



Shropshire Council's Guide for Candidates and Agents



UK Parliamentary By-Election 2021

North Shropshire Parliamentary Constituency

November 2021

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Separate Loose-Leaf Enclosures

- Return of Deposit Instruction Form
- Request for electoral register
- Request for a copy of the lists of postal and proxy voters
- Election Timetable

Link to Electoral Commission Website

[UK Parliamentary by-elections in Great Britain | Electoral Commission](#)

Forms available for after the Election

- Application Form for the Marked Polling Station Registers/
Marked Absent Voter Lists

The marked copy of the Register and marked Absent Voters Lists is available to the following parties after the election has taken place:-

- The Electoral Commission
- Elected Representatives for electoral purposes only
- Local Constituency Parties
- Registered Political Parties
- Candidates who stood at the election
- Government Departments and Other Bodies
- Police Forces or other Security Agents

Application Forms for the Marked Register will be made available after the declaration of the result, duly costed with the prescribed fees.

How to Contact Shropshire Council

For Members of the Public

The following details can be passed on to members of the public who have any queries:

Office Address	Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND.	
Telephone Number	0345 678 9015	
E-Mail Queries	Election queries	elections@shropshire.gov.uk
	Registration queries	registration@shropshire.gov.uk
Website	www.shropshire.gov.uk	

USEFUL WEBSITES

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/elections-and-electoral-registration/voting-and-elections/north-shropshire-parliamentary-constituency-by-election/>

REGISTER TO VOTE:

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

DIRECT GOV:

<http://www.direct.gov.uk>

ELECTORAL COMMISSION:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/uk-parliamentary-elections-great-britain>

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter>

ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS

<http://www.election-maps.co.uk/index.jsp>

EVERY VOTE COUNTS

<http://www.everyvotecounts.org.uk>

Copy Notice of Election

UK Parliamentary By-Election

For the North Shropshire Constituency

1. A By-Election is to be held of one Member of Parliament for the North Shropshire Constituency.
2. Nomination papers can be obtained from the office of the Acting Returning Officer, The Elections Office at Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND during the times stated below.
3. Nomination papers must be delivered to the Acting Returning Officer at The Elections Office at Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND on any day after the date of this notice, on Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm but no later than 4pm on Friday 19 November 2021.
4. The £500 deposit can be paid by legal tender or by means of a banker's draft from a drawer which carries on business as a banker in the United Kingdom.
5. If the election is contested, the poll will take place on Thursday 16 December 2021.
6. Applications to register to vote must reach the Electoral Registration Officer by 12 midnight on Tuesday 30 November 2021.
7. All new applications to vote by post, together with any applications for the cancellation or amendment of an existing postal or postal proxy vote, must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND by 5pm on Wednesday 1 December 2021.
8. All new applications to vote by proxy must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND by 5pm on Wednesday 8 December 2021.
9. Applications to vote by emergency proxy at this by-election on the grounds of physical incapacity or for work/service reasons must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND by 5pm on Thursday 16 December 2021. The physical incapacity must have occurred after 5pm on Wednesday 8 December 2021. To apply on the grounds of work/service, the person must have become aware that they cannot go to the polling station in person after 5pm on Wednesday 8 December 2021.

Dated: Friday 12 November 2021

Andy Begley
Acting Returning Officer

CANDIDATES' DEPOSITS AND CANDIDATES' EXPENSES

Deposits

In addition to the information contained in the following Notice, Candidates must receive at least 5% of the total of votes polled to be able to have their deposit returned after the election. Full details on deposits can be obtained in the Electoral Commission's "Guidance for Candidates and Agents" – Part 2a or Part 2b.

- *Please note:* Please complete and return the loose-leaf Form contained in your pack, to tell us who to make your cheque payable to, and to what address you would like it to be sent.

Election Expenses

Comprehensive guidance on Election Expenses is contained in the Electoral Commission's "Guidance for Candidates and Agents" – Part 3 (Spending and Donations).

- *Please note:* It is neither the role nor responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer's staff to provide guidance/advice on permitted expenditure and expenses limits.

Expenses Forms and Returns of Expenditure

All Expenses Forms produced by the Electoral Commission can be downloaded from their website at:

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/uk-parliamentary-general-election-great-britain> - *Resources for Part 3: Spending and Donations*

Expenses and the necessary Agent's and Candidate's Declarations shall be delivered to the Acting Returning Officer **within 35 days after the day on which the result is declared.**

- *Please note:* It is neither the role nor responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer's staff to provide guidance/advice on the completion of the returns and declarations. The submission of these forms is a legal requirement, and a record of all such returns and declarations are held by the Acting Returning Officer's staff for public inspection for a period of two years.

UK PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION 2021

NORTH SHROPSHIRE CONSTITUENCY

DEPOSITS

DEPOSITS

Rule 9 of the Parliamentary Election Rules requires that Candidates' Deposits are made during the period allowed for nominations, closing at 4.00 p.m. on Friday 19 November 2021.

The amount of the deposit is £500.

As we require funds to clear before the close of nominations, and as the period permitted for nominations is so short, **we will only receive deposits in the form of Bankers' Drafts or legal tender** (£1 coins or notes of greater denomination).

Bankers Drafts to be made payable to:

- Shropshire Council Parliamentary Elections North Shropshire

Rule 53 concerns the returns of deposits. We will return the deposits for those candidates that poll more than 5% of the total number of valid votes cast by the legal deadline of Monday 20 December 2021, by posting a cheque drawn upon the Acting Returning Officer's account to the candidate or to his personal representative notified to us in writing.

Forfeited deposits are sent to Her Majesty.

Andy Begley
Acting Returning Officer

Supporting Documents Available

UK Parliamentary By-Elections 2021

North Shropshire Constituency

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

The Representation of the People Acts makes provision for the Electoral Registration Officer or for the Acting Returning Officer to supply various documents or data to candidates and their agents in an election to support them in the conduct of their campaign.

The Political Parties are requested to be mindful that printed versions of the documents are lengthy – around **85,000 entries** on the electoral register and around **13,000 entries** on the absent voters lists. Whilst you can request either a paper or data copy, please be mindful of the time and resources required to produce a paper copy, compared to a data version.

● Obtaining the Documents or Data

The Register of Electors, Absent Voters List and the Marked Polling Station Register/Marked Absent Voter List are all available from Shropshire Council **upon written request**.

“Current” Absent Voters Lists are supplied upon receipt, with “Final” Lists produced immediately after the deadline for postal and/or proxy vote applications.

Application Forms for each of these items are contained as loose-leaf Forms in this Pack.

Completed Application Forms should be sent to Shropshire Council’s Electoral Services Team:-

Tel: 01743 252330

E-mail: elections@shropshire.gov.uk

THE ELECTORAL REGISTER:

The Register can be supplied to the following **upon receipt of a written request**:-

● <i>A Person Nominated to act for a Constituency Party</i>	● <i>A Registered Political Party</i>
● <i>A Member of Parliament</i>	● <i>An Election Candidate</i>

For anyone listed above, who has not already received a copy, the relevant Application Form is enclosed as a loose-leaf Form in this Pack.

THE ABSENT VOTERS LISTS:

There are three types of absent voter, namely:-

Postal Voters, Proxy Voters and Postal Proxy Voters.

In the run up to an election, the list is constantly changing.

- The "*Current List*" is "as it stands at 9.00 am" on the day on which it is supplied.
- The "*Final List*" is as it stands after 5.00 pm on:
Wednesday 1 December 2021 for postal votes; and
Wednesday 8 December 2021 for proxy votes.

The Absent Voters List can be supplied to the following **upon receipt of a written request**:-

• <i>A Person Nominated to act for a Constituency Party</i>	• <i>A Registered Political Party</i>
• <i>A Member of Parliament</i>	• <i>An Election Candidate</i>

Applications for the receipt of the Absent Voters List must be made **in writing**, specifying whether the "*Current*" and/or "*Final*" list is required.

Completed Form(s) should be sent to the Electoral Registration Officer at the Shirehall, e-mail: elections@shropshire.gov.uk The documents or data is supplied free of charge.

MARKED POLLING STATION REGISTERS – MARKED ABSENT VOTER LISTS:

After the poll has taken place, copies of the Marked Polling Station Register and Marked Absent Voter List can be requested. Please note that the Marked Polling Station Register can only be supplied as a paper copy, although we may issue this as a scanned document.

Whilst anyone can make an appointment to view the Marked Register/List, they can only be supplied to the following **upon receipt of a written request**:-

• <i>A Person Nominated to act for a Constituency Party</i>	• <i>A Registered Political Party</i>
• <i>A Member of Parliament</i>	• <i>An Election Candidate</i>

Applications for the receipt of the Marked Register/List must be made **in writing** and should be sent to the Electoral Registration Officer at the Shirehall.

Application Forms for the Marked Register will be made available after the declaration of the result, duly costed with the prescribed fees.

Fees for the supply of these documents are laid down in The Representation of the People (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and are £10 administration fee, plus £2.00 for each 1,000 entries or part thereof.

PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION 2021

NORTH SHROPSHIRE CONSTITUENCY

Notices of Time and Place for Local Key Events Given to Agents and Candidates at the Election

Event	Notice Given in Accordance with	Time and Place	Number of Agents who may attend
Polling Agents	Schedule 1, Rule 30		<p>Not more than one polling agent may be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same candidate.</p> <p>Notice of appointment to be given to the Acting Returning Officer by close of office on Thursday 9 December 2021.</p> <p>(Application Form in Nomination Pack)</p>
Opening of the Postal Votes	Schedule 2, Rules 45, 56	<p>Opening Sessions (as the Reception is not open agents are asked to come to the North Entrance at the Shirehall):</p> <p>Commencing at 8.30am on the following days:</p> <p>Tuesday 7 December Wednesday 8 December Thursday 9 December Friday 10 December Monday 13 December Tuesday 14 December Wednesday 15 December Thursday 16 December</p> <p>(Openings may be cancelled at short notice if there are insufficient postal votes returned)</p>	<p>TWO agents* per candidate at any one opening</p> <p>Notice of appointment to be given to the Acting Returning Officer <u>before the opening</u>.</p> <p>(Application Form in Nomination Pack)</p>

<p>Opening of the Postal Votes cont...</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p>Count Venue: A final opening at Shrewsbury Sports Village commencing at 8.00pm on Thursday 16 December 2021.</p> <p>Rejected postal votes from the preceding opening session will be available for Agents' objections to be registered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily at the Shirehall, on each working day at 4.00pm from Tuesday 7 December 2021 to Thursday 16 December 2021 inclusive. ● At the conclusion of the final opening session, at Shrewsbury Sports Village on Thursday 16 December 2021. 	
<p>Counting of the Votes</p>	<p>Schedule 1, Rule 30</p>	<p>10.30 pm on Polling Day at Shrewsbury Sports Village.</p>	<p>NUMBER OF AGENTS PERMITTED = TBC*</p> <p>Notice of appointment to be given to the Acting Returning Officer by 5pm on Thursday 9 December 2021.</p>

COUNT VENUE:

Shrewsbury Sports Village,
Sundorne Road,
Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY1 4RQ.

* Note: The number of Count Agents will be in addition to the **Candidate**, his or her **Guest**, and appointed **Election Agent** who may attend any of these proceedings.

Andy Begley - Acting Returning Officer

Postal Voting Overview

Opening of the postal votes will take place at the following location.

Venue: Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND.

Dates	Times
Tuesday 7 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Wednesday 8 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Thursday 9 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Friday 10 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Monday 13 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Tuesday 14 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Wednesday 15 December	8.30am til 4.00pm
Thursday 16 December	8.30am til 2.00pm

Rejected postal votes will be available for agents' objections to be registered daily at 4.00pm on the above dates and at the conclusion of the final opening on 16 December 2021.

It is also planned to hold Opening Sessions on polling day at 8.00pm and at the close of poll at Shrewsbury Sports Village.

Entry to the opening of postal votes is restricted to Candidates and/or the persons appointed to attend the Postal Voting Sessions. A form for the appointment of such agents is contained in the Electoral Commission's Nomination Pack.

As at 12 November 2021, the absent voters for North Shropshire Constituency is: -

Parliamentary Constituency	Postal	Proxy	Postal Proxy
North Shropshire	11,369	55	23

The figures are however changing daily.

The deadlines for receipt and amendment of postal and proxy applications are as follows: -

POSTAL VOTING DEADLINE: 5PM ON WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2021

- Deadline for new applications
- Deadline for new postal proxy applications
- Deadline for amendments to existing applications
- Cancellation of existing applications

PROXY VOTING DEADLINE: 5PM ON WEDNESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2021

- Deadline for new applications
- Deadline for amendments to existing applications
- Cancellation of existing applications

A person is not entitled to vote as a proxy on behalf of more than two electors. They may however vote for more than two if they are acting as a proxy of the spouse, civil partner, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild of the elector.

EMERGENCY PROXY VOTING DEADLINE: 5PM ON THURSDAY 16 DECEMBER 2021

Emergency Proxies may be appointed in the case of a medical condition occurring on the grounds of illness or disability arising after the deadline for ordinary proxy applications, and on the grounds of occupation, service or employment. In each case, these may only be granted subject to the appropriate attestation being provided.

Postal Vote Opening Process – A Brief Summary

The Electoral Commission has produced a comprehensive guide on postal voting for Candidates and Agents - Part 5: Your right to attend key electoral events.

Reproduced below is the process adopted by Shropshire Council, for dealing with the returned postal vote packs.

Stage 1 – First Table

- Working in bundles of 25 envelopes at a time.
- The Postal Vote Statement and Envelope A's are extracted, and two piles are made, ensuring that the piles are kept in the same order, with the outer Envelope B's being disregarded.
- If a Postal Vote Statement or Envelope A (Ballot Paper) is missing, a docket is attached, and the items are placed in a basket to be dealt with later.
- A check is made to ensure that the ballot paper number at the top of the postal vote statement matches the number on the A envelope. If the numbers do not match, a docket is attached, and the items are placed in a basket to be dealt with later.
- For all successful applications, batch header sheets are attached to the Postal Vote Statements and Envelope A's that are being passed to the next stage of the process.

Stage 2 – Second Table

- Each statement will be scanned to check that the date of birth and signature completed by the elector, are correct.
- If correct, the papers are clipped with the appropriate batch header sheets and forwarded to the next table, together with the corresponding batch of postal voting statements, for the next stage in the process.
- If a postal voting statement is found to be incorrect, the corresponding Envelope "A" is removed from the bundle and given to a runner to be dealt with separately. The remaining statements and ballot paper envelopes are then forwarded with amended batch headers, to Table 3.

Stage 3 – Third Table

- Ballot papers are extracted from the remaining Envelopes marked “A” and are kept FACE DOWN. A summary sheet of the number of ballot papers to be included in the count is completed.

The Final Recording Process

- A record is kept of all rejected and provisionally rejected ballot papers/statements.
- The provisionally rejected ballot papers are retained for cross-reference purposes, as they may be able to be “matched” before the end of the Count.
- The rejected ballot papers (ie. those which have incorrect or missing personal data on the postal voting statements) are recorded and placed in a folder.
- The postal votes which have successfully been received and batched are placed in a ballot box to be included in the final count for the individual venues.

Attendance at Proceedings by Postal Vote Opening Agents

Rule 85A(3-4) requires that, when no match can be made, the postal voting statement is marked “rejected”. Formally appointed agents may attend the opening of the postal votes and may see the rejected statements, as well as the personal identifiers record. If they object to the Acting Returning Officer’s decision, they can ask for the rejection to be objected to.

The rejected ballot papers will be available for inspection after each opening session at 4.00pm on each day that such an opening takes place, with the exception of polling day, when a final inspection of that day’s postal voting statements will take place at the conclusion of the Count.

No more than two agents per candidate may attend any opening session. Any person attending these sessions, will be asked to “sign in” upon arrival, and “sign out” upon departure.

GUIDANCE FOR TELLERS AT ELECTIONS

This is a summary of guidance issued by the Electoral Commission.

TELLERS DO'S AND DON'TS

Tellers are usually volunteers for candidates. They stand outside polling places and record the electoral number of electors who have voted. By identifying electors who have not voted and relaying this information to the candidate or their supporters, tellers play an important role in elections and referendums. The candidate or their supporters may then contact the voters who have not yet been to vote during polling day and persuade them to vote, which may help to increase turnout.

There should be no more than one teller at a polling station for each candidate at any time. Where a polling place contains more than one polling station with separate entrances, it may be appropriate for there to be tellers at each entrance, but no more than one per candidates.

Tellers have no legal status and voters have the right to refuse to give them any information.

Tellers must:

- (a) Always remain outside the polling station/place.
- (b) Only enter the polling station to cast their own vote, to vote as a proxy or to assist a voter with disabilities.
- (c) Always comply with the instructions of the Returning Officer.

Tellers must not:

- (a) Be able to see or hear what is happening inside the polling station.
- (b) Impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling station/place.
- (c) Demand any information relating to a voter's electoral number, name or address.
- (d) Ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their elector number.
- (e) Have discussions with voters that may give rise to allegations of undue influence (e.g. voting intentions or party affiliations)
- (f) Display any campaign material in support of or against any particular political party or candidate other than a rosette

Tellers may:

- (a) Approach voters for information as they enter/leave the polling station/place.
- (b) Display a coloured rosette displaying the name of the candidate or party. While the rosette must not be oversized, it may carry a description or emblem.

POSTERS AND FLY-POSTING

To display any advert on private land, you need permission from the site-owner.

The Council does not permit any posters on Council owned buildings, vehicles or street 'furniture' – this includes lamp posts.

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

PROTOCOL ON USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES BY POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION CANDIDATES

1. Use of Council Facilities

- This Protocol has been prepared by the Acting Returning Officer for Shropshire Council and the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- The Protocol clarifies the legal position regarding the use of Council facilities – premises, equipment and property – and staff time for political purposes. In particular it provides guidance on handling requests to film or photograph Council services for use in any promotional material including leaflets and videos.
- The Protocol is based on Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 which prohibits a Local Authority from publishing any material designed to effect public support for a political party. This includes any communication in whatever form addressed to the public at large or a section of the public. The Local Authority is prohibited from giving financial or other assistance to a person for publication of such material.

2. Use of Council Services for Publicity Purposes

- All requests from political parties (including all Members of the Council, MPs, MEPs, election candidates and their agents or representatives) which may involve the use of Council facilities and staff time must be made to the Chief Executive.
- All Council staff who receive such requests, must refer these immediately to the Chief Executive. No member of staff, other than the Chief Executive (or his authorised deputy), is permitted to agree such requests.
- Local Authorities are barred from assisting any Member, MP, candidate or agent in publishing publicity material. Council printing facilities must therefore not be used for the printing of political publicity.
- Filming or photography of Council Services which are publicly and freely available may be permitted, subject to certain conditions to prevent the filming or photography of members of staff and Council customers, and to avoid disruption to services. As a rule of thumb, the filming or photography of the outside of Council premises or facilities in a public space (e.g. on the street where the Council has no control over public access) is not a problem in principle. Filming inside Council premises or on Council land is not acceptable, as this would be in contravention of Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986. Any filming or photography, including the conditions to be applied, must still be agreed in advance by the Chief Executive.
- If requests for photography or filming are granted, Council Services must continue to run as normal. In no circumstances will special provision be made.

3. Websites

- Publicity material of a political nature will not be permitted on the Council's website or Intranet. Links to other websites containing political material will not be permitted.
- IT Services are responsible for ensuring that the Council's website is kept free of political publicity and that any links provided are to websites that are free of political material.

4. Council-generated publicity

- The Council will be bound by the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. The Code requires that particular care is taken when publicity is issued immediately prior to an election, to ensure that this could not be perceived as seeking to influence public opinion, or to promote the public image of a particular candidate or group of candidates. Between the time of publication of a Notice of Election and Polling Day, proactive publicity will not be issued which deals with controversial issues or which reports views or policies in a way that identifies them with individual candidates or political parties.
- These constraints do not mean that there will be a blanket ban on all Council publicity during any pre-election period. Normal publicity generated by the Council via press releases issued by the Council will continue, with all press releases to be approved by the relevant Head of Service or Executive Director. The Council will also continue to respond to media enquiries including those relating to issues of a controversial nature.

5. Use of Council Property for Public Meetings

- There is provision within The Representation of the People Act 1983, for candidates in an election to have free use of certain rooms for holding public meetings. A candidate is entitled – for the purpose of holding public meetings in furtherance of his/her candidature – to use, free of charge, at reasonable times (up to the day before the poll), a suitable room in schools or other Council buildings (s.95 RPA 1983).
- The person using the room must pay the costs of preparing the room, heating, lighting and cleaning. Permitting use of these facilities will not breach this protocol provided the local authority does not publicise the meeting. This provision does not allow a candidate to hold surgery-type meetings or meetings of particular political groups.
- In accordance with this protocol, all such requests for public meetings within schools and other Council buildings must be reported in advance of the meeting to the Chief Executive. Prior permission does not need to be sought, subject to the provisions outlined above being followed.

This Protocol takes immediate effect and will remain in force until further notice.