**Things you need to know before polling day:**

**Make sure you vote in time**

* Polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm on Thursday 5 May. You had to have applied to register to vote by midnight on 18 April in order to be able to vote on 5 May.
* Your poll card will have been sent to the address where you are registered. It will say where your polling station is. You can only vote at the polling station that is stated on your own poll card.
* Plan what time you will be able to cast your vote at the polling station, leaving plenty of time before the 10pm deadline.
* If you are in a queue at your polling station at 10pm you will still be able to vote.
* If you arrive at the polling station after 10pm then the poll will be closed and you will have missed your chance to take part.

**Postal voting**

* If you have a postal vote, make sure it is returned by 10pm on Thursday 5 May.
* If you have not had time to post it before polling day, then you can take it to the polling station on polling day and hand it in. Your poll card tells you where your polling station is. Postal votes that arrive after 10pm on May 5 will not be counted.

**Proxy voting**

* If you’ve appointed a proxy, then they need to make sure they are able to vote at the correct polling station on your behalf.
* If you are suddenly unable to vote in person, because you have a medical emergency which prevents you from attending on polling day, or your occupation, service or employment means that you cannot go to the polling station in person, and you only become aware of that fact after the deadline, then you may be entitled to appoint an emergency proxy.
* You can apply for an emergency proxy up until 5pm on polling day. You should contact your local electoral registration office directly to ask about this.

**What you need to take with you**

* Just yourself!
* You can take your poll card with you to show the polling station staff when you arrive. They will still ask for you to confirm your name and address. If you don’t have it with you, just tell the polling station staff your name and your address and they can check whether you’re on the electoral register.

**Social media**

* Social media is a great way to let your friends and family know you have voted and to encourage them to do the same. So use Twitter, Facebook and any other social media accounts you have to get the message out there.
* Remember- pictures of you before you go into or after you leave the polling station are great to use on social media posts but don’t take a picture of yourself inside the polling station as if you post this it could be a breach of the law.

**How to fill out your ballot paper**

* The staff at the polling station will give you a ballot paper listing the candidates you can vote for. You may be given more than one ballot paper if there is more than one election taking place in your local area on the same day.

* Staff are on hand at the polling station to provide advice on the voting process.
* If you are disabled, you can ask the Presiding Officer for help and they can mark the ballot paper for you. You can also ask someone else to help you (e.g. a support worker, as long as they are either a relative or an eligible elector).
* If you have a visual impairment, you can ask to see a large print ballot paper or you can ask for a special voting device that allows you to vote on your own in secret.
* Take your ballot paper into a polling booth so that no one can see how you vote. Read the ballot paper carefully, it will tell you how to cast your vote. Do not write anything else on the paper or your vote may not be counted.
* Mark your ballot paper according to the instructions. A pencil will be provided for you to do this, but you may use your own pen if you prefer.
* The PCC Election uses a different voting system to the usual ‘first past the post system’ and instead uses the Supplementary Vote system. Voters will be asked to make a first preference choice and a second preference choice for who they want to become the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner.
* There will be two columns on the ballot paper and electors will mark a cross against their first preference candidate in the first column, and a cross against their second preference candidate in the second column if they wish. The first and second choices must be different.
* The ballot papers from around Suffolk will be counted and if one candidate receives more than 50% of the first preference votes, they will be elected.
* If no candidate reaches the 50% threshold, the two candidates with the highest number of votes go forward to the next stage of the count when the second preference votes for those two will be counted. The candidate with the most votes at the end of this process will be elected.
* If you make a mistake on your ballot paper, don’t worry, So long as you haven’t already put it in the ballot box just let the polling station staff know and they can issue you with a replacement ballot paper.
* Fold your completed ballot paper in half and pop it in the ballot box - and that’s it done!