



For the first time, residents in Forest of Dean District will need to show photographic ID to vote in person at this year's local elections which are being held on 4 May.

Residents are being urged to make sure they are ready to vote in May by checking they have an accepted form of ID.

Accepted forms of ID include a UK, European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth passport; a UK, EEA or Commonwealth drivers' licence; and some concessionary travel passes, such as an older person's bus pass. Voters will be able to use expired ID if they are still recognisable from the photo and the name on the ID should be the same name as appears on the Electoral Register.

Anyone who does not have one of the accepted forms of ID will be able to apply for free ID online at [voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/](https://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk/) or by completing a paper form which is available from the Council.

More information is available on the Forest of Dean District Council website, including details of how to apply for the free ID. Anyone not able to visit the Council website, or apply for a Voter Authority Certificate online, is being encouraged to contact the Council by calling 01594 812638 or emailing [elections@fdean.gov.uk](mailto:elections@fdean.gov.uk)

Andrew Knott, Returning Officer for Forest of Dean District Council, said:

"Anyone voting at a polling station in England this May will need to show photo ID before they can be given their ballot paper. It's important that everyone understands what types of ID they can use, and how to apply for free ID if they need it.

"With elections taking place in the Forest of Dean District on 4 May 2023, it is important that those who want to vote make sure they are registered to vote and have an accepted form of ID. It may seem early but checking now means you will be ready to vote in May.

"Residents who do not have one of the accepted forms of ID can apply for free ID either online or by completing a paper application form which is available at our offices or by calling us at 01594 812638. If you need any help with applying for the free ID or want to request an application form, contact our electoral services team at the number above."

Anyone who wants to have their say in the elections this May must also be registered to vote. If you aren't already registered it only takes five minutes to register online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote). Voters wishing to apply to their council for free ID should first make sure they are registered to vote.

The requirement to show photo ID at the polling station, is a new requirement, introduced by the UK Government's Elections Act which was passed last year and comes into effect for the first time this May.

The changes do not affect postal votes, but do affect proxy voters who will be required to show their own valid ID when voting on behalf of someone else.

Contact Information

Forest of Dean Communications Team

[media@fdean.gov.uk](mailto:media@fdean.gov.uk)