

## FLOOD GUIDANCE

It remains that many rivers remain bank-full, and will do for some time, as water continues moving through the system. Please do remind people NOT to walk along riverbanks at the moment – they may still be saturated from the amount of water and could be weak underfoot. In some areas some fields remain flooded, sometimes by design as part of flood defences, and may continue to see high water levels. The Lincolnshire Rural Support Network can offer help and advice to farmers and growers impacted by Storm Babet in Lincolnshire, including via their helpline on 0800 138 1710.

## NEW CHANGES TO POSTAL AND PROXY VOTE APPLICATIONS COMMENCING 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2023

The next tranche of electoral changes as part of the Elections Act 2022 comes into effect from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 and applies to postal and proxy voting. This includes the ability to apply online for a postal or proxy vote (paper-based applications remain as an option). Further personal information will be required for ALL postal or proxy applications at the time of application regardless of how the application is made. The issue of postal ballot papers remains unchanged.

These are part of several measures to protect the integrity of the electoral system.

Below is a high level overview.

### IDENTITY CHECKING REQUIREMENTS

All applications – both online and on paper – will require an identity check as part of the application process.

All absent vote applications (except for emergency proxy applications made on or after 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 must contain a national insurance number) or a reason why one cannot be provided.

The personal identifiers contained on the application (name, address, date of birth and NINo) must initially be verified against department of Works and Pensions (DWP) data.

Where an application fails to match a DWP data – electors will be required to provide documentary evidence to verify their identity. Where this is not possible, electors must submit an attestation to confirm their identity.

All existing postal voters will need to reapply to move onto the new three- yearly cycle before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026. Transitional arrangements mean all existing postal vote arrangements set up prior to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 are extended to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026, with no need for any signature refreshes in that time.

### APPLYING ONLINE FOR ABSENT VOTE APPLICATIONS

From 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 electors (except for anonymous electors) will be able to apply for most types of (absent vote online) making it accessible for many (paper applications may still be used):

Postal vote

Proxy vote for a particular election or referendum

Proxy application for definite or indefinite period for overseas and service electors.

Electors applying for a postal vote from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 onwards will only be able to hold their postal vote until the 3<sup>rd</sup> year on 31<sup>st</sup> January following the date of which their application was granted.

For electors with a long-term postal vote (in place before 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023) there will be transitional arrangements. Existing domestic electors will be able to vote by post before 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 must reapply and make a fresh application by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

### CHANGES TO PROXY VOTING LIMITS

The number of people a person can act as proxy for has also been restricted. From 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023, a person is not entitled to vote as a proxy in any electoral area on behalf of more than four electors. Within the four electors, no more than two electors can be domestic electors.

#### YOUR VIEWS ON THE DISTRICT NEEDED IN TWO NEW SYSTEMS

Resident's thoughts on the visitor economy in North Kesteven are needed to help support and inform a new tourism strategy to be shaped for the district.

The survey by NKDC invites people to share their priorities and wish list for the local visitor economy. These thoughts will then be collated and used to support the future of the District's visitor economy by helping shape the North Kesteven Tourism Strategy 2024 – 2029.

The survey asks for input from residents, businesses, organisations, and the people behind visitor attractions. The survey launched early October, with paper copies available at some venues including Cogglesford Water Mill and Navigation House in Sleaford. Cranwell Aviation and Heritage Museum, and Mrs Smiths Cottage in Navenby.

#### IMPROVE YOUR DIGITAL CONFIDENCE BY ATTENDING DIGITAL HUB SESSIONS

NKDC are putting a call out to residents looking to grow their confidence using digital technology, or perhaps might know someone who is?

As Get Online draws to a close, it is the ideal chance for residents across North Kesteven to enhance their digital skills, and online confidence by attending one of the free Digital Hub sessions. Designed to grow people's confidence in operating in a more digital world – with E Mails to friends, online shopping and the use of smart phones for example – they take place every week; Currently in Waddington, Sleaford, Ruskington, Heckington and Osbournby and anyone can travel to any of them. Currently there is most availability at the Waddington Digital Hub, which is weekly occurrence every Thursday, during term time, 1pm until 2.30pm, at the Waddington Community Hub, High Street, Waddington LN5 9RF. For more information on the Waddington Digital Hub please call 01529 414155.

#### REMEMBRANCE CEREMONIES FOR 2023

The Sleaford Branch of the Royal British Legion will be hosting the following ceremonies to mark the remembrance this year:

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November – Armistice Day

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November – Remembrance Parade and Service

Both ceremonies will take place 10.45am at Sleaford Town War Memorial, Market Place, Sleaford at 10.45am.

Please be in mind that Sleaford Market Place will be closed overnight and throughout the morning on Sunday November 12<sup>th</sup> for the Act of Remembrance.

Best Wishes  
Lucille



## Cllr Lucille Hagues Councillor

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