



Elections fact pack 2024



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WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Borough Election timetable

Publication of Notice of Election	Friday 22 March
Publish statement of persons nominated	4pm, Monday 8 April
Deadline to register to vote	Midnight, Tuesday 16 April
Last day to apply for new postal and postal proxy votes, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes	5pm, Wednesday 17 April
Deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate	5pm, Wednesday 24 April
Last day to apply for a proxy vote	5pm, Wednesday 24 April
Polling Day – Polls open from 7am to 10pm	Thursday 2 May
Verification of all ballot boxes at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre	Friday 3 May
Borough Election count at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre	Friday 3 May

Police and Crime Commissioner Election timetable

Publication of Notice of Election	Tuesday 22 March
Publish statement of persons nominated	4pm, Monday 8 April
Last day to apply for postal and postal proxy votes, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes	5pm, Wednesday 17 April
Last day to apply for a proxy vote	5pm, Wednesday 24 April
Polling Day – Polls open from 7am to 10pm	Thursday, 2 May
Count Wokingham Borough votes for the PCC election	Saturday, 4 May

Count venue

Borough election

The verification of all ballot boxes, including Police and Crime Commissioner, will take place at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre, Rushey Way, Lower Earley on Friday May 3 starting at 9am. This year's local elections will use the 'grass skirt' counting method. This involves layering ballot papers on top of one another and lining up the voting areas of the ballots so that only the voting marks can be seen. This forms a skirt effect and allows the votes to be counted easily and quickly. The results will be posted online at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/elections-and-voting/

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) election count

West Berkshire Council is coordinating the Police and Crime Commissioner election for the Thames Valley. The count for the PCC Election will be conducted at local counting centres across the Thames Valley area on Saturday 4 May, with a Regional Hub based at Newbury Racecourse. This is where the final result of the election will be declared. A local declaration of the verified figure will be given by each Local Returning Officer (LRO) once approved by the PARO, but there is no requirement to announce the overall result by the LRO on Saturday 4 May.

The PCC votes will be counted at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre on Saturday 4 May approximately 10am. To find out more about the PCC role, visit www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk

For more information about the TVP area PCC election visit [Police Area Returning Officer \(PARO\) 2024 - West Berkshire Council](#)

Applying for accreditation

The last day to apply for media accreditation for the Wokingham Borough count is Friday 26 April.

All reporters and crew will require media passes, subject to available space.

To apply, email the Communications, Engagement and Marketing team at: CEM@wokingham.gov.uk stating your name, organisation, and any special requests you may have, such as filming requirements.

PCC election

If you wish to attend the PCC Regional Hub based at Newbury Racecourse, please contact paro.communications@westberks.gov.uk to make arrangements.

Visit www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/elections-and-voting/current-elections for all the latest information on the current elections, including the Statement of Persons Nominated. For more information about the TVP area PCC election visit [Police Area Returning Officer \(PARO\) 2024 - West Berkshire Council](#).

Contact numbers

David Allen (CEM Manager) – 07769 963220

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Previous declaration times

Election	Year	Time
Local	2023	3.20pm
Local	2022	12.30pm
Local	2021	5pm
PCC	2021	7.10pm
General	2019	3am
Local	2019	3.25pm
Local	2018	1.50am
General	2017	2.30am
Local	2016	4am
PCC	2016	4.30pm
Local	2015	12.30pm
General	2015	5.40am
European	2014	11.50pm
Local	2014	3.30pm
PCC	2012	5.30pm
Local	2012	2pm
Referendum	2011	6.30pm
Local	2011	3pm
Local	2010	6pm
General	2010	5.10am
European	2009	10pm
Local	2007	12.30pm
Local	2006	12.40am
General	2005	1.15am
Local	2004	3.30pm

A profile of Wokingham Borough

Wokingham Borough consists of 17 parishes and towns, each with their own distinctive character. The borough offers an excellent quality of life, with great job opportunities, top class schools and an attractive local environment.

These positive features of the borough not only make it a great place to live but also attract leading edge businesses and highly skilled workers.

Facts and figures

Area: 17,892 hectares (44,211 acres)

Population: 178,169 (2021)

Total electorate: 132,523 (as of January 2024)

Number of households: 74,487 (as of March 2024)

The local economy

The local economy is dominated by sectors such as IT, pharmaceuticals, research and education. The borough is home to major international companies, including Oracle, Microsoft, Johnson and Johnson, Jacobs, Pepsico, and Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

Much of the University of Reading's main Whiteknights campus falls within the borough – as does the University's Thames Valley Science Park – which is contributing to the rapidly expanding film and TV sector at Shinfield Studios, alongside Winnersh Film Studios at Winnersh Triangle and Arborfield Studios.

Businesses are attracted by the good quality environment, high achieving schools, a highly skilled workforce and excellent transport links to London, Heathrow, Gatwick and the motorway networks.

Employment

In December 2023, the percentage of working age people in Wokingham Borough claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and National Insurance credits – or receiving Universal Credit principally for the reason of being unemployed – was 1.7%, which is significantly lower than levels for the South East (2.9%) and Great Britain (3.7%).

While this is higher than low pre-Covid levels (1.1%), and marginally higher than the beginning of 2023, this is indicative of the structural resilience of the local economy.

Skills & Education

The borough has a very well-qualified and highly skilled resident workforce, with 57% of the population being qualified to at least NVQ Level 4, which is well above the regional and national equivalents (45.2% and 43.6% respectively).

There is also a high proportion working in managerial and professional roles (74.3%). Wokingham Borough's well-qualified and educated workforce supports the particularly strong local knowledge economy sector. The area also enjoys similar advantages at NVQ Levels 3, 2 and 1.

The borough's schools are high achieving, with results regularly placing the local authority among the top performing in the country.

Housing

Over recent years, national policy has expected between 750 and 800 new homes to be built in Wokingham Borough each year. The current planning strategy, which looks towards 2026, concentrates the majority of new homes into four major developments at north and south Wokingham, Arborfield Green and the around the villages of Shinfield, Three Mile Cross and Spencers Wood. Each major development is planned with significant levels of affordable housing and supporting infrastructure, including new roads, schools and open spaces.

The council is in the process of preparing a new long-term planning strategy, with a number of consultations having taken place. The new strategy will need to allocate new areas of land to continue to meet housing needs, including for affordable homes. It is expected that the new strategy will allocate a new area for major development, in addition to smaller allocations distributed across the borough.

Current political make-up

There are currently 25 wards within Wokingham Borough, represented by 54 councillors on the Borough Council*. Currently, there is not a single political party which holds majority and so the council is therefore considered to have 'no overall control'. The current political balance is:

Liberal Democrats – 26 seats

Conservatives – 22 seats

Labour – 5 seats

Independent Group – 1 seat

*** Please see section below on changes to ward boundaries and constituencies. From May 2024 the number of wards in Wokingham Borough will change**

Changes to ward boundaries and constituencies

Major changes have been made to the electoral ward boundaries, following a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). Details can be found at: www.lgbce.org.uk

This means that some residents will be voting in a different ward to the one they last cast their vote in. They are advised to read their polling card carefully when it arrives, as it will let them know which polling station they can vote at.

The review was conducted to ensure councillors represent roughly the same number of electors and that ward arrangements will help the council work effectively. The number of councillors will remain at 54, but there will now be 18 wards, with each represented by three councillors.

The wards are:

- Barkham & Arborfield
- Bulmershe & Coronation
- Emmbrook
- Evendons
- Finchampstead
- Hawkedon
- Hillside
- Loddon
- Maiden Erlegh & Whitegates
- Norreys
- Shinfield
- South Lake
- Spencers Wood & Swallowfield
- Thames
- Twyford, Ruscombe & Hurst
- Winnersh
- Wescott
- Wokingham Without

Seats up for election

All 54 seats are up for election this year.

The current list of councillors by current ward is as follows:

(Note: There will be changes to Wokingham Borough wards and number of councillors for each ward from May 2024 – please see section above on changes to ward boundaries and constituencies)

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Arborfield	Gary Cowan	Independent	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Barkham	Ian Pittock	Liberal Democrats	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Bulmershe & Whitegates	Andy Croy	Labour	2022
	Tony Skuse	Labour	2023
	Shahid Younis	Conservatives	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Charvil	Sam Akhtar	Conservatives	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Coronation	Keith Baker	Conservatives	2022
	Alison Swaddle	Conservatives	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Emmbrook	Rachel Bishop-Firth	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Morag Malvern	Liberal Democrats	2021
	Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	Liberal Democrats	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Evendons	Sarah Kerr	Liberal Democrats	2022
	Adrian Mather	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Ian Shenton	Liberal Democrats	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Finchampstead North	Peter Harper	Conservatives	2022
	Charles Margetts	Conservatives	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Finchampstead South	David Cornish	Liberal Democrats	2022
	Rebecca Margetts	Conservatives	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Hawkedon	David Hare	Liberal Democrats	2022
	Clive Jones	Liberal Democrats	2021
	Andrew Mickleburgh	Liberal Democrats	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Hillside	Pauline Jorgensen	Conservatives	2021
	Alistair Neal	Liberal Democrats	2022
	Caroline Smith	Liberal Democrats	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Hurst	Wayne Smith	Conservatives	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Loddon	Anne Chadwick	Conservatives	2021
	Abdul Loyes	Conservatives	2023
	Bill Soane	Conservatives	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Maiden Erlegh	Norman Jorgensen	Conservatives	2021
	Stephen Newton	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Mike Smith	Liberal Democrats	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Norreys	Rachel Burgess	Labour	2022
	Phil Cunnington	Conservatives	2021
	Marie-Louise Weighill	Labour	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Remenham, Wargrave & Ruscombe	John Halsall	Conservatives	2021
	Graham Howe	Conservatives	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Shinfield North	Andrew Gray	Labour	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Shinfield South	Catherine Glover	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Chris Johnson	Liberal Democrats	2022
	Jackie Rance	Conservatives	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Sonning	Michael Firmager	Conservatives	2023

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
South Lake	Laura Blumenthal	Conservatives	2023
	Beth Rowland	Liberal Democrats	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Swallowfield	Stuart Munro	Conservatives	2022

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Twyford	Stephen Conway	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Lindsay Ferris	Liberal Democrats	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Wescott	Jane Ainslie	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Peter Dennis	Liberal Democrats	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Winnersh	Prue Bray	Liberal Democrats	2022
	Paul Fishwick	Liberal Democrats	2023
	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	Liberal Democrats	2021

Ward	Councillor	Party	Last elected
Wokingham Without	David Davies	Conservatives	2022
	Pauline Helliar-Symons	Conservatives	2021
	Jordan Montgomery	Liberal Democrats	2023

- The candidate that receives the most votes will be in post for four years
- The candidate that receives the second-most votes will be in post for three years
- The candidate that receives the third-most votes will be in post for two years
- There are no local elections in 2025 (fallow year)

Political make-up of Wokingham Borough Council

Detailed results from previous elections are available on our website at:

<https://wokingham.moderngov.co.uk/mgManageElectionResults.aspx?bcr=>

2023	
Liberal Democrats	26 seats
Conservatives	22 seats
Labour	5 seats
Independent Group	1 seat
2022	
Conservatives	26 seats
Liberal Democrats	23 seats
Labour	3 seats
Independent	2 seats
2021	
Conservatives	31 seats
Liberal Democrats	18 seats
Labour	2 seats
Independent Group	2 seats
Independent	1 seat
2020	
No election	
2019	
Conservatives	31 seats
Liberal Democrats	16 seats
Labour	4 seats
Independent	3 seats
2018	
Conservatives	42 seats
Liberal Democrats	8 seats
Labour	3 seats

2023 – Elections for third of Council seats

2022 – Elections for third of Council seats

2021 – Elections for third of Council seats

2020 – *No election*

2019 – Elections for third of Council seats

2018 – Elections for third of Council seats

2017 – *No election*

Independent	1 seat
2017	
No election	
2016	
Conservatives	48 seats
Liberal Democrats	5 seats
Labour	1 seat
2015	
Conservatives	47 seats
Liberal Democrats	5 seats
Independent	1 seat
Labour	1 seat
2014	
Conservatives	44 seats
Liberal Democrats	7 seats
Independent	2 seats
Labour	1 seat
2013	
No election	
2012	
Conservatives	43 seats
Liberal Democrats	10 seats
Independent	1 seat
2011	
Conservatives	45 seats
Liberal Democrats	9 seats

2016 – Elections for third of Council seats

2015 – Elections for third of Council seats

2014 – Elections for third of Council seats

2013 – *No election*

2012 – Elections for third of Council seats

2011 – Elections for third of Council seats

Constituencies in Wokingham Borough

In addition to the ward boundary changes, there are also new parliamentary boundaries to elect Members of Parliament.

There are two constituencies in Wokingham Borough, which are:

- Wokingham (John Redwood)
- Earley and Woodley (No MP – new ward)

The Wokingham and the new Earley & Woodley constituency are administered by Wokingham Borough Council.

This change came as a result of a different review, which was carried out by the Boundary Commission for England.

Details can be found at: <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/interactive-map/>

2024 polling stations

For this year's elections, a total of 65 different polling stations will be used. The polling stations are listed below. Some polling places, especially in wards with a large number of electors, will have more than one polling station. Details of the [polling places review carried out by the council](#) can be found online.

Ward	Polling Station	No. of stations
Barkham & Arborfield	Arborfield Green Community Centre	1
	Arborfield Village Hall	1
	Barkham Village Hall	2
Bulmershe & Coronation	Coronation Hall	1
	St John's Church Centre	1
	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	1
Emmbrook	Emmbrook Village Hall	2
	St Paul's Parish Rooms	2
Ewendons	Civic Offices	1
	Woosehill Community Centre	2
Finchampstead	California Ratepayers Hall	2
	FBC Centre	1
	Finchampstead Sports Pavilion	1
Hawkedon	Earley Crescent Resource Centre	2
	Maiden Place Community Centre	2
Hillside	Lower Earley Library	1
	Radstock Community Centre	2
Loddon	Woodley Airfield Youth & Community Centre	2
	Woodley Baptist Church Centre	1
Maiden Erlegh & Whitegates	Earley Home Guard	2
	Earley St Peter's Church Hall	1
	St Nicolas Church Hall	1
Norreys	Norreys Evangelical Church	2
	Wokingham Methodist Church Hall	1

Shinfield	School Green Centre	2
	Shinfield Players Theatre	1
South Lake	Christ Church Hall	1
	Emmanuel Church Centre	1
	St James' Church Centre	2
Spencers Wood & Swallowfield	Riseley Memorial Hall	1
	Spencers Wood Pavilion	1
	Swallowfield Parish Hall	1
	The Victory Hall	1
	Three Mile Cross Church Centre	1
Thames	Beech Lodge	1
	Charvil Village Hall	1
	Crazies Hill Village Hall	1
	Remenham Village Hall	1
	Wargrave Pavilion	1
Twyford, Ruscombe & Hurst	Hurst Village Hall	1
	Loddon Hall	2
	Stanlake Pavilion	1
Wescott	Salvation Army Hall	1
	St Crispin's Leisure Centre	2
Winnersh	St Mary's Church Hall	2
	Winnersh Community Centre	2
Wokingham Without	St Sebastian's Memorial Hall	2

Police & Crime Commissioner Election

West Berkshire Council is co-ordinating the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) election on Thursday 2 May.

Police and Crime Commissioners were introduced in the 41 police authorities across England in 2012. They are elected representatives who oversee how crime is tackled in a police force area. Their aim is to cut crime and to ensure the police force is effective. They are elected for a four-year term.

The Thames Valley Police Area is made up of 13 local authorities, which have Local Returning Officers who are responsible for arranging and delivery the poll for the electors in their area. The number of votes counted in each local area is collated to provide the overall result. In 2024, Nigel Lynn, CEO of West Berkshire, is the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO) for the Thames Valley police area.

The current PCC for the Thames Valley is Matthew Barber and the result of the election will be announced on Saturday 4 May.

The verification of all of the Wokingham Borough ballot boxes will take place at Loddon Valley Leisure Centre, Lower Earley on Friday 3 May at 9am. The votes will be counted on Saturday 4 May and local results will be sent to the PARO authority who will declare the result for the whole PCC area.

The list of candidates the election has been published and electors can read the PCC candidate manifestos at: www.choosemypcc.org.uk

PCC elections previously used the supplementary vote system, where voters could choose a first and second choice vote. Now, voters will be allowed to select only one candidate on their ballot paper. This is the first time the PCC elections have used the first past the post voting system.

Further information about the role is available from Thames Valley PCC website or the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. To find out more about the PCC role, visit: www.thamesvalley-pcc.gov.uk

For more information about the PCC election, visit: www.westberks.gov.uk/article/42659/Police-and-Crime-Commissioner-for-Thames-Valley-election-on-2-May-2024