

Easy Read



Ready to Vote



# Your guide to voting in the 2026 Senedd election

Election date: Thursday 7 May 2026

What the Senedd is

Why your vote matters

Who can vote

Registering to vote

How to vote

Deciding who to vote for



Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru  
Easy Read Wales

# Contents

**What the Senedd is..... 3**

**Why your vote matters ..... 7**

**Who can vote in a Senedd election ..... 9**

**Registering to vote.....10**

**How to vote .....13**

**Deciding who to vote for .....24**

# What the Senedd is



The Senedd is Welsh Parliament. **It is different to Welsh Government.**



The Senedd is made up of the people **you** vote for in Senedd Elections.



The next Senedd election is **Thursday 7 May 2026**. It is your chance to have a say in who becomes your Member of the Senedd.



Members of the Senedd represent the people in their voting area. They talk about the issues you are facing, and make sure your voice is heard when decisions are made.



The Senedd makes laws and policies for Wales about things like:

- Health services.
- Social services and social care.
- Education.
- Public transport.
- Roads and speed limits.
- Housing.
- Farming.
- Sport and culture – like arts, museums and libraries.





There are some things the Senedd does **not** have power over. This is because they are controlled by UK Parliament.



For example, the Senedd **cannot** make laws or policies about:



- **Foreign affairs** – like buying and selling goods from other countries and dealing with issues like war and security.



- **Defence** – like making decisions about where our armed forces go and what they do.



- **Immigration** – rules about who can come to the country to stay, work or live.



- **Welfare benefits** - like PIP, DLA and Universal Credit.

# Welsh Government



The leader of the political party who gets the most votes in a Senedd election, usually leads Welsh Government.



The leader of Welsh Government is called the First Minister.



The First Minister chooses a team of secretaries and ministers to make up Welsh Government.



Welsh Government runs public services in Wales and suggests new laws. Their work is checked by the Senedd.

# Why your vote matters



Voting in a Senedd election is important. It is your chance to choose who you think are the best people to make decisions for us in Wales.



The people you vote for become Members of the Senedd, or MSs for short.



MSs are in charge of many things that affect our lives.



They try to get the Welsh Government to make changes that would help their local area.



MSs talk about the issues you are facing, and make sure your voice is heard when decisions are made



You can contact your MS and ask them to take issues to the Senedd.



You can find out how to contact your MS here:  
[senedd.wales/find-a-member-of-the-senedd](https://senedd.wales/find-a-member-of-the-senedd)

# Who can vote in a Senedd election

To vote in the Senedd election you must:



- Be registered to vote.



- Be 16 years old or over.



- Live in Wales



- Not be banned from voting by law. For example, because you are in prison, or because you are under 16 years old.



For more information about voting, visit:

- the **Senedd** website: [senedd.wales/election](https://senedd.wales/election)
- [vote.wales](https://vote.wales)

# Registering to vote



Before you can vote in the Senedd election, **you must register to vote.**



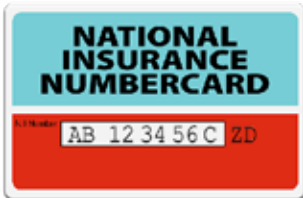
You can register to vote here:  
[gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://gov.uk/register-to-vote)



You must register to vote by **midnight on Monday 20 April 2026.**



It usually takes about 5 minutes to register.



It is useful to have your National Insurance number ready. You can find this on your payslip or letters from the Government.



If you need help, ask someone you trust.



If you are not sure if you are registered to vote, contact your local Electoral Registration Office to check: [gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office](https://www.gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office)



**You only need to register to vote once.** Not every time there is an election.



If your name, address, or nationality changes, you will need to register again.



The UK Government has an Easy Read guide to registering to vote here: [gov.uk/government/publications/registering-to-vote-easy-read-guide](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/registering-to-vote-easy-read-guide)

# How to vote

There are 3 ways to vote:



- **In person.** Go to a polling station on election day.



- **By post.** Send your vote in.



- **By proxy.** Someone you trust votes for you.



You can choose the way that works best for you.

# Voting in person



You do **not** need photo ID to vote in Senedd elections.



You must register to vote by **12am midnight on Monday 20 April 2026.**



When you are registered to vote, you will get a **poll card** in the post. This will be sent to you about 3 weeks before the election.



The poll card will tell you which polling station to go to vote on election day - **Thursday 7 May 2026.**



A polling station is the place you go to vote in an election. You will only be allowed to vote at the polling station named on your poll card.



Polling stations are usually in places like libraries, schools, and community centres.



**Polling stations will be open from 7:00am to 10:00pm on election day - Thursday 7 May 2026.**



If you lose your poll card and forget where your polling station is, you can check online - you will need to put your postcode in: [electoralcommission.org.uk/voter](https://electoralcommission.org.uk/voter)



Go to your polling station on election day between these times. Staff will be at the polling station to help you.



When you get to your polling station, you need to tell the staff your name and address. They will check you are on the voting register.



If everything is OK, they will give you a ballot paper. This is a sheet of paper listing the political parties and independent candidates you can vote for.



Go to 1 of the polling booths. This is a private area where you can vote, so your choice is secret.



Everyone gets 1 vote. Put a cross in the box next to the independent candidate or political party you want to vote for.



There will be instructions in the booth and on your ballot paper on how to vote.



When you are finished, put your ballot paper in the big ballot box.



If you need help, ask the staff at the polling station. You can take someone with you for support.

# Voting by post



If you want to vote by post, you must apply by **5pm on Tuesday 21 April 2026**. You must first be registered to vote.

To apply you need to fill out a form. You can:

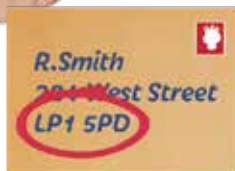


- Download, print and post the form, which you can find online here: [gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote)



- Ask your local **Electoral Registration Office** to send you the form. You can find their details here: [gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office](https://www.gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office)

## Before applying, make sure you have your:



- Date of birth
- Address where you are registered to vote
- National Insurance number



If you need help with your form, contact your local Electoral Registration Office. You can find yours here: [gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office](https://www.gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office)



You can find an Easy Read guide to applying for a postal vote here: [gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote-easy-read-guide](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote-easy-read-guide)



You can call the Electoral Commission helpline on 0800 328 0280 for help.

# What happens next



About 3 weeks before the election, you will get your postal voting pack. Keep it safe and do not let anyone else use it.



Follow the instructions in the voting pack.



Post your completed postal vote back as soon as possible. You do not need a stamp.



If you cannot post it yourself, ask someone you trust for help or contact your council.



Your postal vote must arrive by **10:00pm on Thursday 7 May 2026**. Send it as quickly as you can to make sure it is counted.



You can hand your postal vote in at your polling station if you forget to post it in time.

# Voting by proxy



This means choosing someone to vote for you at a polling station.



The person you choose should be someone you trust. They are your proxy. You tell them who you want to vote for.



You must apply for a proxy vote by **5pm on Tuesday 28 April 2026**. You must first be registered to vote.



You can find an Easy Read guide to applying for a proxy vote here: [gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-proxy-vote-easy-read-guide](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-proxy-vote-easy-read-guide)

## Before applying, make sure you have your:



- Address where you are registered to vote
- National Insurance number. Or another type of ID, like your birth certificate
- Contact details of your proxy
- Reason you want a proxy vote. For example, because you are disabled or have medical issues, or because you are away or work in the armed forces.



If you need help, contact your local Electoral Registration Office. You can find yours here: [gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office](https://www.gov.uk/contact-electoral-registration-office)



You can call the Electoral Commission helpline on 0800 328 0280 for help.

# Deciding who to vote for



This is your choice. It can be hard to decide.



It can help to talk to family and friends about what matters to you. But remember it is **your** choice. Nobody can tell you who to vote for



To learn about the candidates and political parties in your area visit **Who Can I Vote For:** [whocanivotefor.co.uk](http://whocanivotefor.co.uk)



You can read about what is important to them.



You can contact them to ask questions.



Candidates might knock on your door or be in your area. You can ask them questions to learn about their views.



Most candidates are part of a political party.



Some of the parties standing in the Senedd Election are:

- [Labour Party](#)
- [Conservative Party](#)
- [Plaid Cymru](#)
- [Green Party](#)
- [Liberal Democrats](#)
- [Reform](#)



You can read a political party's **manifesto** to understand their views and ideas. A **manifesto** tells you what they promise to do if they win the election.



Some candidates are independent. This means they are not part of a political party. You can find out about them on the **Who Can I Vote For** website: [www.whocanivotefor.co.uk](http://www.whocanivotefor.co.uk).



There will also be debates on TV. This is where candidates talk about their ideas and answer questions about important issues.



For more information about voting in the Senedd election, including Easy Read information, visit the [vote.wales](https://www.vote.wales) website.



Whoever you choose to vote for, your vote matters. **Make sure your voice is heard in the 2026 Senedd election.**

**Photosymbols®**

Publisher Licence 403527247