

Could You Be Our Next Presiding Officer?

An information guide for
people interested in becoming
a Presiding Officer.

Running a polling station
with confidence,
professionalism and pride.



Deliver

Take charge of a polling station and help deliver safe, fair and accessible elections.



Develop skills

Receive comprehensive training, guidance and ongoing support to lead with confidence.



Make a real impact

Help ensure elections are run professionally, securely and in accordance with electoral law.



POLLING STATION CHECKLIST

- ☒ Prepare for opening
- ☒ Welcome voters
- ☒ Issue ballot papers
- ☒ Maintain records
- ☒ Support voters
- ☒ Close and reconcile

Help your community vote, be the difference.



Paid role



Full training
provided



Running a
polling station



Make a real impact
on election day



Wealden
District Council

What Does a Presiding Officer Do?



Wealden
District Council



Remember:

You are never expected to know everything.

Full training, guidance and support from the Electoral Services Team are always available to help you **manage** with confidence.

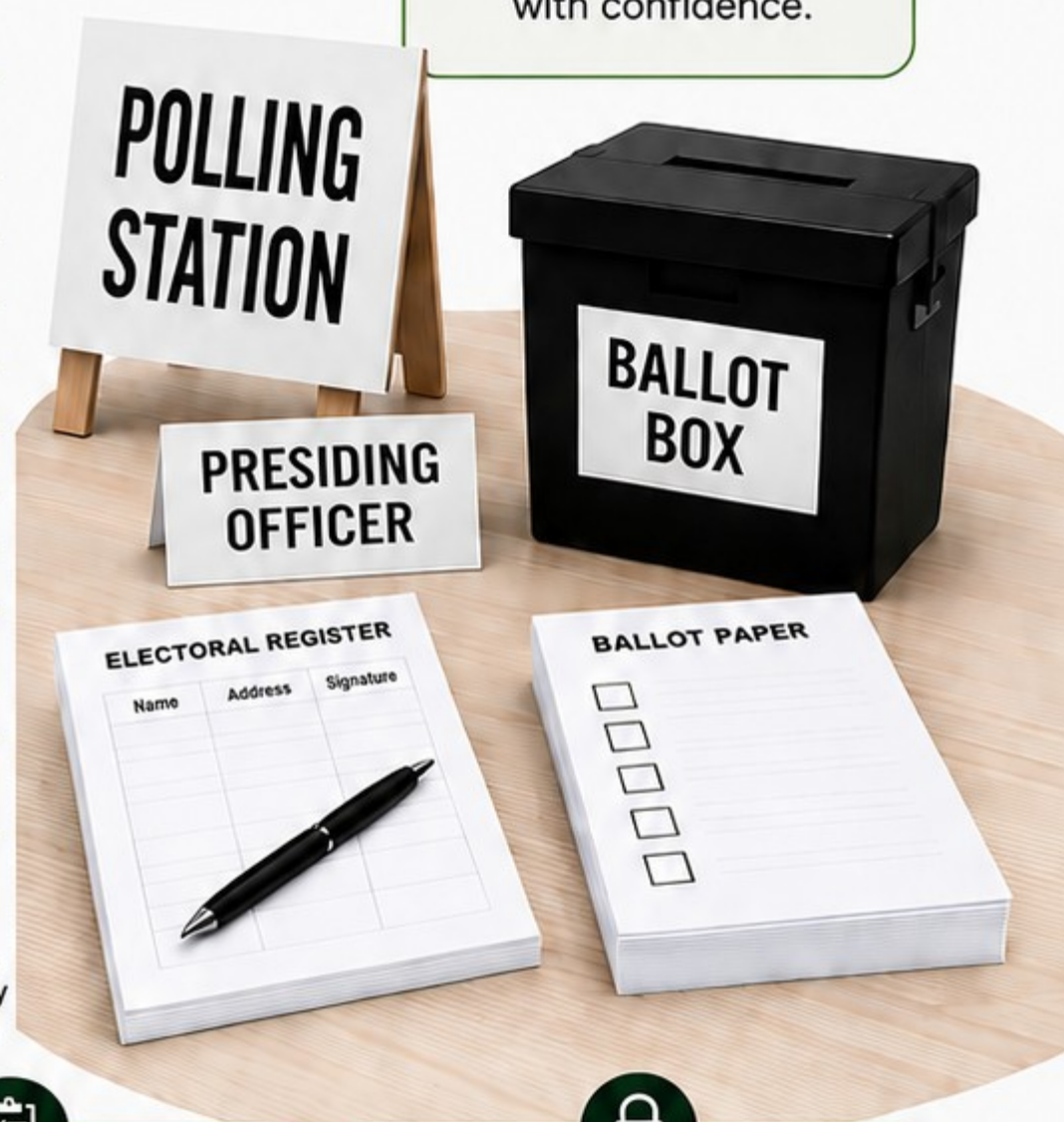
You will manage the Polling Station

As Presiding Officer, you manage the polling station team to ensure elections are run smoothly, safely and efficiently throughout polling day.

You will welcome voters, oversee election procedures, support your team and ensure the integrity of the election process.

You are responsible for:

- ✓ Attending in person briefings prior to polling day & completing online training provided.
- ✓ Collect ballot box and check all contents thoroughly before polling day.
- ✓ Opening and setting up the polling station in time to open at 7.00 am.
- ✓ Supervising Poll Clerks.
- ✓ Ensuring election law is followed.
- ✓ Helping voters.
- ✓ Protecting the secrecy of the ballot.
- ✓ Completing official paperwork.
- ✓ Keeping ballot papers secure.
- ✓ Closing the polling station correctly.
- ✓ Monitoring ballot paper issuing throughout the day to ensure Poll Clerks follow procedures correctly and issue ballot papers in sequence.
- ✓ Supporting Poll Clerks and carrying out regular checks to prevent errors before they become problems.
- ✓ Maintaining accuracy and attention to detail at all times – elections are not a race, and taking time to get things right is essential.
- ✓ With help of Poll Clerks, ensure all items are packed away tidily and returned to the elections team along with your ballot box, as per your Close of Poll instructions.



SUPPORT YOUR TEAM

Guide and support your Poll Clerk(s) throughout the day.



Maintain accuracy
Complete paperwork correctly and ensure every ballot paper is accounted for.



Deliver secure elections
Help protect the integrity of the democratic process.



Every election relies on dedicated people like you.
Thank you for helping democracy happen.

Poll Clerk vs Presiding Officer

As a Presiding Officer you manage the polling station, oversee ballot paper issuing, manage the team, complete official paperwork and make procedural decisions.

What's the Difference?

 Poll Clerk	 Presiding Officer
 Assists voters	 Manages the polling station
 Issues ballot papers	 Oversees all ballot paper issuing
 Clears up the polling station whilst PO completes paperwork	 Responsible for all official paperwork
 Supports the team	 Manages the team
 Follows instructions	 Makes procedural decisions
 Assists throughout the day	 Responsible for the polling station from start to finish



If you've already worked confidently as a Poll Clerk, you may already have many of the skills needed.



Is This Role Right for You?

Our best Presiding Officers are calm under pressure, friendly, organised, reliable, confident decision-makers and committed to excellent customer service.



GUIDE & SUPPORT

Guide & Support

Manage your team
Guide and support Poll Clerks throughout polling day.



Make informed decisions

Take responsibility for the smooth running of the polling station.



Build on your experience

Take the next step after working as a Poll Clerk.



Experienced Poll Clerks already have many of the skills needed to become excellent Presiding Officers.

Step Into a Role That Makes a Difference

Leading a polling station with confidence,
professionalism and pride.



Wealden
District Council



No previous management or leadership experience is needed.

Many of our Presiding Officers started as Poll Clerks or brought experience from other customer-facing roles. Full training, guidance and support are provided every step of the way.



Remember:

Many of our Presiding Officers started as Poll Clerks.

Full training, guidance and support from the Electoral Services Team are always available to help you lead with confidence.

What to Expect

Here's what happens when you work as a Presiding Officer.



1. Appointed

We'll confirm your appointment for the election you've registered to work.



2. Train

Complete online training and attend an in-person session before polling day.



3. Collect Ballot & Prepare

Collect your ballot box and paperwork. Check contents before leaving.



4. Work

Support voters and follow clear procedures on election day.



5. Get paid

Receive payment by bank transfer after the election.



6. Keep in touch

We'll keep you informed about future elections and opportunities.



The Pay

The figures below are based on the County Council election in May 2026.

Presiding Officer Fee
(including holiday pay)

£458.73

Training Fee

£44.93



If you are required to work additional days (e.g. recounts, verifications or training), you will be paid an additional fee.



Time Commitment

Usually **6.00 am until approximately 10.30-11pm on polling day**, plus completion of online training and attendance at an in-person briefing before polling day.



Is This Role Right for You?

Our best Presiding Officers are calm under pressure, friendly, organised, reliable, confident decision-makers and committed to excellent customer service.



You may already have many of the skills needed if you've worked in retail, administration, education, hospitality, customer service or another role involving responsibility, organisation and working with people.



Experienced Poll Clerks already have many of the skills needed to become excellent Presiding Officers.

What Happens on Polling Day?



Remember:

You are never expected to know everything.

Full training, guidance and support from the Electoral Services Team are always available to help you lead with confidence.

Your role as Presiding Officer

You are in charge of the polling station and responsible for ensuring everything runs smoothly from opening to close.

Below is an overview of what happens during the day.

The day in summary:



6:00 am

1. Before Polling Day

Attend briefings, complete training and collect the ballot box and all equipment.



6:00 – 7:00 am

2. Setting Up

Arrive early to set up the polling station and check everything is ready to open at 7.00 am.



7:00 am – 10:00 pm

3. Throughout the Day

Support your team, assist voters, issue ballot papers and ensure procedures are followed.



9:00 – 10:00 pm

4. Preparing for Close

Ensure your envelopes and forms are written and placed on the relevant sacks, ready for close of poll.



10:00 pm

5. Close of Poll

Seal ballot box and close polling station.



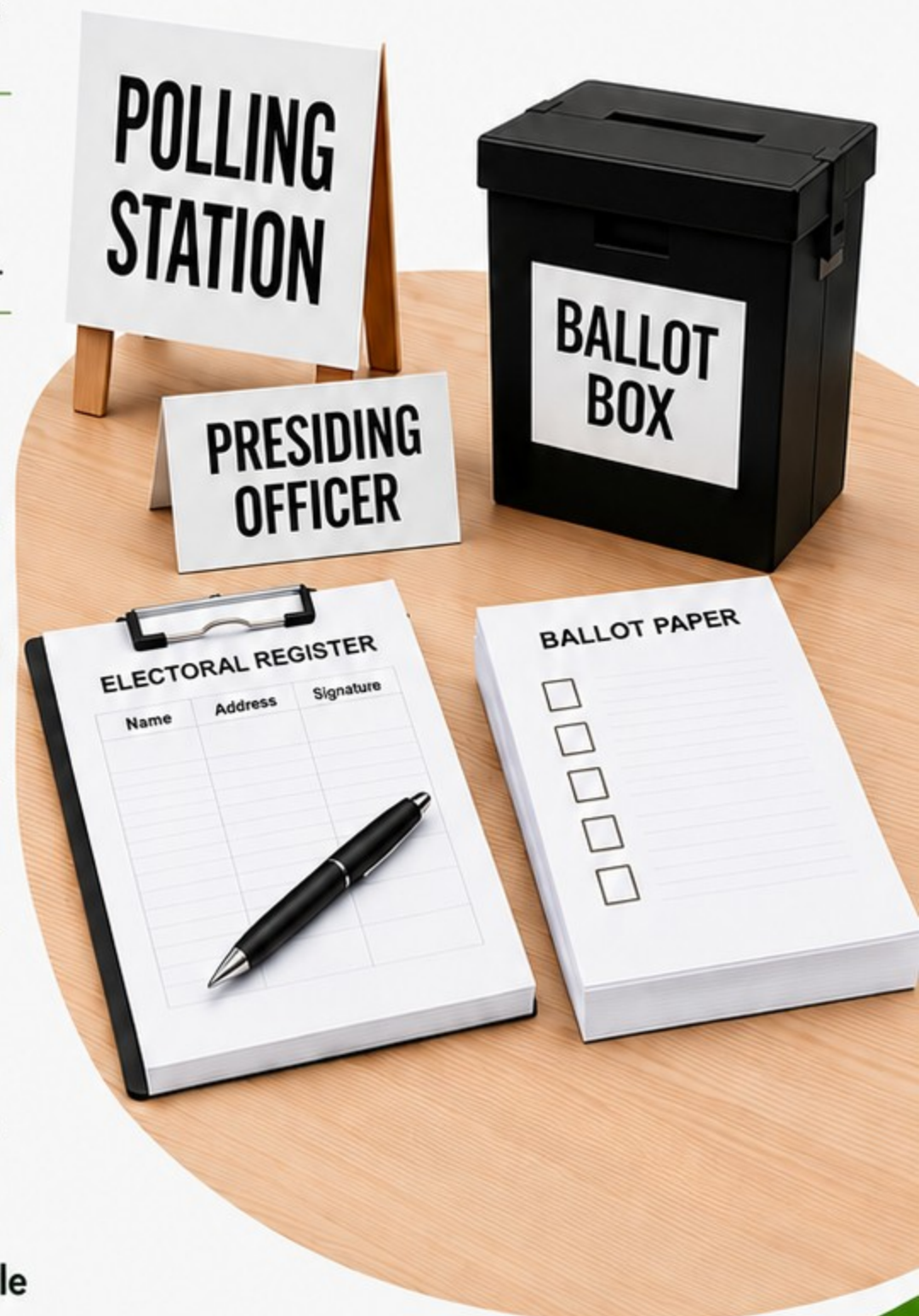
After close

6. Finalise and Return

Finalise paperwork and pack away as per your close of poll instructions. Lock polling station and return ballot box and equipment to the count venue.



Every election relies on strong people and dedicated local people like you.
Thank you for helping democracy happen.



FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some of the most common questions about working at a polling station.



If you have any other questions, please contact the Elections Team – we're here to help.



Do I need any previous experience?

We ask that you complete at least one election for wealden as Poll Clerk unless you have experience as Presiding Officer with another Authority. First appointments as a Presiding Officer are subject to references from your previous Local Authority. Full training will still be provided, and you will be supported by the Elections team on the day.



Is training compulsory?

Yes, you must complete our online training and attend an in-person briefing before you can work at a polling station.



What time will I need to be there?

You will need to arrive at 6.00am–6.15am to set up the polling station and be ready to open at 7.00am. Ensure you have contacted your Poll Clerks to advise them of timings and your key holder so you can open the polling station. The station closes at 10.00pm and you will stay to complete your paperwork. Once complete and the station is tidy, you will lock up and take your ballot box and equipment to the Count venue.



What will I be expected to do?

You will oversee the polling station, manage the poll clerks, ensure voting is conducted fairly, securely and in accordance with electoral law, maintain the secrecy of the ballot, support voters with accessibility needs, be available to assist poll clerks with voter ID checks when required, manage the receipt of postal votes handed in, and complete all required procedures before delivering your ballot box and equipment to the Count venue.



Will I be handling ballot papers?

You are responsible for ensuring your poll clerks issue ballot papers in sequence and will need to issue ballot papers yourself when covering staff breaks. You must also account for and securely handle ballot papers throughout polling day in accordance with electoral law and local procedures.



What about security and confidentiality?

All staff must follow strict procedures to protect the integrity of the vote and keep information secure. You will receive full guidance during training.



Can I claim travel expenses?

Yes. Travel expenses incurred on election days may be reclaimed in line with our policy.



Can I request which polling station I work at & can I work with a friend or relative?

You can request to work at a specific polling station and request to work with a friend or relative. We cannot make any guarantees, but we will always do our utmost to accommodate requests.



Do I need photographic ID to work?

No. You do not need ID to work at a polling station. (Photographic ID is only required for voting.)



Every election is different, but our team is with you every step of the way. If you're unsure about anything, please contact the Elections Team.



elections@wealden.gov.uk



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Top Tip

Use the 16 hours wisely and organise and prepare your paperwork throughout the day, e.g. write your envelopes and lay them next to the relevant sack
- DON'T WAIT UNTIL 10PM.

Key Things to Remember

- You are in charge of the polling station on polling day.
- Follow the law, guidance and instructions at all times.
- Keep ballot papers, documents and equipment secure.
- Treat every voter with courtesy and respect.
- Ask for help whenever you need it.
- You play a vital role in democracy.
- Take your time and do not rush. Accuracy is always more important than speed.
- Pack and return all equipment, paperwork and the black folder in accordance with the Close of Poll instructions.
- Well-organised returns help the parcelling team process materials quickly and avoid delays at the count venue.

Still Interested?

We Would Love You to Join Us

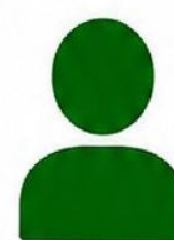
If you are ready to take the next step, contact Electoral Services to express your interest in becoming a Presiding Officer.

Thank you for helping us deliver safe, secure and successful elections.

@ elections@wealden.gov.uk

☎ 01892 602407

🖱 [Elections Job Vacancies](#)



You don't need previous management experience.

You simply need a willingness to learn and confidence to lead your polling station.