

Progressive Sussex: working towards the Mayoral Election in 2028.

This document is a work in progress as we continue to plan.

The new Sussex Mayor will be elected in May 2028, preceded by the new Sussex Unitaries elections in May 2027. This has prompted Brighton & Hove and Lewes Compass Groups to work together to prepare for these elections. There is a real danger that Reform could win in one or all of these contests; their support now is 25-30% but the action in Crowborough shows how volatile this situation is.

The government is reintroducing the Preferential Voting [For an explanation of Preferential or Supplementary Voting see https://electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems/types-of-voting-system/supplementary-vote/](https://electoral-reform.org.uk/voting-systems/types-of-voting-system/supplementary-vote/) system for Mayoral Elections, which is better than First Past the Post. For us to defeat Reform, we will need to talk to each other about how a progressive alliance and tactical voting can be effective in that context. And also, what we want from a new Mayor. For us, this shifts our focus to East & West Sussex and Brighton & Hove. A vast area and not a lot of time, when you think what needs to be done!

We are proposing five strands for our joint work;

- Getting out and about to build and connect to the existing networks across the new area; although there are only 2 Compass Groups, there are many community activists and campaigns that we want to connect to in the run up to May 2028. Compass national can help us contact the thousands of members in the area. And we will be going out to the main towns, making contact with local activists, finding out what their specific issues are, and how we can support each other. Can we organise around the idea of a progressive Sussex identity?
- In line with Compass principles, we want to promote and advocate for pluralism and collaborative politics. Proportional Representation might help us if we have the trusted alliances and networks to call on.
- We are planning a joint Democracy Day on May 23rd 2026.*[Postponed to Sept 2026]* The disillusion and even despair about politics and political change is feeding Reform. We believe that most of their voters will not be racist, but they feel they have no other way of getting their voices heard. We want to showcase different ways doing democracy to make change. For more information, contact xxxxxx
- We are going to develop a 'playbook' of ideas and arguments to use in our person to person contact with voters, and on leaflets and other media. Getting out there and speaking to people is much easier if you know what you are going to say!
- Collate examples of progressive, positive and pluralist government and community based activities that are having an effect and speaking for and with local people. These ideas can be shared with others in the network.