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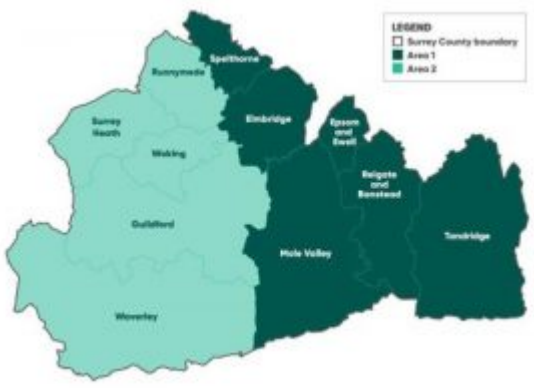
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Last day to Stand for Surrey's Unitary Councils

9 April 2026



Today is the final day to get your name on a Surrey ballot ahead of this year's once in a generation election.

Surrey County Council was created in 1889 with the 11 boroughs and districts forming in 1974.

This year, they will be dissolved and replaced with two new mega authorities covering the east and west of the old county as local government moves from the old two-tier system, into two single councils.

This election, set for May 7, will be the first time people get to vote under the new system and today, Thursday April 9, is the final day for any would-be politicians to get their names on the ballot sheets.

The new councils, East and West Surrey, will be responsible for things that make everyday work, such as waste collection and recycling, planning and building control, as well as adult social care and children's services.

The idea is to move to two councils that are effectively responsible for everything, rather than 12 each with their own agendas. This, the hope is, will simplify local government and improve service delivery – and ideally make accountability clearer to residents.

Other big ticket items the councils cover include highways and transport, housing and homelessness support, environmental health, leisure and community services.

Basically it's where your council tax goes.

To stand for election you must be at least 18, be a British, EU, or a Commonwealth citizen, and be registered to vote or have lived or worked in the area for at least a year.

Those looking to stand as a member of a political party should contact their preferred groups while independents can reach out to the Local Government Association Independent Group for any tips.

Valid nomination papers must be submitted with at least two people, a proposer and a seconder, who have agreed you are a suitable candidate – these people need to be on the electoral register in the relevant ward.

Councillors elected in May 2026 will sit on shadow authorities for their new councils for the first year.

This will allow them time to develop budgets and service plans, agree staffing and governance arrangements, and prepare for the transfer of responsibilities from the existing councils.

The new East and West Surrey Councils will then formally begin operating in April 2027, when Surrey's 12 legacy councils will be dissolved.

To stand for election you must email or call the relevant existing council for the area you wish to stand.

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Email: electoralservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk
Telephone: 01372 732000

Chris Caulfield LDRS

Map 2.2 Surrey East West. (Credit: Elmbridge Borough Council)

Related reports

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Epsom & Ewell Borough Council agrees to submit proposal recommending three unitary councils for Surrey

County council set to propose two unitary councils for Surrey

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