

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

November 13, 2019

Text message scheme launched to keep residents up-to-date with elections

Fenland District Council has launched an SMS text message service to help keep residents up-to-date with elections.

With the Parliamentary General Election in just four weeks, the council's Elections Team may use the service to help remind residents about key election dates and deadlines.

Text messages could also be used to inform people about any changes to polling stations in their area, or to remind people who have changed their name or address to update their voter registration details.

The service, which is provided by GOV.UK Notify, will help the team to communicate with residents in a more effective and cost effective way. It is also hoped the service will raise awareness of elections and encourage more people to turn out and vote.

A Fenland District Council spokesman said: "We are now using text messaging (SMS) to contact some of our residents who have previously given us their telephone number. It will help us to reduce costs and customers can benefit from improved communications and a better quality of service.

"The service is totally confidential, and will not generate any other marketing or text messages to your phone. The messages will never include any links or ask for personal information, and people can unsubscribe at any time."

GOV.UK Notify helps government service teams send text messages, emails or letters to users. It is currently used by more than 1,300 service teams from over 400 organisations.

MAKE SURE YOU'RE READY TO VOTE

The UK Parliamentary General Election takes place on Thursday, December 12, when electors in Fenland will be voting for a Member of Parliament to represent the North East Cambridgeshire Constituency.

Poll cards are now being sent to all registered voters in the district. White poll cards will include details of the voter's polling station and polling times, while pink poll cards are being sent to anyone who already votes by post.

Electors are being asked to check their poll cards carefully to see if the polling stations they have previously used have changed, particularly as some community polling station venues may not be available for this election due to Christmas events.

If you don't receive a poll card you will need to make sure you are registered to vote. It is quick and easy to register by visiting: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

Anyone who was registered to vote at the local council elections in May will not need to re-register in order to take part in the 2019 General Election – providing their details have remained the same.

The deadline to register is midnight on Tuesday, November 26.

Residents who are unable to attend a polling station to vote may be able to vote by post or proxy.

The deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm on Tuesday, November 26. The deadline to apply for a proxy vote, where a voter nominates a trusted person to cast a vote on their behalf, is 5pm on Wednesday, December 4.

Postal and proxy vote application forms are available at: www.yourvotematters.co.uk Completed forms must be received by Fenland District Council's Elections Team before the deadlines.

Anyone wanting to check if they are registered to vote can contact Fenland District Council's Elections team on 01354 654321 or email elections@fenland.gov.uk

For more information, visit: www.fenland.gov.uk/elections

ENDS

For more information contact Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226