

MCB

Hungry for
CHANGE

**LOCAL
ELECTIONS
CAMPAIGN
2026:
POLITICAL
TOOLKIT**

*A British Muslim's guide
to register yourself,
your family and friends
to vote in the local
elections in England*

- Why?*
- How?*
- What?*

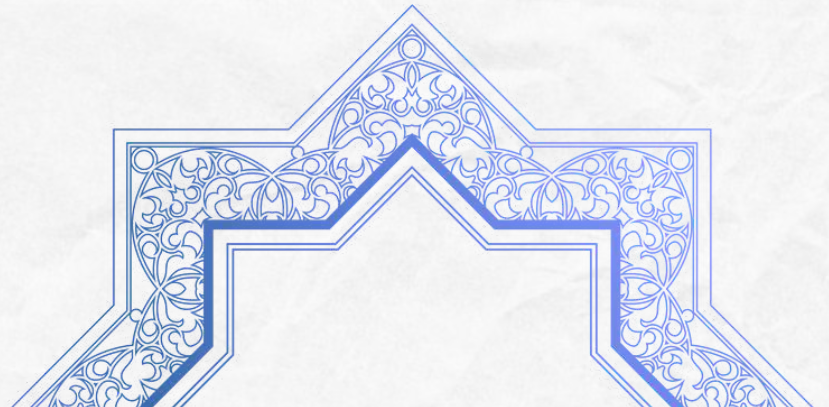
VISION 2050
Unite | Empower | Serve

ON THE 7TH OF MAY 2026, ENGLAND WILL GO TO THE POLLS TO VOTE FOR THEIR NEXT LOCAL COUNCILLORS, INCLUDING 6 REGIONAL METRO MAYORS.

This past year has reinforced the unprecedented societal challenges facing British Muslims: including threats to their safety, lack of government engagement on key issues such as housing, rising youth crime and health inequalities facing Muslims as well as rising levels of Islamophobia in the face of rising hate.

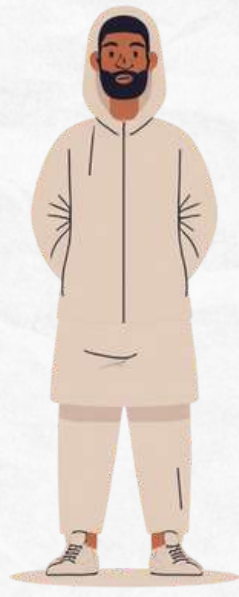
The Muslim Council of Britain has put together this Political Toolkit as a guide on local elections, how you can register to vote as well as a proposed list of cross-party pledges that can be prioritised by local councillors that you meet. These are informed by the Regional Townhall community consultations MCB held across the country in 2025.

You can email this to your local candidates - in addition to issues that you feel are important in your local area.





Muslim participation in the May 2026 local elections is critical. If not, your local council decisions may be made by someone who does not prioritise your needs as a community.



Often young and minoritised people miss out in shaping how decisions around local services and facilities - such as transport systems, libraries and parks - are funded, maintained or budgeted for.

Your vote can help shape the agenda of the next council by either electing a new council or pressuring the council to change direction. Voting gives you and your community the power to have representation that best reflects your values. Elected officials are more likely to engage with active voters, hence it is important for every Muslim to make an informed vote by reading up on each candidate.

By voting in the local election, we can shape our local areas in ways that help us all!



Your local councils are in charge of a range of essential services



Education

providing schools, transporting children to school and providing opportunities for adult learning, providing museums and art venues;



Housing

organising or providing accommodation for people in need and maintaining social housing;



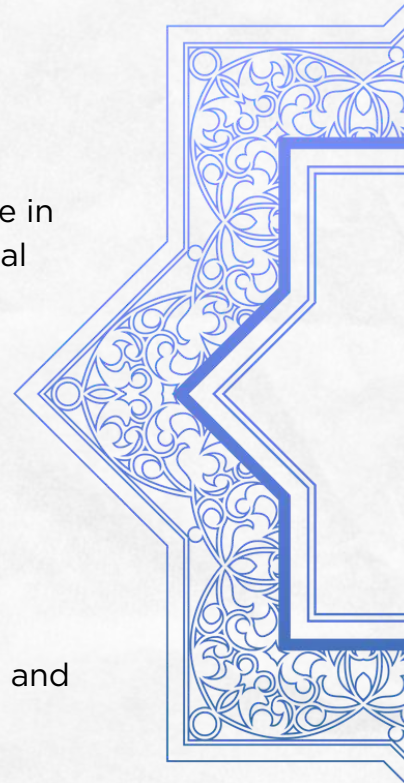
Social services:

caring for and protecting children, older people and disabled people;



Parks and leisure:

maintaining green spaces, children's play equipment, and sports and leisure centres;



Why Your Vote Matters!

1

In the 2024 general election British Muslim voters showed their impact by playing a huge role in the election. Your vote matters now, at a time when the rise of hatred is increasingly seen as an existential threat to British Muslims and other minority communities.

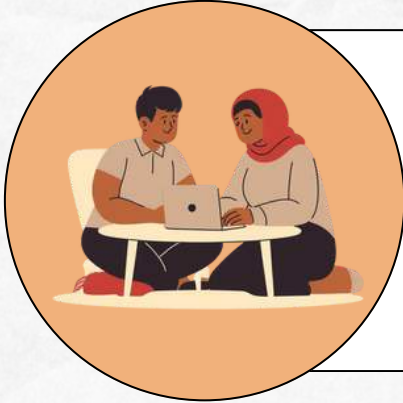
2

Your vote can help shape the agenda of the next council by either electing a new council or pressuring the council to change direction for the betterment of your community.

3

Elected officials are more likely to engage with active voters, so voting gives you the power to have representation that best reflects your values and concerns.

STEP BY STEP GUIDE ON HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE IN THE LOCAL ELECTIONS 2026



01. CHECK IF YOU'RE ELIGIBLE

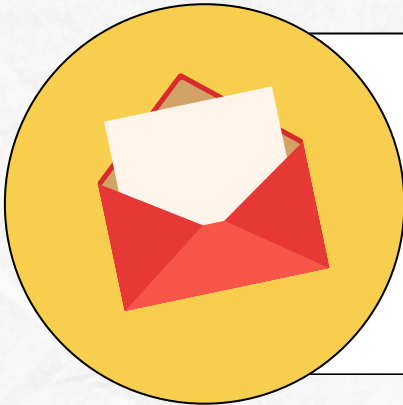
- You can register to vote if you're a British citizen or an Irish citizen
- or a Commonwealth citizen who lives in the UK (e.g. Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Malawi, Nigeria, Sri Lanka...)*
- or if you live abroad and are a British Citizen

*A full list of Commonwealth countries can be found here:
www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/who-can-vote-uk-elections)

02. REGISTER ONLINE BEFORE 20TH APRIL

Go to www.mcb.org.uk/register-to-vote and register to vote OR just scan this QR code:

The deadline to register to vote by post is Tuesday 21st April.



03. YOU WILL RECEIVE A POLLING CARD

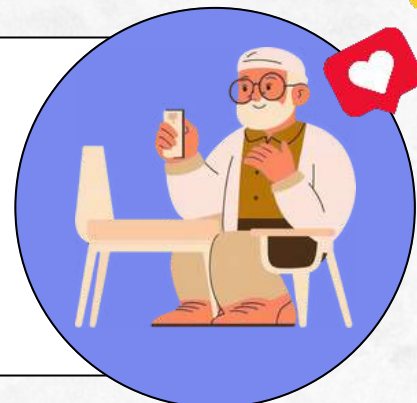
This will have details of your local polling station by post to the home address you've registered to vote from.

You vote in person at a polling station (usually in a public building, such as a school or local hall).

04. ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO IT TOO!

If there are other Muslims in your community who you think might need encouragement, why not assist them to do the same?

And we would love to hear from you about why you feel empowered to vote: send us your video via DM on Instagram or tag us @MuslimCouncil.UK



Local council elections in England use the first-past-the-post system.

Ensure you have registered to vote and know where and when you will be voting.

The deadline to register is **20th April 2026**

The local elections will be held on **7th May 2026**

Find out in advance who your local candidates are:

VISIT:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voting-and-elections/how-elections-work/types-elections/local-councils



Each councillor sits for a four year term.

When the four year term starts and ends for each councillor will depend on the voting system the council is using. This means that you may not vote for all of the councillors representing you at the same election.

The ballot paper will list the candidates for your area.

You can vote for as many candidates as there are councillor vacancies, by putting a cross [X] in the box next to your choice.

The ballot paper will explain how many candidates you can vote for.

E.g. if you are represented by three councillors and there are three vacancies, you can vote for three candidates.

The candidate(s) with the most votes wins

The winner does not need a majority - just more votes than anyone else.



You must take one form of photo ID with you when you go to vote, from the following list:

- a UK or Northern Ireland photocard driving licence (full or provisional)
- a driving licence issued by an EU country, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, the Isle of Man or any of the Channel Islands
- a UK passport
- a passport issued by an EU country, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein or a Commonwealth country
- a PASS card (National Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- a Blue Badge
- a biometric residence permit (BRP)
- a Defence Identity Card (MOD form 90)
- a HM Armed Forces Veteran Card (MOD form 100)
- a national identity card issued by an EU country, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein
- a Northern Ireland Electoral Identity Card
- a Voter Authority Certificate
- an Anonymous Elector's Document

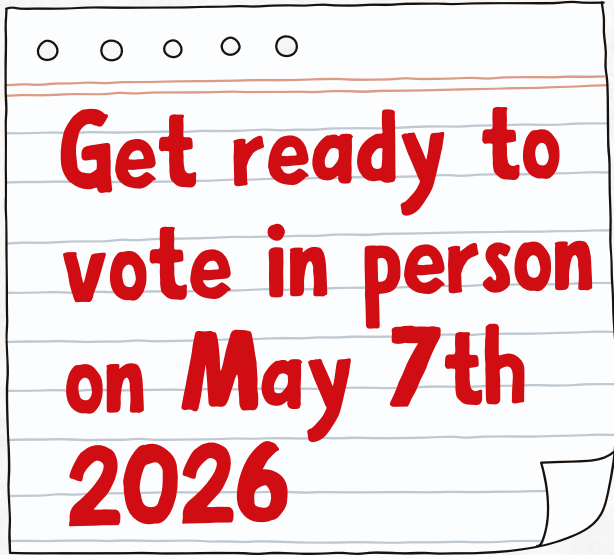


If you do not have any photo ID that allows you to vote, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate.

You can also use one of the following travel passes as photo ID when you vote:

- an older person's bus pass
- a disabled person's bus pass
 - an Oyster 60+ card
 - a Freedom Pass
- a Scottish National Entitlement Card (NEC)
- a 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card
- a Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card
- a Northern Ireland concessionary travel pass





You can only vote at the polling station location on your card.

You can still vote if you've lost your poll card. You do not have to take your card with you to vote.

If you have not received a poll card but think you should, contact your electoral registration office.

Polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm on the day of an election, known as 'polling day'. Make sure to try and vote before you go to work, usually employers can be flexible if you request a later start to ensure you go cast your vote or leave work in time to reach your voting poll before the 10pm deadline.

Do not leave it too late and make sure to plan ahead so your vote does not get wasted!



Accessibility Needs:

Contact your electoral registration office to find your polling station or to find out what to do if you have accessibility needs.

VOTING AS A STUDENT



If you are a student and are living in a different area to where your parents home is, you may be able to vote at BOTH your parents' address and your student accommodation address.

Voting in more than one location is only permissible for:

- local council elections,
- Police and Crime Commission elections, and
- Mayoral elections

For national elections it is a criminal offence to vote in the same election more than once. You must register to vote in both areas and the local electoral registration offices will check each application and tell you if you can register in both areas.

British Muslim Community Manifesto Pledges

Outlined below are three key areas British Muslims can lobby and encourage their local candidates to prioritise and address in their roles (if successful as councillors) to ensure everyday issues facing them are fairly and equally taken into account.

You can always add more pledges if you would like that are tailored to your local community's concerns and issues.

These are based on the Regional Townhall feedback where we listened to over 1000 Muslim voices up and down the country these came out as the top challenges British Muslims would like to see reform and enhanced policy change on.

1 BETTER, MORE INCLUSIVE SPENDING OF LOCAL BUDGETS

Dedicated Youth Hubs & Restoration of Youth Services Funding:

Advocate for a significant, long-term increase in funding for youth services and youth centres, arguing that cuts have removed safe alternatives and left young people vulnerable to negative influences.

Sports and Recreational Facilities:

Campaign for affordable, culturally sensitive facilities that enable young Muslim men and women to participate fully in sport through greater investment of funds.

Knife Crime: expansion of knife amnesty bin schemes, advocacy programmes and taking a rounded public health approach to the overall issue.

2 CHALLENGE THE RISE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

Champion the formal adoption, reporting and consistent monitoring of the widely accepted All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia in your region or area. "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness". Commit to stamping out hate crimes by ensuring access to dedicated local online tools to report hate crime swiftly, including actively encouraging use of these platforms and the use of the dedicated support services.

3 SOLIDARITY THROUGH ETHICAL SPENDING

Move local council spending and investment towards ethical sources and away from companies that are complicit in Israel's genocide in Gaza.

Boycott and Divestment:

Some local councils have relationships with companies and institutions that are financially complicit in the oppression of Palestinians. We should demand that local governments take action to end such complicity and to boycott these companies as a way to build meaningful solidarity.

Important Do's and Don'ts for Mosques / Community Organisations

What “spiritual influence” means in a UK mosque setting

Imams and mosque leaders can teach Islamic ethics, encourage civic responsibility, and remind people to vote with conscience in order to make informed decisions on their votes for the greater good of society. They however cannot claim religious authority to control political choices or label dissenters as “bad Muslims.”

Most mosques are charities, so the mosque as an organisation must stay party-neutral. A charity can campaign on issues that connect to its charitable purposes, but it must not support or oppose a political party or a specific candidate.

What Mosques CAN do during elections:

- Run voter registration drives with the community and consolidate/unify your votes for specific candidates
- Explain policy impacts on the community
- Host candidates and invite them to speak at the mosque/community space as long as all candidates are given an opportunity to speak if they ask
- Host candidate hustings and Q&A sessions so long as it's done in a way that's fair and not designed to steer votes to/against particular parties or candidates

What's mosques CANNOT do (as mosques / charities)

- Endorse any single party
 - Tell worshippers “Islam requires you to vote for X candidate”
 - Provide a platform for only one party without impartial reasons
 - Use mosque resources to promote candidates

If you are unsure of this please contact us on info@mcb.org.uk and we can try to assist you with ensuring you are obliging with the government guidance provided.

For further guideline from the government on political campaigning:
www.gov.uk/guidance/political-activity-and-campaigning-by-charities?

BECOME A GET OUT THE VOTE CHAMPION

YOUR VOICE. YOUR COMMUNITY



01

BE A GET OUT THE VOTE CHAMPION

If you want to get more involved and engage in the local elections, or are already active in your local community, mosque or organisation you can sign up to become a Champion today.



02

WHAT A GOTV CHAMPION DOES:

Ensure that you rally your local community to sign up and get as many people to register to vote!

Encourage your local mosque to announce the voter registration drive times (after Jumuah and prayer times is ideal!)

Set up a table to register people using the QR code we have provided above

Feedback to MCB on people's reasons and motivations; capture videos with permission from participants to share on our social media

03

WHO CAN SIGN UP?

Anyone who cares about the community and wants to make a local difference; students, parents, professionals, and volunteers are all welcome, aged 18 and above.



Non-Partisan & Community-Focused: MCB is a non-partisan organisation, we work to promote the voices of British Muslim communities in wider civil society.

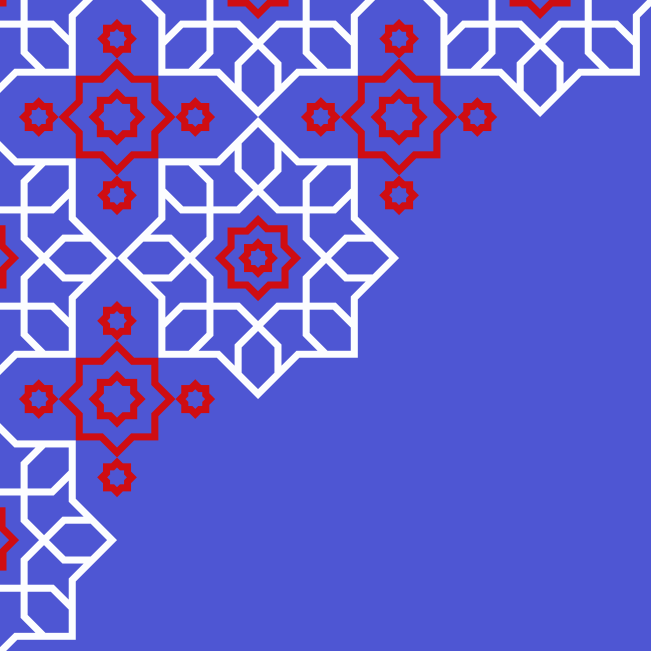
Contact info@mcb.org.uk for more info or queries



List of constituencies with 10% or more Muslim voters



Barking
Bethnal Green and Stepney
Birmingham Edgbaston
Birmingham Erdington
Birmingham Hall Green and Moseley
Birmingham Hodge Hill and Solihull North
Birmingham Ladywood
Birmingham Perry Barr
Birmingham Selly Oak
Birmingham Yardley
Blackburn
Blackley and Middleton South
Bolton North East
Bolton South and Walkden
Bradford East
Bradford South
Bradford West
Brent East
Brent West
Brentford and Isleworth
Burnley
Bury North
Chingford and Woodford Green
Cities of London and Westminster
Coventry East
Croydon West
Dagenham and Rainham
Derby South
Dewsbury and Batley
Ealing Central and Acton
Ealing North
Ealing Southall
East Ham
Edmonton and Winchmore Hill
Enfield North
Feltham and Heston
Gorton and Denton
Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Hackney South and Shoreditch
Halifax
Hammersmith and Chiswick
Hampstead and Highgate
Harrow East
Harrow West
Hayes and Harlington
Hendon
Holborn and St Pancras
Huddersfield
Hyndburn
Ilford North
Ilford South
Islington North
Keighley and Ilkley
Kensington and Bayswater
Leeds East
Leeds North East
Leicester East
Leicester South
Leyton and Wanstead
Luton North
Luton South and South Bedfordshire
Manchester Central
Manchester Rusholme
Manchester Withington
Middlesbrough and Thornaby East
Mitcham and Morden
Newcastle upon Tyne Central and West
Nottingham East
Oldham East and Saddleworth
Oldham West, Chadderton and Royton
Pendle and Clitheroe
Peterborough
Poplar and Limehouse
Preston
Queen's Park and Maida Vale
Rochdale
Sheffield Brightside and Hillsborough
Sheffield Central
Sheffield South East
Slough
Smethwick
Southgate and Wood Green
Stratford and Bow
Streatham and Croydon North
Stretford and Urmston
Tottenham
Uxbridge and South Ruislip
Walsall and Bloxwich
Walthamstow
Watford
West Ham and Beckton
Wycombe



Further resources and information

To find out further information and if you need any support please contact:
info@mcb.org.uk

Index of Muslim Voters by Region

1) LONDON COUNCILS (APPROX NO. OF MUSLIMS = 1.2 MILLION)

All 32 Boroughs: Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Camden, City of London, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston upon Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Southwark, Sutton, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth, Westminster

2) West Midlands

(Approx no. of Muslims = 350,000)

Birmingham City Council
Coventry City Council
Dudley Council
Walsall Council
Sandwell Council
Solihull Council
Wolverhampton Council

3) West Yorkshire

(Approx no. of Muslims = 400,000)

Bradford District Council
Leeds City Council
Calderdale Council
Kirklees Council
Wakefield Council

4) Greater Manchester

(Approx no. of Muslims = 350,000)

Manchester City Council
Bury Council
Bolton Council
Rochdale Borough Council
Oldham Council
Salford Council
Stockport Council
Wigan Council
Trafford Council
Tameside Council