# Incorrect voting instructions cause confusion at Buckinghamshire polling stations ahead of local elections



Polling stations in Buckinghamshire encountered significant confusion ahead of the local council elections scheduled for Thursday, as incorrect notices instructing voters to select only one candidate were displayed in several locations. This error is particularly concerning, given that many wards were represented by two or three candidates, leading to fears of spoiled ballot papers.

The issue reportedly affected polling sites including the Bourne End Community Centre and the Flackwell Heath Community Centre, as well as the Harvey Memorial Hall in Wexham and Hedgerley Memorial Hall. A local resident expressed concern about the situation, stating, "We are very worried that this major error has been allowed to occur, and it could mean that here there are lots of spoiled ballot papers." The presiding officer at one of these stations apologised and promptly removed the incorrect notice upon learning of the problem.

In response to the incident, a spokesperson for Buckinghamshire Council stated that they had been informed of the “incorrect instructions” displayed externally at the affected polling stations. The council took swift action, instructing all polling places to remove the erroneous signage immediately. Polling station inspectors were also deployed to ensure that the notices were taken down during their rounds.

The spokesperson attempted to reassure voters by noting, “The instructions on the actual ballot paper always state exactly how many votes a person can cast at that particular election.” They clarified that the notices inside polling booths correctly indicated the number of candidates voters were eligible to select. Additionally, polling staff were instructed to inform voters about the correct number of votes they could cast when issuing ballot papers.

Importantly, no similar issues were reported in neighbouring Oxfordshire, suggesting that the problem may have been isolated to specific areas within Buckinghamshire. The potential impact of this error on voter turnout and the integrity of the electoral process remains a concern amongst residents and local officials alike.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-56983778> - This article discusses a previous incident in Buckinghamshire where residents received incorrect postal ballot papers ahead of local elections, leading to concerns about vote validity and the council's response to rectify the issue.
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-32627755> - This report covers an administrative error in Hounslow, where thousands of voters received incorrect polling station details, prompting the council to offer a free shuttle bus service to ensure voters could cast their ballots.
3. <https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/news/politics/dozens-of-people-in-aylesbury-stopped-from-voting-due-to-controversial-id-rules-4780932> - This article highlights instances in Aylesbury where voters were turned away due to new voter ID requirements, raising concerns about voter disenfranchisement and the impact of such policies on local elections.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/may/03/uk-voters-turned-away-polling-stations-id-trial> - This piece reports on a trial of voter ID in England, where individuals were turned away from polling stations for not carrying the necessary documents, leading to confusion and anger among voters.
5. <https://www.bucksherald.co.uk/news/politics/dozens-of-people-in-aylesbury-stopped-from-voting-due-to-controversial-id-rules-4780932> - This article discusses the impact of voter ID rules in Aylesbury, where numerous individuals were initially turned away from polling stations, highlighting the challenges and controversies surrounding the implementation of such policies.
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-32627755> - This report covers an administrative error in Hounslow, where thousands of voters received incorrect polling station details, prompting the council to offer a free shuttle bus service to ensure voters could cast their ballots.
7. <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/25135936.incorrect-polling-info-confused-bucks-voters/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data