

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the election? Which elections are taking place?

On Thursday 6 May 2021, residents of the Isles of Scilly will be voting in two elections:

- a full council election for all 16 members of the Council of the Isles of Scilly; and
- an election for the police and crime commissioner for the Devon and Cornwall police area.

How can I vote at these elections?

There are a number of ways to have your say - you can vote in a polling station, by post or by appointing someone you trust to vote on your behalf, known as a proxy vote.

To vote in any election in the UK, you must be registered to vote. The deadline to register is midnight on Monday 19 April 2021.

How do I register to vote?

It takes 5 minutes to register and you can do this online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

If you're unable to register online, you can apply by post. You can download the relevant form at:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/register-vote-and-update-your-details.

If you can't print the form, please contact us at elections@scilly.gov.uk or on 01720 424545 so we can send you one in the post.

If you were registered to vote in the last election and your details have not changed, you don't need to take any action. If in doubt, you can check with us.

I'm a European Union citizen. Has anything changed as a result of Brexit?

No, your voting rights have not changed. If you are on the electoral register, you can vote in both elections on Thursday 6 May 2021.

I'm a student and I'm not sure where I should register to vote.

Students may be entitled to register at both their home address and their term-time address.

It is an offence to vote more than once in a national election, such as a UK general election. But where you are registered in two different local authorities you can vote in both sets of local elections. Likewise, if you are registered in two different police areas, you can vote for the police and crime commissioner for each police area.

How can I apply to vote by post?

To apply to vote by post you need to download, print and fill in a postal vote application form:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voting-person-post-or-proxy/voting-post

Once you have completed the form and signed it, you need to send it to Electoral Services, Council of the Isles of Scilly, Town Hall, St Mary's, TR21 0LW or you can email the scanned form to elections@scilly.gov.uk. If you can't print the form, please contact us so we can send you one in the post.

If you want to vote by post, you can apply to do this now. This will make sure your application is processed early and your postal vote can be sent to you more quickly once the candidates for the elections are confirmed.

The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm on Tuesday 20 April 2021.

If you already have a postal vote arrangement in place and your details have not changed, you don't need to take any action. If in doubt, you can check with us at elections@scilly.gov.uk or on 01720 424545.

Don't forget that however you choose to vote, you must be registered first.

Your date of birth and signature are required on the application form and then again later when you return your postal vote. This information is needed to prevent fraud. If you are unable to sign your name, or unable to sign your name in a consistent manner, please contact us as special arrangements will need to be put in place.

I'm a postal voter. When will my postal ballot pack arrive?

The first issue of postal ballot packs will be posted by Wednesday 21 April 2021.

A second and final issue of postal ballot packs, for applications received in the last few days before the deadline, will be posted on Wednesday 28 April 2021.

I've opted for a postal vote but I'm too late to post it. What can I do?

You can drop off your postal vote on polling day at your polling station or at the elections office at the Old Wesleyan Chapel on Garrison Lane. Make sure you do it before 10pm.

You cannot be given another ballot paper at the polling station.

How can I apply to vote by proxy?

If you aren't able to vote in person, you can ask someone you trust to vote for you. This is called a proxy vote and the person is often referred to as your proxy.

To apply to vote by proxy you need to download, print and fill in the relevant proxy vote application form:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voting-person-post-or-proxy/voting-proxy

You will need to explain briefly why you can't get to your polling station in person. Once you have completed the form and signed it, you need to send it to Electoral Services, Council of the Isles of Scilly, Town Hall, St Mary's, TR21 0LW or you can email the

scanned form to elections@scilly.gov.uk. If you can't print the form, please contact us so we can send you one in the post.

The person voting on your behalf can either go to your polling station to vote or can apply to vote for you by post.

The deadline to apply for a proxy vote is 5pm on Tuesday 27 April 2021.

If you already have a proxy vote arrangement in place and your details have not changed, you don't need to take any action. If in doubt, you can check with us at elections@scilly.gov.uk or on 01720 424545.

Don't forget that however you choose to vote, you must be registered first.

Is voting in person safe?

Polling stations will be safe places to vote. If you choose to vote in person, you can keep yourself and others safe by:

- wearing a face covering
- bringing your own pen or pencil
- cleaning your hands when entering and leaving the polling station
- keeping a safe distance

You should not attend the polling station if you have symptoms of Covid-19 or if you have been asked to self-isolate.

We will continue to follow the most up to date public health guidance as we prepare for the elections and will update this page as more information and guidance becomes available.

What happens if I fall ill with Covid-19 or need to self-isolate at the last minute?

If you are self-isolating or become unwell as a result of Covid-19 shortly before polling day, or on the day itself, you don't need to miss out on your vote. You will be able to apply for an emergency proxy vote – where someone you trust can vote on your behalf. Speak to us on 01720 424545 and we will tell you what you need to do to arrange this.

Will I need to bring my own pen or pencil?

Yes, you should bring your own pen and pencil to minimise contact.

There will be clean pencils available at the polling station if you forget to bring your own.

Is it safer to vote by post instead of going in person?

Polling stations will be safe places to vote in May but you can choose to apply to vote by post or by proxy instead if you wish.

Where is my polling station?

There is one polling station for each island:

Island Hall, St Agnes

Community Centre, Bryher

Island Hall, St Martin's

Old Wesleyan Chapel, St Mary's

Community Centre, Tresco.

I'd like to stand as a local councillor. What do I need to do?

Nomination packs and a recorded briefing session will be available on the Council website from Wednesday 24 March 2021.

The deadline for delivery of nomination papers is 4pm on Thursday 8 April 2021.

Useful information may be found at:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent and at www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor.

If you have any questions, please contact us at elections@scilly.gov.uk or on 01720 424545.

Who is standing in these elections?

The statements of persons nominated for both the local and PCC elections will be available on the Council website from 4pm on Friday 9 April 2021:

www.scilly.gov.uk/council-democracy/elections/current-elections

All candidates at the PCC election can make a campaign statement that will be published at www.choosemypcc.org.uk as soon as practicable after 4pm on Thursday 8 April 2021. Hard copies can also be requested by contacting 0800 1070708.

When will the results be announced?

The votes at the local government election will be counted on Friday 7 May 2021 with the results declared following the count.

The votes at the PCC election will be counted on Monday 10 May 2021 with the local totals declared following the count. The Police Area Returning Officer in Exeter will declare the overall result for the police area once all local totals are received.

Further information about the PCC election is available from the website of the Police Area Returning Officer:

www.exeter.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/elections-and-voting/2021-police-and-crime-commissioner-election/

You might also like to refer to the website of the Electoral Commission:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter