

Local Elections

5th May 2022

Candidates and Agents Briefing

12th April 2022

Introduction

Mike Gravatt

Returning Officer

Cathy Potter

Deputy Returning Officer

Graham Russell

Deputy Returning Officer

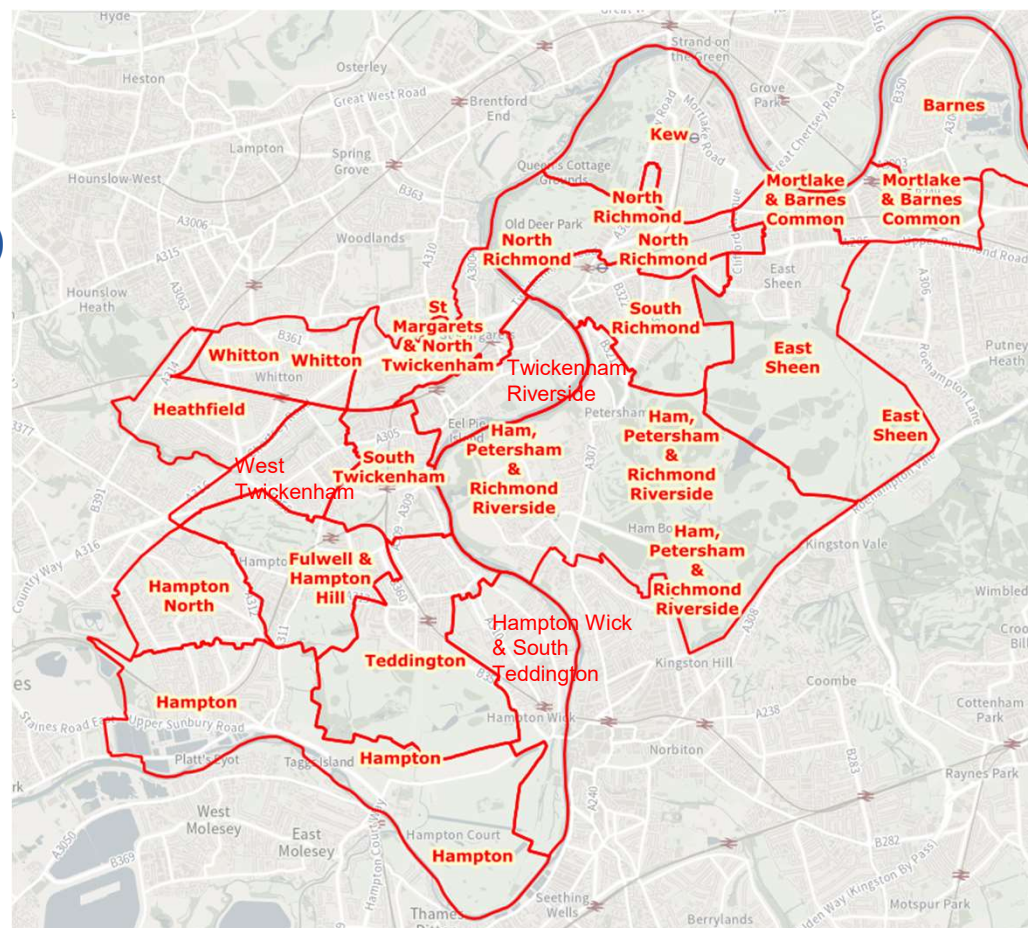
Kam Singh

Deputy Returning Officer

London Borough of Richmond

- 18 wards
- 54 seats
- 138,841 electorate (as at today)
- 28,826 postal voters (as at today)
- 51 polling places

Barnes
East Sheen
Fulwell & Hampton Hill
Ham, Petersham & Richmond Riverside
Hampton
Hampton North
Hampton Wick & South Teddington
Heathfield
Kew
Mortlake & Barnes Common
North Richmond
South Richmond
South Twickenham
St Margarets & North Twickenham
Teddington
Twickenham Riverside
West Twickenham
Whitton



What we are covering today

- Key Dates
- Agents
- Electoral Registration
- Absent Voting
- Postal Vote Openings
- Campaign Material
- Campaigning Outside Polling Stations
- Reporting Allegations
- Tellers
- Polling Day
- The Count
- Candidate Spending
- Contacts

Key Dates

Last date to Register to Vote	14 April
Applications for postal vote or amending existing arrangement	5pm on 19 April
Issuing Postal Votes	19 April
Publication of Notice of Poll	26 April
Last date to receive New Proxy Vote Applications	5pm on 26 April
Appointment of Count and Poll Agents	27 April
Verification and Counting of Votes (after close of poll)	5 May
First day to issue replacement lost postal ballot papers	28 April – 5pm on 5 May
Applications for Emergency proxy votes	5pm on 5 May
Day of Poll	7am – 10pm on 5 May
Return of Election Expenses	10 June

Agents

All Persons attending any event associated with the poll has a duty to maintain the secrecy of the ballot **Secrecy of Proceedings Section 66 of RPA 1983**

Postal Vote Agents

Entitled to appoint one postal vote agent per candidate – right to observe but not to interfere with process – **Appointments must be made before the start of each opening session.**

Polling Agents

Entitled to appoint four polling agents per candidate but not more than one may be admitted into the polling station at the same time on behalf of the same candidate.

Deadline to appoint is 27 April

Counting Agents

Entitled to appoint one counting agent per candidate to scrutinise the count - but must not touch ballot papers. **Deadline to appoint is 27 April**

Electoral Registration

**Deadline to register to vote at this election is
Thursday midnight 14 April 2022**

Eligible residents can register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Electoral Registration forms can be also be downloaded from the above link.

Advise residents to return forms directly to Elections Office.

Residents should only register if they are not already on the electoral register.

Eligible electors have been sent a poll card

New registered electors will be sent a confirmation letter with details of their polling station and absent vote deadlines

Absent Voting

Deadline to return a postal vote application form or change existing voting method is 5pm on 19th April 2022

Resident must be registered to vote. This also applies to **proxies** and their registrations are checked even if in another authority area.

Application forms returned as scanned images (not photos) attached to emails are accepted (electoral.services@richmond.gov.uk)

Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.

Postal ballot papers for applications received up to

29th March will be posted 1st class on 14th April

from 9th April will be posted 1st class on 22nd April

Electors not received postal pack. **We can re-issue from 28th April to 5pm on 5th May**

The deadline to receive new proxy vote applications (not postal proxy) is 5pm Tuesday 26th April 2022

Postal Vote Opening

First opening Monday 25 April at 10am

Daily openings from Tuesday 26 April will start at 10am (except weekends which, if required, will be notified separately).

Polling Day – St Mary’s University

The first session on polling day will commence at 3pm in the Clarendon Hall, with a second session commencing from 7pm at St Mary’s University. Any postal votes returned at polling stations will be opened during the day with the remainder after 10pm at the count venue.

Please note that some sessions may be cancelled, you are advised to telephone the Electoral Services Office on 020 8891 7784 to find out if a session is taking place.

As required by law, the signatures and dates of birth on all the postal vote statements will be checked against the original applications.

Postal vote ballot papers must be kept face down – nobody must attempt to see how individual ballot papers have been marked. **See Part 6 of the EC guidance.**

Campaign Material

Please be considerate when choosing where to campaign; be pragmatic and ask permission where necessary

- ☐ Fly posting will be removed and will be disposed of at a cost to the Council.
- ☐ Do use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- ☐ Do comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners.
- ☐ Do make sure outdoor posters are removed **within 2 weeks** after the election.
- ☐ Do not produce material that looks like a poll card.
- ☐ Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).

Electoral registration and absent vote applications:

- ☐ Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law
- ☐ Include the ERO's address for the return of forms
- ☐ Ensure unaltered applications are sent to ERO within **two working days**.
- ☐ Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.
- ☐ Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
- ☐ Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.

Postal ballot packs:

- ☐ Never touch a postal ballot paper
- ☐ Never observe electors completing their postal vote.
- ☐ Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot pack from voters

Campaigning outside polling stations

Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, but their activities should not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.

Code of Conduct for Campaigners (copies in your pack) and link

- You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including public spaces outside polling places.
- Must not campaign near polling stations that could be seen by voters as aggressive or intimidating
- Campaigners should keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.
- Presiding Officer is responsible for maintaining order in the polling place and you may be asked to move by staff or police if you are impeding voters' access.
- If there are any issues on polling day which cannot be resolved with assistance from the Presiding Officer, please contact the Elections Office.
- We will contact the Election Agent/Candidate directly regarding any issues we cannot resolve.

We invite you to sign up to the Local Protocol and look forward to receiving your signed Declaration

Reporting Allegations

- Report to Police – Special Enquiry Team - SETElections@met.police.uk unit
- List of offences in section 10 (page 13) of the 'Local Protocol'
- If found guilty, as well as a criminal record, punishment can include a fine or even imprisonment

Tellers

- Guidance of the Conduct of Tellers in and around Polling Places (copy in your pack)
- Please distribute copies to your party workers
- Arrangements in place enable Tellers to politely request electors numbers from voters as they enter and leave the polling station
- To come equipped with own chairs/facilities
- Not to locate themselves in the polling place (i.e. building in which the polling station is located)
- Tellers should **never** ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their elector number
- On no account should Tellers obstruct, impede or intimidate voters entering the polling place. Tellers must be identifiable and should wear a rosette, displaying no more than the name of the candidate or party.
- 'Tellers 'dos and don'ts' guidance produced by the Electoral Commission will be displayed outside the polling place on polling day.

Polling Day

- Polling stations open from 7:00am to 10:00pm.
- Electoral Services office staffed from 6:00am to 9:00pm for any election or register queries.
- Polling Station Inspectors will visit stations throughout the day.
- We have put arrangements in place to ensure that polling stations are safe places to vote
- provision of hand sanitiser on entry
- Voters will be encouraged to bring their own pen or pencil for use in polling stations, but pencils will also be made available for anyone who needs one
- Voters should be encouraged to check their poll card before polling day, to see if their polling station has changed since previous elections.

The Count

- Entrance to the count venue will be from 9:30pm
- 18 separate but simultaneous counts – one for each ward
- 3 stages to count – verification, sorting and then counting of votes (procedures in your packs)
 - Verification – verifying the number of ballot papers from polling stations and postal voters that we are expecting for each ward.
 - Sorting – Ballot papers are sort into Block Votes, Mixed Votes, and Doubtful Votes
 - Counting – Block votes counted first; Mixed votes then recorded on a spreadsheet
- Doubtful papers will be adjudicated continuously during the count at two locations
- Results will be declared as they become available
- Returning Officer will consult with agents on provisional results.
- It is against the law to share any results (including provisional results) from the count until the Returning Officer has declared the results.
- **The Returning Officer will announce each ward declaration. Candidates will not be invited up on stage for declaration and there will be no speeches. This will speed up the declaration process.**

The Count continued

Secrecy of Proceedings

All attendees must observe the provisions as to Secrecy prescribed in **Section 66 of the RPA 1983** (copies in your pack)

No filming allowed on the count floor (including from mobile phones, etc.)

Entry to count

- Entry to count will be by prior notice; anyone whose name is not on the list at the count reception will not be allowed in, photo ID is compulsory
- **One** Counting Agent per candidate – deadline to appoint 27th April
- Maximum **one Guest** per candidate – please advise names to cathy.potter@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk by Monday 2nd May in order for tickets to be issued

Parking

- Parking available on and off site

Refreshments

- We will not be providing refreshments for Candidates and Agents at the count venue

The Count continued

- The Mixed Vote process



Candidate Spending

Please refer to Part 3 – Electoral Commission guidance on Spending and Donations.

Election agents are responsible in law for the return of the declaration of expenses forms.

For guidance on specific questions on campaign expenditure please consult the Electoral Commission

£806 + 7p per elector in the register (Ward) Electorate figures will be published on the Councils website

Spending limits for joint candidates

- You are a joint candidate if you stand in the same ward and:
- have the same election agent or
- use the same campaign rooms or
- publish joint material

Joint candidates have lower spending limits, as they are sharing some of the costs.

25% reduction for 2 candidates:

- First, calculate the spending limit for a single candidate - $£806 + (7,500 \times 0.07) = £1,331$
- Then, calculate 25% of this amount - $£1,331 \times (25 \div 100) = £332.75$
- Then, take this amount off the spending limit for a single candidate - $£1,331 - £332.75 = £998.25$
- The spending limit for each of the two joint candidates is £998.25

33% reduction for 3 or more candidates. ($£1331 - £439.23 = £891.77$)

Even if you don't spend any money, you must still submit a report.

Contacts

Contacts

Elections Office

020 8891 7784 (candidates and agents)

020 8891 7775 (public enquires)

electoral.services@richmond.gov.uk

www.richmond.gov.uk/elections

Cathy Potter

020 8891 7784

cathy.potter@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Electoral Commission Contacts

London Team 020 7271 0567

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

London@electoralcommission.org.uk