

Leading the Way:

How Modern Democracy and
Tunbridge Wells Delivered
Ambitious Electoral Pilots



The Challenge

In May 2026, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council participated in the UK Government's flexible voting pilots during local elections in one of the most significant changes to election delivery in decades.

The pilot enabled electors to vote the weekend before polling day at any one of three voting hubs across the borough, including a shopping centre in Royal Tunbridge Wells.

With two operational peaks to manage, the council needed technology that could support a fundamentally different rhythm of election delivery while maintaining accuracy and confidence throughout.

The Solution

Already a user of Modern Polling for elections and neighbourhood planning referendums, Tunbridge Wells was well placed to deliver the pilot, building on an established foundation of digital polling day management.

Modern Polling provided polling staff with everything they needed in one place, reducing paperwork, simplifying processes, and providing clear guidance throughout each day of voting. For the Returning Officer, the platform delivered a real-time, bird's-eye view of how the election was progressing across every location.

"Elections are the cornerstone of our democracy and I think anything we can do to make them more accessible to voters has to be worth exploring. The early voting pilot showed how technology can help make voting more convenient while maintaining confidence in the process."

William Benson, Chief Executive and Returning Officer

The Results

Modern Polling was vital to successfully delivering one of the UK's most ambitious electoral innovation pilots:



Reduced uncertainty:

Live visibility of turnout helped mitigate concerns around unknown voter volumes across multiple voting days.



Simplified delivery:

Polling staff had clear, centralised guidance, reducing paperwork and streamlining processes.



Real-time oversight:

The Returning Officer had instant access to hub status and turnout data across all hubs.



Consistent accuracy:

Digital tools ensured information was managed consistently and accurately throughout the pilot.



Positive voter feedback:

Voters praised the convenience of early voting hubs, with some casting their vote spontaneously after seeing signage while out shopping.

Future-ready elections start here

Modern Democracy is the UK's leading provider of Election Day solutions, combining over a decade of expertise with innovative tech to transform how elections are run.

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