



SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION MIDLOTHIAN NORTH CONSTITUENCY

7 MAY 2026

NOTICE TO CANDIDATES & ELECTION AGENTS OF OPENINGS OF POSTAL BALLOT BOXES AND ENVELOPES

I HEREBY GIVE YOU NOTICE

- (1) that, in terms of paragraph 16 of Schedule 4 to The Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2015, I shall, in connection with the above Election, begin the opening of the Postal Ballot Boxes and the Envelopes contained therein in the Council Chambers, Normandy Court, Dalkeith, EH22 1GH at **10 am on Monday 20 April** and thereafter daily at the same time and place, (including, if necessary, Saturday 25 April, Sunday 26 April, Saturday 2 May and Sunday 3 May 2026) until Wednesday 6 May (12pm) at which point the postal vote opening equipment will be decanted to the Count Hall at the Lasswade Centre and the next opening will be 10am on **Thursday 7 May 2026** (as detailed below). For the avoidance of doubt, an opening will take place under the usual arrangements on Monday 4 May 2026 (*May Day Bank Holiday*).
- (2) On **Thursday 7 May 2026 (Polling Day)** I will commence a first opening of the Postal Ballot Boxes and the Envelopes contained therein at The Lasswade Centre, Eskdale Drive, Bonnyrigg, EH19 2LA at 10 am and at 8 pm commence a second opening. This second opening will proceed as and when necessary until the postal ballot envelopes then received timeously for the election have been processed.
- (3) In the event that any postal ballot envelopes are received after 8 pm on Thursday 7 May 2026 there will be a final opening at 9 am on Friday 8 May 2026 at The Lasswade Centre, Eskdale Drive, Bonnyrigg, EH19 2LA. This opening will proceed as and when necessary until all the postal ballot enveloped received timeously for the election have been processed.

Please note that if for any reason it is not practical to open the postal votes and process the postal voting statements therein at The Lasswade Centre (eg power failure) such openings will revert to the Council Chambers in Normandy Court, Dalkeith.

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- (4) (a) that, in terms of paragraph 5 of Schedule 4 to The Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2015, each Candidate or a person appointed by him/her to attend in his/her place and each Election Agent or a person appointed by the Candidate to attend in the Election Agent's place will be entitled to be present at the Opening of Postal Ballot Boxes and the Envelopes contained therein. I will also allow the Candidate or the Election Agent if he/she so wishes to appoint one agent in addition to the aforementioned.
- (b) that, notice in writing of the appointments (made in terms of paragraph 3(a) above) stating the name(s) and address(es) of the person(s) appointed shall be given by the Candidate or as appropriate the Election Agent to me. **This must be done before the time fixed for the relevant opening of the postal voters' ballot boxes.**

I shall issue to every person attending the proceedings for the issue or receipt of postal ballot papers a copy of Article 31 of the Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2015 in regard to the requirement of secrecy.

NOTE – Where in Schedule 4 to The Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2015 (relating to the receipt of postal ballot papers) any act or thing is required or authorised to be done in the presence of the candidates or their agents, the non-attendance of any such persons or person at the time and place appointed for the purpose shall not, if the act or thing is otherwise duly done, invalidate the act or thing done.

Accordingly in the absence of such persons the Opening of Postal Ballot Boxes and the Envelopes contained therein will proceed at the times stipulated.

In regards to the timings of the various adjudications for processing the incoming postal ballot papers and postal vote statements please refer to the 'Administrative Notes' contained in the Nomination Pack.

Dr Grace Vickers
Constituency Returning Officer
16 March 2026