Please ask for: Jason Spencer
Direct Dial No: 01629 761300
E-mail: jason.spencer@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Mrs S Hampson
6 Alsop Moor cottages
Alsop-en-le-Dale
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 1QS

17 October 2025

Dear Mrs Hampson,

Hartington Town Quarter Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.
Thursday 27 November 2025

I am writing to you to confirm that, following a request from the Peak District National Park Authority for a referendum on the Hartington Town Quarter Neighbourhood Plan, The Counting Officer for the Derbyshire Dales District Council has arranged for a poll to take place on Thursday 27 November 2025. I hope that the following information regarding the poll will be useful to you.

Key Details

1. The question to be asked will be:

   "Do you want the the Peak District National Park Authority to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Hartington Town Quarter to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

   The responses on the ballot paper will be yes or no. For a Neighbourhood plan referendum to be successful, a simple majority of those votes cast is needed.

   For more information we have set up a page on the District Council website here:

   https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/your-council/elections-and-voting/hartington-town-quarter-neighbourhood-plan

   Please feel free to share this link with others. The elections team will use this page to publish statutory notices and other information relating to the referendum.

Continued…

Paul Wilson, MCD, Dip TP, Dip Mgmt, MRTPI
Counting Officer
Town Hall, Bank Road, MATLOCK, Derbyshire DE4 3NN
For general enquiries telephone 01629 761100 or visit www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Information Statement and Notice of Referendum

2. The Information Statement must be published by Monday 20 October, and the Notice of Referendum must be published before Thursday 23 October. A copy both Notices with today's date are included with this letter. I have published this on the District Council's website and at the Town Hall in Matlock. However, I would be grateful if you could arrange for copies of both notices to be also displayed within the Parish and on your website.

Further Notices

3. The Counting Officer will publish a Notice of Poll and Situation of Polling Stations Notice shortly after the deadline for registering to vote in the referendum. A copy of this notice will be sent to you. Again, I would be grateful if you could arrange for it to be displayed in the Parish.

Cost of Elections

4. Although the referendum is being organised by Derbyshire Dales District Council, the cost of the election will be charged to the Peak District National Park Authority as the planning authority for your area.

Official Poll Cards

5. Unlike a Parish Council Election, official poll cards are compulsory for a Neighbourhood Plan Referendum. The poll cards will be delivered by Royal Mail shortly after the Notice of Poll has been published. I am waiting for confirmation from our printers on the date they will be handed over to Royal Mail. The official poll cards will be sent to all local government electors included in the current electoral register for the Neighbourhood Area and will give the following information:

   Address of the polling station: **Hartington Village Hall, Hyde Lane. SK17 0AW**
   Date of the poll: **Thursday 27 November 2025**
   The hours of the poll: **7am to 10pm**

   Those electors who are registered as absent voters will receive a poll card reminding them that this will be the case. Postal vote packs for exiting absent voters are unlikely to arrive before Thursday 6 November 2025.

Referendum Campaigners and expenses

6. A campaign organiser is an individual or body by who, or on whose behalf, referendum expenses are incurred in connection with a referendum campaign. This is when expenses are incurred with a view to promote or procure a particular outcome in relation to the question to be asked. There is no requirement for a campaign organiser to register with a body such as the Electoral Commission or the Council, but it would be useful if you could let me know of any campaign organisers you are aware of so I can keep them informed of their rights and obligations.

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7. Please note that the Council is prohibited from using public resources to campaign for a particular outcome in a neighbourhood referendum. The Council is however able to raise awareness of the referendum and provide information about it. Individual Councillors may be involved in campaigning, but they must make it clear that they are acting in a personal capacity and not use council resources to support their campaign.

8. Referendum expenses relate to any expenses incurred by the campaign organiser for referendum purposes during the referendum period which commences when the information statement is published. Expenses include the following:

    - advertising of any nature (whatever the medium used);
    - unsolicited material addressed to voters (whether addressed to them by name or intended for delivery to households within any particular area or areas);
    - market research or canvassing conducted for the purposes of ascertaining voting intentions;
    - provision of any property, services or facilities in connection with press conferences or other dealings with media;
    - transport of persons to any places or places with a view to obtaining publicity with referendum campaign; and
    - rallies and other events, including public meetings organised to obtain publicity in connection with a referendum campaign.

9. Campaigners may use council facilities such as a meeting room for their purposes but they must pay the current commercial rate for doing so.

10 Campaign organisers should ensure that any material they produce contains an imprint which specifies the name and address of the printer of the document; the name and address of the promoter of the material and the name and address of any person on whose behalf the material is being published. Imprints should also be included in online campaigning information.

9. There is a limit to the referendum expenses that can be incurred which cannot be exceeded. The limit for this referendum is £2,379.35 (£2,362 + (0.059 x [current electorate] 294). While it is an offence to exceed the limit, unlike election expenses, there is no requirement for campaigners to submit their referendum expenses to the Counting Officer. There is also no requirement for Counting Officer to investigate any allegations relating to expenses so any complaints should be referred to the police.

Appointment of Observers

10. For a Neighbourhood Plan Referendum, the Counting Officer must appoint persons to observe the verification of the ballot paper account and the counting of votes. I will confirm the location and timing of the Count in due course but based upon the electorate it is likely that it will take place in the Polling Station approximately 30 minutes after the close of poll. Only persons appointed as observers may attend the verification and count. Bearing in mind the need to accommodate the Counting Officer and his staff, the normal limit for this kind of poll would be 8 observers.

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11. If members of the Parish Council or campaigners wish to be appointed as observers, please ask them to send me their name, address and contact details before 4pm on Thursday 20 November. Any personal information supplied will only be used for the purpose of appointing observers and informing them of polling arrangements. In having regard to the limits on observers, the Counting Officer has a duty to ensure that, where applicable, representatives of opposing campaigning groups have the opportunity to be equally represented.

Elections Timetable and Applications to Vote by Post or Proxy

12 For your further information, a copy of the statutory referendum timetable is attached to this letter. In addition to the information about statutory deadlines, you may be interested to note the specified dates by which any applications to vote by post or proxy have to be received. As you know, applicants wishing to vote by post do not need to have a reason for their request (although proxy applicants do). Applications for postal and proxy can now be made online at https://www.gov.uk/vote-uk-election. Providing information to electors about the elections timetable is not campaigning as long as the council remains neutral on the subject of the referendum.

Persons not included in Electoral Register

13. Only persons included in the register for electors will be able to vote at this election. The deadline for receiving applications for registration will be Tuesday 11 November.

I am sorry for the length of this letter, but I hope that it is both clear and useful. However, if you have any queries concerning either the letter or any other elections issues, please do not hesitate to contact me through the elections team.

Yours sincerely,

Jason Spencer
Deputy Counting Officer
Derbyshire Dales District Council

Hartington Town Quarter Neighbourhood Plan Referendum
Timetable

Thursday 27 November 2025

Event	Date/Time
Publication of Information Statement.	Not later than Monday 20 October
Publication of Notice of Referendum.	Not later than Thursday 23 October
Deadline for applications to be included on the register of electors in order to vote in the election.	Tuesday 11 November.
Postal Voting Applications or change or cancellation of existing postal vote or proxy appointment.	Not later than 5pm on Wednesday 12 November.
New applications to vote by proxy. (except for medical or employment emergencies)	Not later than 5pm on Wednesday 19 November.
Publish Notice of Poll and Situation of Polling Stations	After Wednesday 19 November
Appointment of Polling and Counting Observers.	Not later than 4pm on Thursday 20 November.
Polling Day.	Thursday 27 November 2025 (7am to 10pm)
New Proxy Voting Applications on grounds of medical or employment emergency.	After 5pm on Wednesday 12 November and not later than 5pm on Thursday 27 November 2025.

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