responsible for ensuring that their Candidate and Counting Agents have the required badge prior to arrival.

81. At the count, badges can be issued to those who forget or lose their badge, but this will cause a delay to them entering the count.
82. The area for the declaration of the result will be located inside the count hall.

## Campaign guidance

### Spending limits

83. Candidates are required to follow certain rules regarding how much they can spend, who they can accept donations from and what they must report after the election.
84. The spending limit for the regulated period is £11,390 + 8p per elector (Luton North) and 12p per elector (Luton South & South Bedfordshire)

Constituency	Electors	Basic	Const. Type	Per Elector	Electors Total	Spending Limit
Luton North	72,494	£11,390	Borough	£0.08	£5,799.52	£17,189.52
Luton South and South Bedfordshire	72,769	£11,390	County	£0.12	£8,732.28	£20,122.28

85. The regulated period for the Parliamentary General elections in England and Wales begins on the day after the date you officially become a candidate and ends on polling day
86. The last day for the receipt of the **Return of Election Expenses** is **Friday 9 August 2024**.

### Campaigning dos and don'ts

87. Do use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
88. Do comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners.
89. Do make sure outdoor posters are removed 2 weeks after the election.
90. Do not produce material that looks like a poll card.
91. Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).

### Campaigning outside polling stations

92. You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including public spaces outside polling places
93. Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.

### Tellers

94. Tellers must
  - always remain outside the polling station

- only enter the polling station to cast their own vote, to vote as a proxy or to accompany a disabled voter
- always comply with the instructions of the Returning Officer and Presiding Officer

95. Tellers must not

- be able to see or hear what is happening inside the polling station
- impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling station
- demand any information relating to a voter's elector number, name or address
- ask to see or check a voter's photographic ID
- ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their elector number
- have discussions with voters that may give rise to allegations of undue influence (e.g. voting intentions, party affiliations or party campaigns)
- display any campaign material in support of or against any particular political party or candidate other than a rosette or badge

96. Tellers may

- approach voters for information in accordance with instructions from the Returning Office and Presiding Officer
- display a coloured rosette or badge displaying the name of the candidate, party and/or emblem or description; the rosette/badge should not bear a slogan and must not be oversized
- remind electors as they approach the polling station that they need to provide photographic ID

## Imprints

97. An imprint must, by law, be added to campaign material to show who is responsible for its production.

98. On printed material, such as leaflets and posters, you must include the name and address of:

- the promoter
- any person on behalf of whom the material is being published (and who is not the promoter)

99. A standard imprint should look like this:

Printed by [printer's name and address].  
Promoted by [agent's name] of [agent's address], on  
behalf of [candidate's name] of [candidate's address]

100. Electoral Commission advice on imprints for social media is as follows:

### ***Social media***

*You should display your full imprint details prominently on your profile. You can include a shortened link to your imprint in your tweet or post. If it is*

*impractical to place a full imprint on to an image, you should include the text of a link, or a hyperlinked logo or emblem that leads to your full imprint.*

*We also suggest that if you use online discussion forums you make your identity as a candidate clear where possible*

## **Websites and other electronic material**

*You should also put an imprint on electronic material, such as websites and emails. The imprint should include the name and address of the promoter and the organisation on whose behalf it has been produced.*

## **Seven principles for safer canvassing**

101. **Be prepared, not scared:** Regularly assess risks, seek available training and support, including advice from local police, parties, or council, and trust your instincts for personal safety during canvassing to ensure a confident and secure approach.
102. **Focus on group safety:** Whenever possible, canvass in groups or pairs for safety – and because it is more enjoyable! Inform others of your whereabouts if canvassing alone. Prioritise team safety by halting and discussing any incidents that may occur.
103. **Actively communicate with the team and set periodic check-ins:** Share canvassing plans with the team and trusted contacts, establishing regular check-ins for safety.
104. **Use technology to make canvassing safer:** Use available technological aids like wearable devices and tracking apps for mobile phones. Get familiar with their emergency features to enhance safety while canvassing. Familiarise yourself with smartphone security functions beforehand and align technology choices with the risk assessment for canvassing.
105. **Be security aware:** Prioritise safety and security when canvassing. Try carrying only essentials and avoid going into residents' homes. When available, follow party do-not-knock lists and update them if you encounter any problem.
106. **Keep a record:** Maintain a detailed incident log and report any uncomfortable situations encountered while canvassing. Sharing incident reports with both your party and the council/police ensures appropriate awareness and action.
107. **Prioritise aftercare and set emergency protocols:** Offer team support after any experiences of abuse or intimidation, prioritising aftercare. Debrief sessions should encourage sharing experiences and seeking support, focusing on both positive and negative encounters. Periodically review emergency response procedures.

## Contacts

[Link to LBC election web page](#)

### **Robin Porter**

- Acting Returning Officer for Bedfordshire (ARO)
- Chief Executive

Email: [chiefexec@luton.gov.uk](mailto:chiefexec@luton.gov.uk)

### **Debbie Janes**

- Democracy Manager
- Acting Returning Officer
- Nominations

Email [Deborah.Janes@luton.gov.uk](mailto:Deborah.Janes@luton.gov.uk)

Phone: 01582 546038

### **Sam Freer**

- Electoral Services Manager
- Acting Returning Officer
- Nominations

Email: [Sam.Freer@luton.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.Freer@luton.gov.uk)

Phone: 01582 546088

### ***Electoral Commission***

Website: <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/>

Email: [infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk)

Phone: 0333 103 1928