

Welcome to the summer edition of our Elections Newsletter. We have filled it with the latest news and information relating to elections and electoral processes



REFERENDUM AND LOCAL ELECTIONS 2011

The Referendum and Local Elections took place on Thursday 5th May. The total eligible electorate for the referendum area was 64,408 and for the Borough, it was 65,638.

We issued 9,591 postal votes for the Referendum Election and 66% were returned by the close of poll. We issued 9,548 postal votes for the Borough and 67% were returned by the close of poll. The verification for both the referendum and local elections was on the Thursday evening with the Borough count immediately after. The count for the referendum was on the Friday afternoon. The arrangements seemed to work well and the work was completed by 7.30pm.

The referendum count totals for Rushmoor:

Count Totals	Ballots
Yes	7,417
No	17,596
Total valid ballots	25,013

The local election results are on the following page, overall the Conservative Group gained two seats with the Liberal Democrat Group losing both. The Conservative Group now holds 32 of the 42 seats in Rushmoor, the Labour Group has six and the Liberal Democrat Group has four.

Local Elections Results

The overall turnout at the local elections was 39%.

Ward	Candidate Elected	% of total vote	Ward turnout (%)
Cove and Southwood	Alan Chainey (Con)	63	44
Empress	Brian Parker (Con)	60	45
Fernhill	Ken Muschamp (Con)	66	38
Grange	Jackie Hammond (Con)	49	39
Heron Wood	Don Cappleman (Lab)	45	33
Knellwood	Roland Dibbs (Con)	64	47
Manor Park	Peter Crerar (Con)	57	43
Mayfield	Derek Cornwell (Con)	32	32
North Town	Frank Rust (Lab)	62	33
Rowhill	Charles Choudhary (Con)	56	44
St John's	Jacqui Vosper (Con)	60	39
St Mark's	Diane Bedford (Con)	49	38
Wellington	Attika Choudhary (Con)	42	24
West Heath	Mark Staplehurst (Con)	63	45

HELPING SERVICE PERSONNEL TO VOTE IN AFGHANISTAN... AGAIN!



Parliamentary elections in 2010, Rushmoor was part of a joint initiative run again in 2011 to help service personnel based in Afghanistan register and vote. The project was carried out in two stages: firstly there was a campaign to encourage voter registration and applications for proxy and postal voting and, secondly, a process to ensure those wanting to vote by post would be able to do so.

This year, there were 327 new registrations. 281 new proxy applications and 61 new postal vote applications. 66% of these postal votes sent to Afghanistan were returned to be processed. The returned voting packs were distributed all over the country including to Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Once again, this project was successful but is unlikely to be run again in the near future. The government is looking at other ways of helping service voters (and other groups that find it difficult to vote) and proposals are expected to emerge during this Parliament.

ELECTIONS 2011 FEEDBACK

As part of the Council's ongoing improvement programme for polling stations used on election day, surveys were undertaken at St Peter's Parish Centre, Southwood County Infant School, Guillemont Junior School, North Farnborough County Infants School, Fernhill Primary School, Park Primary School and Newport Junior School.

The surveys gave us feedback from electors on the layout of polling stations and their location, as well as the polling station staff, publicity material used and the different methods of voting. This told us that, voters are generally positive about the process and there was a desire to see alternative methods of voting offered.



THE RESULTS

Q1. Which of the following ways of voting would you consider in an election?

- Internet 44%
- Telephone 11%
- Voting before election day at a polling station 39%
- TV 4%
- Something else 3%

Q2. And which of these options would you be most likely to try?

- Internet 60%
- Telephone 11%
- Voting before election day at a polling station 21%
- TV 4%
- Something else 4%

Q3. Out of the following ways of voting which one would you prefer?

- Voting in person at a polling station 71%
- Voting by post 2%
- Voting over the internet 25%
- Voting over the telephone 1%

While we are not aware of any major issues at these elections, if you have any comments please let us know.

Register of Electors 2012

The canvass for the 2012 register of electors will start towards the end of August. As last year, there is the option to register 'no changes' over the telephone and online. This is because we are not able to accept electronic signatures. Any changes to the form, other than opting out of the edited register, need to be made on the form and returned by post.

This year, we will not be pre-printing the tick box for electors to opt out of the edited register. This means that electors will need to tick the box for their registration to appear on the full register only.

Last year, there were 26,187 'no changes' of which 11,929 returns were made by telephone or online. A mini canvass was also carried out in March 2011 for properties where no-one had registered which increased the number of electors on the Register. We are likely to do the same in early 2012. During the canvass we are looking to pick up more email addresses as we are keen to use them to communicate with electors.

The canvass forms are hand delivered using a two stage process. The initial delivery will be carried out in August to all homes in the Borough. Canvassers will then make personal visits with any reminders during October to all of those properties who have not returned the initial form. Canvassers will then return to the property up to three times if there is no response. Canvassers will ask the occupier to complete the form on the doorstep to make sure a returned form is received.

We are also likely to carry out some targeted events during and after the canvass period. Examples include the Military and young people.

The new register is published on 1st December and copies are available to all elected councillors and political parties on paper or electronically. For more information please contact our elections office by emailing elections@rushmoor.gov.uk or calling 01252 398826/7/8.

DIRECTLY ELECTED POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

If the necessary legislation is approved by Parliament, elections will be held in 2012 for Police and Crime Commissioners. It is likely that the elections will be combined with the district Council elections on 3rd May. Commissioners will have a set four year term and be elected through a form of preferential voting.

We are looking at some of the issues on a county-wide basis and we will provide further information in due course.

Improving Service Voter Information

Between July and December 2011, Rushmoor will be taking part in a project with the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Defence aimed at improving the accuracy and number of service personnel registrations on the register.

The work will involve matching some elector and property data that we have with records held by the Ministry of Defence to check accuracy and to carry out some activities in the Garrison area to increase registration levels.

A report on the outcome of the project will be prepared early in 2012.

ELECTORAL REVIEW UPDATE

The Local Government Boundary Commission has published its draft recommendations on Rushmoor's electoral review. The Commission's consultation on the recommendations lasts until 1st August. Copies of the report and plans are available at Libraries and at the Council Offices. They are also available on the Electoral Commission's website, www.electoralcommission.org.uk and our website www.rushmoor.gov.uk. Comments/submissions can be made directly to the Commission and details of how to do this are in the report.

The Commission is proposing thirteen three-Member wards for the Borough with the wards generally following those proposed in the Council's submission. The main proposed changes have been in the boundaries between Empress/Knellwood and Grange Field/Fernhill. The Council will also start considering its response to the draft recommendations and will also start considering issues like the impact on polling stations as preparations start for the whole Council elections in May 2012.

Current Electoral Statistics for Rushmoor

- **Electorate** - 66,104
- **Service Voters** - 519
- **Total number of absent voters** - 9,230

Electoral Services

For further information about the articles in this newsletter, or for elections/electoral registration enquiries you can contact either the Elections Office on 01252 398826/7/8 or by email at elections@rushmoor.gov.uk. You can also visit www.rushmoor.gov.uk/elections