

Elections FAQs (frequently asked questions)

March 2009

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1 Registration

Issue/question	Answer	Action
Am I registered to vote?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to contact your Electoral Registration Officer (ERO). However, if you filled in the annual canvass form that came through your door between August and November last year you should still be registered but we can check for you. You will need to register again if you have moved home since then. 	<p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer.</p> <p>Registration forms need to be returned to the Electoral Registration Officer by 19 May for the 4 June election.</p>
How do I register to vote for the June elections?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The deadline to get on the register for the June elections is 19 May 2009, if you are not already on it. See also <i>Am I registered to vote?</i> above. <p>If the enquiry is received after 19 May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You missed the registration deadline for 4 June. You may be registered at a different address - you will need to contact the 	<p>Download a registration form from the Electoral Commission (EC) website at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.</p> <p>19 May is the deadline for registration for 4 June elections.</p> <p>If you know your previous postcode, you can search for your old ERO's contact details by going on www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<p>electoral registration office of the relevant area for confirmation of this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can register now for future elections if you wish. 	
<p>How do I register for future elections?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By filling in a form and returning it to your ERO. However, if you filled in the annual canvass form that came through your door last year and returned it to your ERO, you do not need to register again. We can check to see if you are on the register. 	<p>Process as above.</p>
<p>I sent my electoral registration form in ages ago but I'm still not on the register.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It can take up to seven weeks for your name to be added to the register. The register of electors is updated on a monthly basis, and there is a cut off date each month for the receipt of forms. If you missed this date your details will be included in the next month's update. However, you will be added to the 	<p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<p>register in time to vote at these elections, so long as your registration form was received by the ERO before 19 May 2009.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are not sure whether your form was received please contact your ERO. 	
<p>What are the monthly cut-off dates? / Any question about a specific month's cut off date.</p>	<p>Use information provided to give details of the relevant monthly cut-off dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 March for 1 April update 7 April for 1 May update (England and Wales) 8 April for 1 May update (Scotland) 19th May for 4 June elections 	<p>19 May 2009 is the deadline for registration for the 4 June elections.</p>
<p>Am I eligible to vote?</p>	<p>You can only vote if you are registered. You can register if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> you are 16 or over (but you cannot vote until your 18th birthday) AND you are a British, Irish Republic or qualifying Commonwealth citizen (i.e. you have leave to remain or don't require leave to remain) who is 	<p>If you want more information go to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk , or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.</p> <p>If you don't know whether you are a citizen of a Commonwealth country, refer to the list of Commonwealth countries in section 11 below.</p> <p>If you are a Commonwealth citizen but are unsure whether you have leave to remain or whether you don't require leave to remain contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further advice.</p> <p>If you are an EU citizen (not UK, Republic of Ireland, Malta or Cyprus) you are eligible to vote if you have</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<p>resident in the UK, or you are a citizen of another European Union (EU) country resident in the UK.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you can also vote if you have registered as a Service Voter or Crown Servant posted overseas. 	<p>completed a UC1 declaration. Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information</p>
<p>If I pay council tax am I automatically registered?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, electoral registration is a separate process performed by the elections office at your local council. There are different requirements to be registered to vote. 	
<p>I'm a student and I'm not sure where I should register to vote.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are entitled to register at both their home address and their university (term time) address if it is a different electoral area. • It is an offence to vote more than once in a national election – this includes the European Parliamentary election on 4 June – but you can vote in at local elections in those areas if they are elections to different councils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you want more information go to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk , or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.
<p>I've just turned 18 and want to register.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same process as 'How do I register to vote' 	

Issue/question	Answer	Action
I'm homeless / in a mental hospital / remanded in custody, can I register?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, you can make something called a 'declaration of local connection'. You should contact your ERO. 	
What are the full and edited registers?	<p>In 2002 new legislation created the full and the edited register of electors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full register includes the names of all those registered to vote in a local area and is used for electoral and limited statutory purposes only. One of these purposes is credit referencing. • The edited register can be sold on to anyone for any purpose and includes the names of all those who have not 'opted out' of their details being included on it. 	<p>Refer to the Commission's Who has my personal details leaflet, which can be downloaded from: http://www.dopolitics.org.uk/toolbox-index/toolbox2/v-z/who-has-my-personal-details</p> <p>Or contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>

2 Postal and proxy voting

Issue/question	Answer	Action
Who can apply for a postal vote?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone who is registered to vote. • If you are not yet registered, you can always submit a postal vote application form alongside your registration form. 	Download a postal vote application form from the Electoral Commission (EC) website at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.
What is the deadline for applying for a postal vote for the 4 June election?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must have returned your application by not later than 5 pm on 19 May. 	
If someone calls after 5pm on 19 May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have missed the deadline to apply for a postal vote for the election on 4 June. • You may be able to apply for a proxy vote up until 5pm on 27 May (reason required) • You can still apply for a postal vote for future elections now if you wish. 	Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.
How do I get a postal vote?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can download an application form from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk. • You need to return the form to the ERO. • Remind them of the deadline (5pm 19 May for 4 June election). 	Download a postal vote application form from the Electoral Commission (EC) website at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.

Issue/question	Answer	Action
I haven't received my postal ballot paper yet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should receive it about a week before the elections. • If it hasn't arrived 5 days before polling day, or you subsequently lose it, you can get a replacement ballot paper in person from your local elections office, up until 5pm on polling day. • If you have spoilt your ballot paper or postal voting statement, you can get a replacement until 5pm on polling day. Do not destroy or throw away your postal ballot papers. You will need to return them. 	Contact the Election Office for further information.
For what period does my postal vote last?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can apply for just this election, for a specific time period, or for a permanent one. 	Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.
How does the postal voting statement work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need to provide your signature and date of birth. • More detailed instructions will be provided in your postal ballot pack, or you can contact your local elections office for more information. 	Contact the Election Office for further information.
Why do I have to give my date of birth and signature? How is it secret?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you apply for a postal (or proxy) vote you must provide your date of birth and signature. • When you get your postal ballot paper 	Contact the Election Office for further information.

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<p>there will be a separate statement on which you will be asked for the same details. This is for security reasons and the details must match those provided in your application for your vote to be counted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, rest assured that the statement is separated from the ballot paper when it is received. This happens before the sealed ballot paper envelope is opened and the vote is counted. 	
<p>How secure is a postal vote? / Any question or challenge about the security of voting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is an offence to complete a postal vote that is not your own, and to intimidate voters. If you have any allegations of fraud, they should be referred to the police and/or the Local Returning Officer. • Special arrangements have been made with the police to ensure the security of this election. 	<p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>
<p>I opted for a postal vote but I don't want to post it/I'm too late to post it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No problem. You can drop your ballot paper off on polling day at your normal polling station, or to any other polling station in your local counting area. Make sure you do it before 10pm on 4 June. 	<p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You cannot be given another ballot paper at the polling station. Contact your local elections office to find out where your polling station is. 	
Who can apply for a proxy vote?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only those with a specific reason such as a disability or being overseas can apply to vote by proxy for a period of time. Contact your local registration office for more information and an application form. To vote by proxy for just one election, you must have a reason – e.g. you will be away on holiday, but you will not require an attestation. See below for deadlines. 	You can download a form from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.
What is the deadline for applying for a proxy vote?	<p>If you are amending an existing proxy vote, you must return your application by no later than 5 pm on 19 May.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New proxy applications must be received by 5pm on 27 May. You can apply to vote by proxy for emergency medical reasons up until 5pm on 4 June. 	You can download a form from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk or contact the Electoral Registration Officer.

Issue/question	Answer	Action
<p>I've been made the proxy for someone and I don't know how it works</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's simple to vote as someone's proxy. You will be sent a special proxy poll card with details of where you should go to vote. • If you can't attend the polling station you can vote as a proxy by post, but you must apply by 5pm on 19 May. <i>Refer them to the ERO.</i> • If you are going to the polling station just tell the staff there that you are voting as a proxy and they will tell you what to do. • Don't forget to take your proxy poll card – this will speed up the ballot paper issuing process. 	<p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>

3 How/where to vote

Issue/question	Answer	Action
Date of Election	4 June 2009	
How do I find out where my polling station is?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your poll card should tell you the location of your polling station. • Alternatively, contact the elections office. • There may have been a review of all the polling places in your area, and your polling station may have been changed as a result. Contact the elections office for more info. 	
Polling hours?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling hours are between 7am – 10pm. 	
What forms of voting are there?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling station • Absent voting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by post (on demand) - by proxy (need to give particular reason for a particular election, need to meet certain criteria for a period of time) 	<p><i>See section 2. Postal and proxy voting.</i></p> <p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>
How does the count work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed locally by the Local Returning Officer • All votes will be verified and counted on Sunday 7 June 2009. • The count will be held in the Saltire Centre, Arbroath commencing at 6.30 pm 	<p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>
How do I fill in the ballot paper?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information will be provided by the polling clerk at the polling 	<p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	station or, if you opted to vote by post, it will be in your ballot pack.	
My whole block/street hasn't had their poll cards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may not necessarily mean that you cannot vote. • Check with the Electoral Registration Officer that you are registered to vote. • Report it to the elections office. 	

4 Overseas voters

Issue/question	Answer	Action
Can British citizens living abroad vote?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• British citizens living abroad can vote at a European Parliamentary election.• However, Service voters and Crown Servants stationed overseas can vote (see next section).	<p>Further information can be obtained from the Electoral Commission website - Overseas electors fact sheet on EC website: http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/document-summary?assetid=13281 and www.aboutmyvote.co.uk;</p> <p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>

5 Service voters and Crown Servants

Issue/question	Answer	Action
<p>I am in the Armed Forces (Army, Navy or RAF) posted abroad. How do I register to vote?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service personnel and their spouses or civil partners posted abroad can register to vote through making a service declaration, which is available to download from the Commission's website, or we can send you one if you don't have access to the internet. • You can register at the address in the UK where you would be living if not posted overseas or at an address where you have lived in the past. • Service declaration forms should be sent to the ERO for the area where you wish to register. 	<p>Service voter registration form can be downloaded from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.</p> <p>Deadline for registering to vote is 19 May.</p> <p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>
<p>I am in the Armed Forces living in the UK how do I register to vote?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service personnel and their spouses or civil partners have the option of making a service declaration as above, or can opt to register to vote in the traditional way (as described in the registration section) 	<p>Service voter registration form can be downloaded from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.</p> <p>Deadline for registering to vote is 19 May.</p> <p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>
<p>I am a Service voter, what methods of voting are available to me?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service voters and their spouses or civil partners can vote in person or can opt to vote by post or proxy. • Postal votes are only 	<p>Refer to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk website where Service voter forms can be downloaded</p> <p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p> <p>5pm 19 May deadline for receipt of</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<p>sent out about a week before election day. If you are living abroad it is advisable that you appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf as there is unlikely to be enough time for postal votes to reach you and be sent back before close of poll.</p>	<p>postal vote applications and the 5pm 27 May deadline for a new proxy vote. If you already have a proxy vote but want to change it, you need to do this by 5pm 19 May.</p>
<p>I work in a UK embassy / for the EU / for the UN, and am based overseas. How do I register to vote?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are working outside the UK as a Crown Servant or as an employee of the British Council, you can still register to vote. You can also register if you are married to or are the civil partner of a Crown Servant or British Council employee and you are accompanying them during their employment abroad. • You will need to complete a Crown Servant registration form, which is available to download from the Commission's website. 	<p>Crown servant voter registration form can be downloaded from www.aboutmyvote.co.uk</p> <p>Deadline for registering to vote is 19 May.</p> <p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>
<p>I am a Crown Servant, what methods of voting are available to me?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crown Servant voters and their spouses or civil partners can vote in person or can opt to vote by post or proxy. 	<p>Refer to www.aboutmyvote.co.uk website where Crown Servant voter forms can be downloaded.</p> <p>Contact the Electoral Registration Officer for further information.</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postal votes are only sent out about a week before election day, if you are living abroad it is advisable that you appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf as there is unlikely to be enough time for postal votes to reach you and be sent back before close of poll. 	<p>5pm 19 May deadline for receipt of postal vote applications and the 5pm 27 May deadline for a new proxy vote. If you already have a proxy vote but want to change it, you need to do this by 5pm 19 May.</p>

6 Access issues

Issue/question	Answer	Action
<p>What provision is made for people with disabilities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authorities have to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act and other laws. See further details below. The Angus Council Election Office has produced a leaflet to assist voters with a disability. It can be obtained from Libraries, Access Offices, Main Council Offices or downloaded from the website 	<p>Further information is available on the website</p> <p>www.angus.gov.uk/elections</p>
<p>What provisions are made for blind or visually impaired voters?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tactile voting templates and large print versions of ballot papers are available at all polling stations. You can take a companion with you (close relative or elector qualified to vote at the election) to assist you, or ask the presiding officer at the polling station for help. 	
<p>What provision is there for non-English and non-Welsh speakers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballot papers cannot be printed in languages other than English and in Wales, Welsh. 	<p>The Electoral Commission leaflet <i>Easy-read guide to voting</i></p> <p>http://www.dopolitics.org.uk/toolbox-index/toolbox2/d-f/easy-read-guide-to-voting</p> <p>Registration and postal voting leaflets are available in a number of different languages from the Electoral Commission. A catalogue of all the materials available can be found at www.dopolitics.org.uk.</p>

Issue/question	Answer	Action
<p>What provision is there for wheelchair users?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every polling station in Angus has been reviewed to ensure that they are as accessible as possible. • Alternatively, you could apply for a postal vote, to allow you to vote from home; or nominate a proxy to vote on your behalf. 	<p>Contact the Election Office for further information.</p>

7 Elections taking place in your area

Issue/question	Answer	Action
What elections are taking place in my area?	European Parliamentary Election	Further information can be obtained from the website:- www.angus.gov.uk/elections
Who is standing?	Details will be made available on the website after the close of nominations on the 7 May	Further information can be obtained from the Regional Returning Officer
Where can I get info about candidates?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no official source. You will need to visit candidate websites, party websites, or write to the party. Most candidates/parties post leaflets through letter boxes during election time. • Party/website contact details will be printed on the leaflets. • Websites such as the BBC, that of the local authority and www.votewise.co.uk may be useful. 	

8 Count, results, etc

Issue/question	Answer	Action
When are the results announced?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The votes will be counted on Sunday 7 June. Local results are likely to be declared that evening.• Contact your local electoral services for more info, or visit their website.	Further information regarding the Angus Local Counting Area can be obtained from the Election Office.
What about recounts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is the responsibility of the Local Returning Officer to decide if a re-count is necessary depending on how close the results are.	

9 Candidates

Issue/question	Answer	Action
How do I stand as a candidate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You need to meet all the qualifications for being a candidate and not be disqualified. • You will also need to submit a set of nomination papers to the Regional Returning Officer (RRO) • Refer to candidates guide on Electoral Commission website http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/electoral_commission_pdf_file/0003/71661/2009-EPE-Candidates-and-Agents-GB-WEB.pdf 	Contact the Regional Returning Officer for further information.
Where do I get nomination papers from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination papers are available in the candidates' guidance on the Electoral Commission website (see above) or from the Regional Returning Officer. 	Contact the Regional Returning Officer for further information.
When is close of nominations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close of nominations for the elections on 4 June is 4pm on 7 May 	Contact the Regional Returning Officer for further information.
Any other nomination query		Contact the Regional Returning Officer for further information.

10 The Electoral Commission

Issue/question	Answer	Action
What is The Electoral Commission?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="491 342 895 622">• An independent body, not part of government, whose aim is to increase public confidence in the democratic system and knowledge of elections and referendums.	If you wish further information please go to the Electoral Commission website:- <a data-bbox="938 483 1442 517" href="http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk">www.electoralcommission.org.uk .

11 List of Commonwealth countries, British Overseas Territories and European Union member states

Commonwealth countries

Antigua and Barbuda	Jamaica	St Vincent & The Grenadines
Australia	Kenya	Samoa
The Bahamas	Kiribati	Seychelles
Bangladesh	Lesotho	Sierra Leone
Barbados	Malawi	Singapore
Belize	Malaysia	Solomon Islands
Botswana	Maldives	South Africa
Brunel Darussalam	Malta	Sri Lanka
Cameroon	Mauritius	Swaziland
Canada	Mozambique	United Republic of Tanzania
Cyprus	Namibia	Tonga
Dominica	Nauru	Trinidad and Tobago
Fiji Islands	New Zealand	Tuvalu
The Gambia	Nigeria	Uganda
Ghana	Pakistan	United Kingdom
Grenada	Papua New Guinea	Vanuatu
Guyana	St Kitts and Nevis	Zambia
India	St Lucia	Zimbabwe

British Overseas Territories

Anguilla	Montserrat
Bermuda	Pitcairn Island
British Antarctic Territory	St Helena
British Indian Ocean Territory	St Helena dependencies (Ascension Island, Tristan da Cunha)
British Virgin islands	
Cayman Islands	South Georgia and the South Islands
Falkland Islands	Turks and Caicos Islands
Gibraltar	

European Union member states

Austria	Germany	The Netherlands
Belgium	Greece	Poland
Bulgaria	Hungary	Portugal
Cyprus *	Ireland	Romania
Czech Republic	Italy	Slovakia
Denmark	Latvia	Slovenia
Estonia	Lithuania	Spain
Finland	Luxembourg	Sweden
France	Malta *	

* Also Commonwealth countries