

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION MIDLOTHIAN NORTH CONSTITUENCY

7 MAY 2026

CANDIDATE AND AGENT ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

1 The Constituency Returning Officer and the Election Office

The Constituency Returning Officer is Dr Grace Vickers, however, the day to day running of the Election will be carried out by Gill Smith, Elections Officer (and Depute Constituency Returning Officer) and Alan Turpie, Legal and Governance Manager (and Depute Constituency Returning Officer).

The Scottish Parliamentary Election for the Midlothian North Constituency will be administered from the **Election Office, Midlothian Council, 29 Normandy Court, Dalkeith, EH22 1GJ.**

Please note that to gain access to this office there will be a doorbell on the right hand side of the entrance doors which you must ring and someone will come and let you into the building. Please do not press any of the other call buttons as this is also a residential building.

Telephone No - 0131 271 3365
Email - elections@midlothian.gov.uk
Web – www.midlothian.gov.uk/elections

The office is open, outwith the Nomination Period, Mondays to Thursdays from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm and 10.00 am to 3.30 pm on Fridays.

Additionally, please note that the office will be open on the day of the poll (Thursday 7 May 2026) from 7.00 am to 10.00 pm.

If you wish to meet either the Constituency Returning Officer or her Depute Constituency Returning Officers, you are advised to telephone in advance.

2 Electoral Registration Officer

Enquiries relating to (a) entitlement to vote by post/proxy and (b) the register of electors should be addressed to the Electoral Registration Officer, Lothian Valuation Joint Board and Joint Electoral Committee, 17A South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh, EH12 9FL.

Telephone No - 0131 344 2500
Email – enquiries@lothian-vjb.gov.uk
Web - www.lothian-vjb.gov.uk

3 Delivery of Nomination Papers

Uplift of paper copies of the Nomination Forms (and the Nomination Pack) can be made from the Election Office from Tuesday 17 March 2026 and the delivery of nomination papers made from Tuesday 17 March 2026 to Wednesday 1 April 2026 at 4.00 pm. The Election Office will be open from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm each working day for this purpose.

Please note that it is a legal requirement that the Nomination Paper, Home Address Form and Consent to Nomination Form must be delivered by hand to the Election Office and not, for example, handed in at the Reception Desk at the Council headquarters at Fairfield House.

Candidates are strongly advised to return their nomination papers (including party authorisation for an emblem and party description) well in advance of the closing deadline – Wednesday 1 April 2026 at 4pm - in order that any problems arising from their nomination form can be resolved.

4 Email

In regard to the use of email, please note that:-

- (a) emails **will not** be accepted for lodging a candidate's nomination paper, a notice of appointment of election agent or party authorisation for an emblem or party authorisation, and
- (b) emails **will** be accepted for giving notice of appointment of postal, counting and polling agents.

5 Candidate's Deposits

With regard to candidate's deposits, the Constituency Returning Officer will accept a banker's draft or certified cheque provided she is satisfied that the drawer carries on business as a banker in the United Kingdom. Drafts and cheques should be made payable to "Midlothian Council".

Electronic Payment of the deposit by BACS or CHAPS is also acceptable but payments must arrive in the Council's Bank Account by Wednesday 1 April 2026 at 4pm. Payments are only allowed with the consent of the Constituency Returning Officer and her pre-authorisation is required before the transaction is made. In addition, the name and address of the person making the payment must be given to her. Payments should be made to:

*Midlothian Council
Royal Bank of Scotland
63 High Street
Dalkeith
Midlothian
EH22 1JA*

*Sort Code 83 17 26
Account No. 00128363
Account Name - General Fund Account
Please also use the reference – "Election Deposit + your surname" -
eg – "Election Deposit – Smith"*

Debit and Credit Cards are acceptable – Payment must be made as part of the process of the delivery of nomination papers and not later than 4.00pm on the day before nominations close - **ie not later than Tuesday 31 March 2026 at 4pm.**

6 Briefing for Candidates and their Election Agents

The Constituency Returning Officer and her staff are available for 'one to one' briefings on the election procedures and processes by appointment.

In regard to the Count, a Briefing Meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 May 2026 at 2pm at the Count Hall in The Lasswade Centre. Invites will be sent out nearer the event.

7 Notice of Election, Notice of Poll, etc

Enclosed in the Nomination Pack for your information are a copy of the formal Notice of Election and a copy of the "Scheme of Polling Arrangements on Polling Day".

The Notice of Poll/Statement of Persons Nominated (which will include at Part 2 the "*Situation of Polling Stations and Descriptions of Voters Entitled to Vote therein*") will be forwarded to you following the close of nominations on Wednesday 1 April 2026.

Midlothian North Constituency Area

Maps showing the whole constituency area and also the five electoral wards that it comprises are enclosed in the Nomination Pack and are also available on the Council's website at www.midlothian.gov.uk/elections

8 Statutory Provisions Re Schools and Rooms for Scottish Parliamentary Election 2026

A copy of the provisions and the statutory list of rooms available for meetings are enclosed in the nomination pack.

9 Campaign Posters

Please be aware that Midlothian Council has a Policy of not permitting the attachment of Posters, flags or other materials to Council owned Street Lighting Columns and Street Furniture, etc

The Council will, if necessary, remove offending items displayed on its non-domestic property.

Please consult the '*Notes for Agents on Polling Procedures*' issued with polling agents cards which sets the rules for displaying political posters outside polling places on polling day and for wearing rosettes (in the Polling Place, but not the polling station).

In addition, Transport Scotland has advised that the display of Advertisements on Trunk Roads is not permitted.

10 Notice of the Opening of Postal Ballot Boxes and Envelopes

All the postal vote application signatures and dates of births in the postal vote statements in the returned postal ballot packs will be electronically verified. Each opening will commence at 10.00am in the Council Chambers, Normandy Court, 29 Normandy Court, Dalkeith, EH22 1GJ. (Please note that the final openings will be held at the Count venue – The Lasswade Centre, Eskdale Drive, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian, EH19 2LA).

The first opening is provisionally scheduled to take place on 20 April 2026 (provided postal votes have been returned by that date).

If any postal vote statement adjudication is required to be done by the Constituency Returning Officer or her Depute appointed for that purpose, it will take place at 4.00pm each postal opening day except on a Friday when it will take place at 3.30pm. On Polling Day it will be carried out on an ongoing basis.

Note: Ballot Papers are not being adjudicated or counted by candidate at the postal pack openings.

Candidates and Agents are reminded that “political campaigners” are not permitted to handle postal votes other than their own or that of a close family member or someone they provide care for.

Formal notification of the postal openings and details of the appointment of agent(s) to attend the postal openings will be issued separately.

11 Appointment of Polling and Counting Agents

The appointment of polling and counting agents may be made by the Candidate or the Election Agent.

Notice of the appointments requires to be given to the Constituency Returning Officer in writing, stating the names and addresses of the persons appointed and can be submitted in hard copy or by email to: elections@midlothian.gov.uk.

(For convenience the relevant forms which you may wish to use to make the various appointments are enclosed in the Nomination Pack and are also available for download on the Council’s Election website.)

There is no restriction on the numbers of polling agents to be appointed but not more than one polling agent may be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same permitted participant.

In regard to Counting Agents the number to be allowed for each Candidate is *provisionally* 5 for Constituency Counting Agents and 1 for Regional Counting Agents but the Constituency Returning Officer will determine the final allocation after the close of nominations and advise Agents accordingly.

In addition, each Candidate is entitled to nominate one person as his/her guest to attend the Count but that person has no legal status in the proceedings. The name and address of the guest should be entered on the counting agent form.

Notice of appointments must be given to the Constituency Returning Officer **not later than Wednesday 29 April 2026.**

12 Uplift/Posting of Poll and Count Cards

In regard to the poll and count admission cards, please state on the appropriate forms a contact name and telephone number of who will be available to collect the cards from the Election Office.

13 The Count

The verification of the ballot paper accounts and the subsequent counting of ballot papers will commence on Friday 8 May 2026 at 9am at The Lasswade Centre, Eskdale Drive, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian, EH19 2LA.

Please note that the sealed room in which the ballot boxes will be stored overnight will be unsealed and opened at 8.30am on Friday 8 May and you are welcome to attend this opening. This is to allow the ballot boxes to be taken to the count hall in readiness for the start of the count at 9am.

Count Accreditation Cards will be issued with the Midlothian '*Count Booklet*' which will contain full details of the count method, venue facilities, count rules, etc.

Please note that further information/guidance is available for candidates and agents on the Electoral Commission Website -

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

**Dr Grace Vickers
Constituency Returning Officer**

Date: 16 March 2026

If you wish clarification of any point in regard to the Scottish Parliamentary Election please do not hesitate to contact either the Constituency Returning Officer or the Depute Constituency Returning Officer (0131 271 3365).

