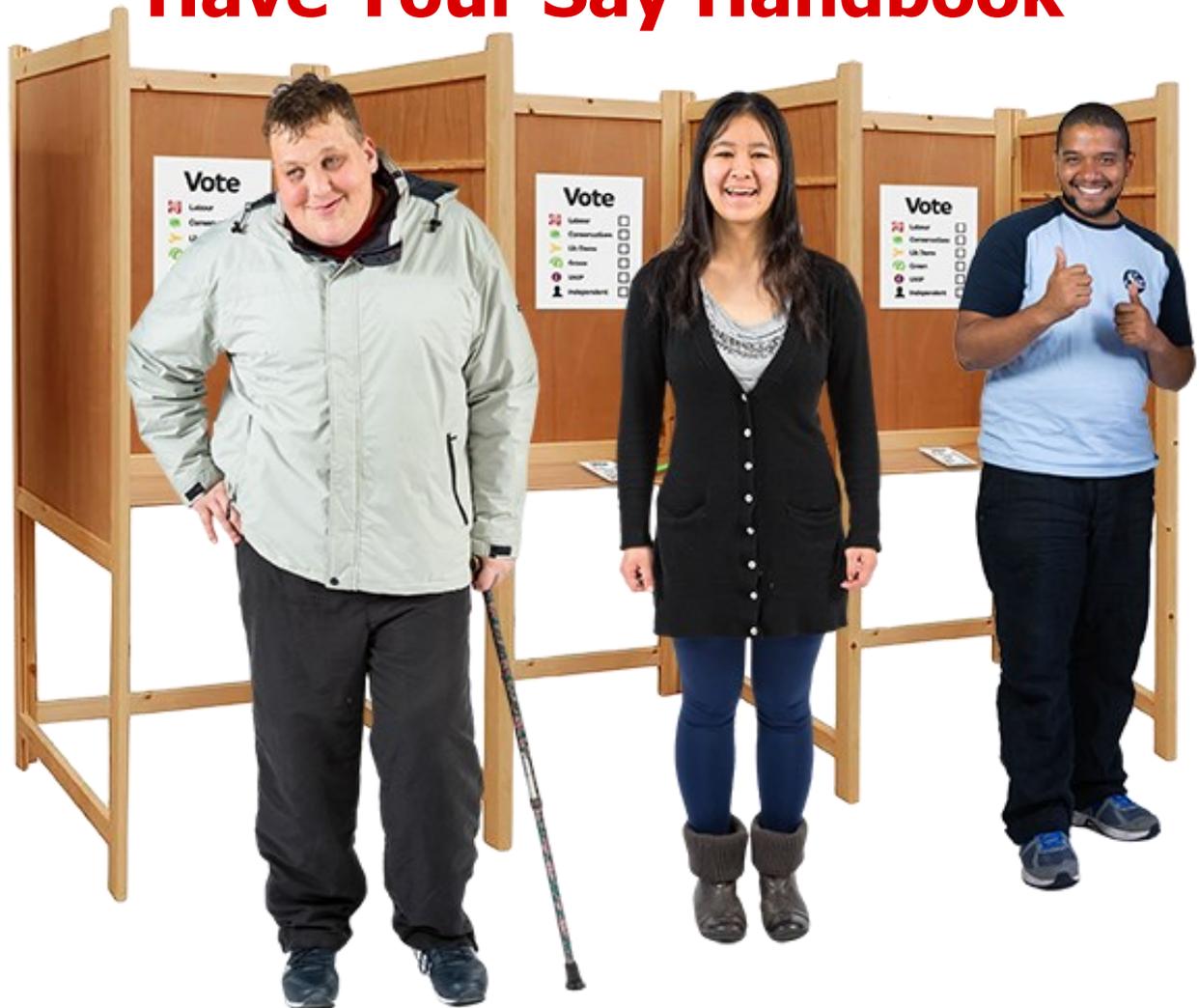




The Mayor of London & London Assembly Elections 2024

Have Your Say Handbook



Website: www.mertoncil.org.uk **Social Media:** @MertonCIL
Telephone: 0203 397 3119 **WhatsApp & SMS:** 0779 671 2502
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The Mayor of London & London Assembly Elections 2024

Mayor of London and London Assembly Elections take place every four years.

The next election will take place on Thursday, 2 May 2024.

Many Disabled people face barriers to voting and democratic engagement.

These barriers can include a lack of accessible information, inaccessible polling stations and society's failure to properly value the voices and choices of Disabled people.

Political decisions have a direct impact on the day-to-day lives of Disabled people.

We need to make sure our voices are heard in the democratic process.

Voting and getting involved in activity in the lead up to elections is one important way to do this.

Together we can make a difference and push for a more inclusive and accessible London.

Three different 'contests' make up Greater London Assembly Elections (GLA) – and there are three different ballot papers for voters.

These are for:

1. the Mayor of London
2. the 14 Members of the London Assembly that represent London's 14 Constituencies
3. the 11 Assembly Members that represent the whole of London (London-wide Members)

You can find out more about what the Mayor of London and The London Assembly do here - <https://www.londonelects.org.uk/im-voter/what-do-mayor-london-and-london-assembly-do>

You can also find out more about the candidates standing for election on page 11.



How to register to vote

If you want to have a say and make a difference, you must be registered to vote (on the electoral register).

To vote in the Mayor of London & London Assembly Elections you must:

- be registered to vote
- live in London
- be at least 18 years old on the day of the elections
- be a British citizen, a European Union citizen or a Commonwealth citizen who has or does not require leave to remain in the UK

Registering to vote is quick and easy. You can register by visiting this website - <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>

You will need to have your National Insurance number to register and also your date of birth and your address.

You can find a step by step easy read guide to registering to vote here - <https://www.myvotemyvoice.org.uk/voting/register-to-vote/how-to-register-to-vote/>

For Merton residents, if you're not sure if you are already registered to vote, you could contact London Borough of Merton's Electoral Services team on [020 8274 4901](tel:02082744901) or via email electoral.services@merton.gov.uk



Can't get online?

You can fill out a paper form if you are unable to get online or struggle with the online process.

You will need to contact Merton's Electoral Services team on [020 8274 4901](tel:02082744901) or via email electoral.services@merton.gov.uk to request a paper form is sent out to your home address.

You will need to return this form to the Civic Centre in Morden, as soon as possible.



Voter ID

The law has changed and you now need to show photo ID when voting in person at a polling station.

You can find a full list of acceptable forms of photo ID here - www.gov.uk/voting-photo-id

You can use the follow forms of ID to vote:

- Blue Badge
- Freedom Pass
- Disabled persons bus pass
- Driving Licence
- Passport
- And more.

If you do not have any of these forms of photo ID, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate

The Voter Authority Certificate is an official document which will contain your name and photograph and can only be used for voting purposes.

Find out how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate here - voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk



**No photo ID? No problem.
You can apply for a free
Voter Authority Certificate.**



Grab your National Insurance number.



**Find a recent digital photo of yourself,
or take a new one.**



Submit your application at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

**GREATER
LONDON
AUTHORITY**

**#NO
VOTE
NO VOICE**

SOUK
SHOUT OUT UK

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City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way, London,
E16 1ZE. Printed and promoted by Shout Out UK,
240 Portobello Road, London, W11 1LL.

You can read Merton's 'Are You Ready?' FAQ's on the next page.

CHECKLIST



CHECK
that you have an
accepted form of
photo ID

NOTE
you can use expired
photo ID – as long as
it's on the acceptable
documents list and
the photo still looks
like you

APPLY
for a Voter Authority
Certificate if you don't
have an acceptable
form of photo ID

REMEMBER
to take your photo
ID with you to the
polling station

For more information
about voting and the
changes to voting
visit merton.gov.uk/voting,
email electoral.services@merton.gov.uk
or phone our Helpline on **0208 274 4901**.

Are you ready? FAQs

How do I know what is an acceptable form of photo ID?

A list of acceptable forms of photo ID can be found at gov.uk/voting-photo-id

Can I use an expired document as photo ID?

Expired photo ID documents can be used as long as the photograph still looks like you.

Is a photocopy or digital copy of my photo ID acceptable?

No. Only original documents are acceptable.

Can I use photo ID with a different name (e.g. because I've got married or changed my name)?

No. The name on your photo ID must be the same name you used to register to vote, unless you bring additional original evidence to support the change e.g. marriage certificate or change of name deed.

What if I don't have any of the documents on the list?

If you don't have an accepted form of photo ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate to use as photo ID at the polling station.

What is a Voter Authority Certificate?

The Voter Authority Certificate is an official document which will contain your name and photograph and can only be used for voting purposes. Find out how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate at voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk

What if I don't want to vote at a polling station?

You can apply to vote by post at merton.gov.uk/voting – a ballot pack will be sent to you by post before polling day.

Postal voters do not need to provide photo ID.

When are the next elections in Merton?

The next scheduled elections are for the Mayor of London and London Assembly on 2 May 2024.

Elections can be called at any time. Make sure you're ready.

Check that you have the correct photo ID or apply for a Voter Authority Certificate now.



How to vote on Thursday 2nd May 2024

You can vote in person at a polling station, by post or appoint someone you trust to vote on your behalf as your proxy.

Postal Vote

Voting by post means that you will be sent a ballot form to mark your vote via post.

Voting by post can be useful if you are worried that you won't be able to get to a polling station or would rather keep your vote to yourself.

To vote by post at any election you must be registered to vote first.

If you want to vote by post either apply

- Online here - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote>
- Or you can download a form here - <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/media/10570>

This form will need to be returned to Merton's Electoral Services team via email electoral.services@merton.gov.uk or post Electoral Services Merton Civic Centre, London Road Morden, SM4 5DX



If you have applied for a postal vote, you can't go to the polling station.

The voting forms are generally sent out about two weeks before polling day, depending on when you apply.

They include instructions on how to return the postal vote, with a security statement that you have to complete with your signature and date of birth.

You have to return this to the Council, with the ballot papers, before the close of polling on the day of the election.

The Council will compare the signature and date of birth on your statement with those on your application. The vote cannot be counted if they do not match.

If your signature changes a lot, then this might not be the right way for you to vote.

Proxy

Can't get to your local polling station? You can register to vote by proxy.

Voting by proxy means that you appoint someone you trust to vote on your behalf. Voting by proxy can be useful if you are worried that you won't be able to get to a polling station on polling day. For example, you may have an on-going illness.

You and the person you nominate to vote on your behalf must be registered to vote. If you want to vote by proxy you can:

- Apply online here - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote>
- Or you can download a form here - <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/media/10587>

This form will need to be returned to Merton's Electoral Services team via email electoral.services@merton.gov.uk or post Electoral Services Merton Civic Centre, London Road Morden, SM4 5DX

If you have a **medical emergency** occurring after 5pm, six working days before the election, you can apply to vote by emergency proxy (until 5pm on the day of the election).

To apply for an emergency proxy vote you will need to download, print and fill in a form and send it to the Council. The form is available on this link <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-09/Emergency-disability-proxy-vote-application-form.pdf>

You can also contact the council.

Find out more about postal and proxy voting in Merton here - <https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-and-local-democracy/elections-and-voting/post-proxy>



What if I would like to go to the polling station myself, but I might need some support?

Before polling day on 2nd May 2024 you will be sent a **poll card** which will tell you **where your polling station is**. You can only vote at the polling station it says on your poll card.

You do not need to take the poll card with you to vote, but it will help the polling station staff if you do. Polling stations will be open between 7am and 10pm for voting. When you get there the polling station staff will ask you for your name and address. Staff will check you are on the electoral register and have come to the right polling station.



7am - 10pm

They will then give you your ballot paper. You mark your vote in secret on the ballot paper in a cubicle and put it in the sealed ballot box. All polling stations should be wheelchair accessible and support Disabled voters. If you need assistance on polling day, you can ask a member of staff, called a Presiding Officer.



Presiding Officers

If you are voting in person at a polling station, there are a number of ways the staff, called Presiding Officers, can support you to vote.

Don't worry if you can not mark your ballot paper, Presiding Officers may mark your ballot paper for you.

You may also attend the polling station with someone who you would like to mark your ballot paper on your behalf.

Polling stations should be accessible for everyone wishing to vote. If for whatever reason your local polling station isn't accessible, Presiding Officers should provide you with a ballot paper and allow you to vote outside of the polling station.

Get in touch - If you are faced with an inaccessible polling station or face barriers around the elections and voting, we want to hear from you.

Tactile Voting Devices

Polling stations should provide tactile voting devices.

The tactile voting device attaches on top of your ballot paper. It has numbered flaps (the numbers are raised and are in Braille) directly over the boxes where you mark your vote.

A Presiding Officer or someone you have attended the polling station with can read out the list of candidates. You can then use the large numbered flaps to find the part of the ballot paper you wish to mark with your vote.



Large Print and Magnifying Assistance

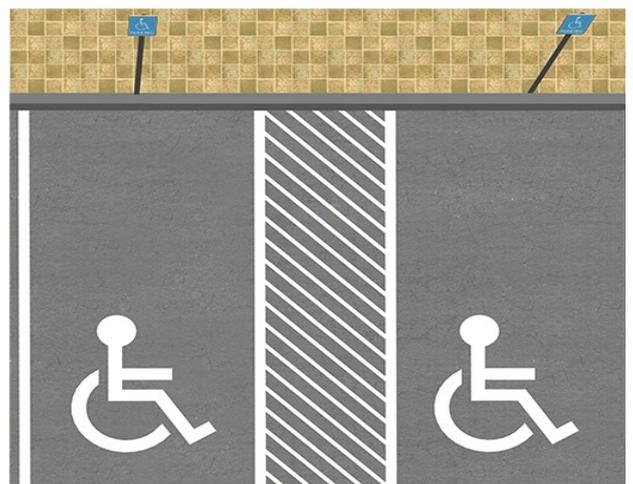
Polling stations should provide large print versions of ballot papers.

Polling stations should also provide magnifying assistance. These magnifying sheets can be placed over standard and large print versions of ballot paper to make them easier to read.

Presiding Officers should be able to provide these aids on request.

Parking

If you need to use a disabled parking space, these should be clearly visible and monitored throughout the day.

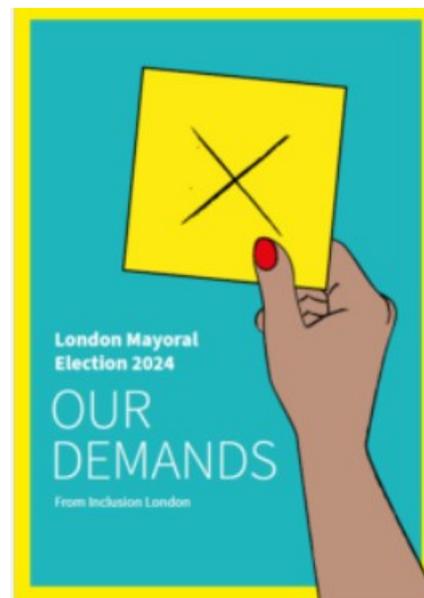


What we are asking for

Deaf and Disabled people's organisations across London have united in a call to the Mayoral candidates to support 6 steps to an equal and inclusive London over the next four years.

These 6 steps are:

1. Make Disability equality and inclusion for Disabled Londoners a reality
2. Provide safe, accessible and affordable transport and remove all disabling barriers to walking and cycling
3. Ensure all Disabled Londoners live in accessible, secure, affordable and safe homes
4. Make London the best place to work and study for Disabled people
5. Make London the best place to work and study for Disabled people
6. Increase Disabled people's trust and confidence in the police



You can read the full manifesto including the asks above and recommended action points here - <https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/6-steps-to-an-equal-and-inclusive-London.pdf>

There are also easy read and BSL translations too.

Write to the candidates

We wrote to the London Mayoral candidates asking them to attend Inclusion London's husting event, read and actively engage with the manifesto and support the push for a more equal and inclusive London.

You can write to them too using Inclusion London's template letter - <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/test-mayoral-campaign>

By sending these letters to candidates, we will ensure that they see the event below and engagement with Deaf and Disabled Londoners as important.

Attend Inclusion London's Hustings

This event will take place in Central London on April 9th. Find out more on page 11.

Attend Inclusion London's hustings



Join us at Inclusion London's hustings. This is a great chance to ask candidates about issues that matter to us, connect, and make our voices heard!

When: Tuesday 9th April 2024, 4-6:30pm

Where: [Abbey Centre, Westminster, London](#) and online

Access: Wheelchair access via a lift, BSL interpretation, captions (palantypist)

How to register and for more access information: [Via Eventbrite](#)

This event is your chance to hear directly from the candidates running for Mayor of London in 2024. **Join the event from 4pm** to learn about their plans for a more inclusive future for all Londoners.

You'll have the opportunity to meet other Deaf and Disabled people over tea, coffee, and biscuits from 4 pm to 5 pm, **the Hustings will start at 5 pm** and will close at 6:30pm.

There will be a livestream option available, but to have the best chance to ask your questions and meet others, be sure to attend in person.

Who you can vote for

The London Mayoral Candidates

Conservative - Susan Hall - <https://www.susan.london/>



Green Party - Zoe Garbett - <https://zoe4london.co.uk/>



Labour - Sadiq Khan - <https://sadiq.london/>



Liberal Democrats - Rob Blackie
<https://www.londonlibdems.org.uk/robblackie>



There are also a number of new parties and independent candidates:

Independent, Shyam Batra - <https://shyambatra4mayor.london/>

Independent, Count Binface - <https://www.countbinface.com/>

Independent, Natalie Campbell - <https://teamcampbell.london/>

Independent, Tarun Ghulati - <https://www.tarunghulati.com/>

Independent, Andreas Michli - <https://michli.co.uk/>

London Real Party, Brian Rose - <https://brianformayor.london/>

Reform UK, Howard Cox - <https://www.cox4london.uk/>

Social Democratic Party, Amy Gallagher - <https://sdp.org.uk/2023/12/18/amy-gallagher-announced-as-sdp-candidate-for-london-mayor/>

Merton & Wandsworth London Assembly Candidates

Conservative Party - Ellie Cox - ellie@ellie4cityhall.co.uk

Green Party - Pippa Maslin - pippamaslin@hotmail.co.uk

Labour Party - Leonie Cooper - leonie.cooper@london.gov.uk

Liberal Democrat Party - Sue Wixley - suewixley@gmail.com

Reform Party - Tania Marszalek - tania.marszalek@reformuk.com

Not sure you're interested in voting? Read a comment from a Merton CIL member during a past election:

"If you don't vote, you have no say at all in who represents you in government. At any election in your area, one of the candidates will be selected to represent you whether you vote or not. If you're registered, you'll have the chance to have a say on who represents you by voting."



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