

How we handle your personal information

This leaflet explains why we ask for your personal information, how that information will be used and how you can access your records.

Why is information recorded about me?

We use information about citizens, electors and voters to enable us to carry out specific functions for which we are responsible and to provide you with a statutory service.

We keep records about potential and actual electors, voters, citizens, candidates and their agents at an election and staff employed by us. These may be written down (manual records), or kept on a computer (electronic records).

These records may include:

- basic details about you, for example, name, address, date of birth and nationality
- unique identifiers (such as your National Insurance number)
- scanned forms, for example, application forms
- details and records about the service you have received
- your previous or any redirected address
- information about other people who live in your house
- if you are over 76 or 16/17
- whether you have chosen to opt out of the open version of the register

What is the information used for?

Your records are used to help to ensure that we provide you with the service you need. We will, based on your nationality, include your name on the Electoral Register so that you are able to vote by your chosen method.

The electoral register is a public document which can be viewed under strict control at the Local Studies Library, 1st Floor 31-32 Fawcett Street, Sunderland, SR1 1RE.

It is important that your records are accurate and up to date as they will help make sure that our staff are able to provide you with the help, advice or support you need.

If you do not provide us with this information then eligible citizens will not be able to vote and you may be breaking the law.

How long do you keep the information for?

In order to provide you with this service, we rely on our legal obligation. The Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer are obliged to process your personal data in relation to preparing for and conducting Elections. Your details will be kept and updated in accordance with our legal obligations and in line with statutory retention periods.

Occasions when your information needs to be shared include:

- To contracted printers to print your poll cards, postal ballot packs and any other electoral material throughout the year
- To registered political parties, elected representatives, candidates, agents and other permitted participants who are able to use the information for electoral purposes only
- Credit Reference Agencies, the British Library, UK Statistics Authority, the Electoral Commission and other statutory recipients of the Electoral Register
- Details of whether you have voted (but **not** how you have voted) to those who are entitled to receive it in law after an election
- where the health and safety of others is at risk
- when the law requires us to pass on information under special circumstances
- crime prevention or the detection of fraud as part of the National Fraud Initiative.

Anyone who receives information from us has a legal duty to keep it confidential

We are required by law to report certain information to appropriate authorities – for example:

- where a formal court order has been issued
- to law enforcement agencies for the prevention and detection of crime
- to the Jury Central Summoning Bureau indicating those persons who are aged 76 or over and are no longer eligible for jury services.

Partner organisations

To verify your identity, the data you provide will be processed by the Individual Electoral Registration Digital Service managed by the Cabinet Office. As part of this process your data will be shared with the Department of Work and Pensions and the Cabinet Office suppliers that are data processors for the Individual Electoral Registration Digital Service. You can find more information about this here: <https://www.registertovote.service.gov.uk/register-to-vote/privacy>.

Information will be processed within the EEA and will not be shared with overseas recipients.

If your details are in the open version of the Electoral Register, your name and address can be sold to third parties who may use it for any purpose. You can opt out of appearing on this version at any time during the year, and are given the option annually as part of the canvass of all households in the area.

The Cabinet Office is required to provide a website to publish the candidate addresses – the Police Area Returning Officer uploads the content of the candidate addresses onto the Cabinet Office choosemypcc.org.uk website. The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012 provides further information about the Cabinet Office role.

Can I see my records?

Data Protection law allows you to find out what information is held about you, on paper and computer records. This is known as 'right of subject access' and applies to your Electoral Services records along with all other personal records.

If you wish to see a copy of your records you should contact the Data Protection Officer. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records free of charge, within a month.

In certain circumstances access to your records may be limited, for example, if the records you have asked for contain information relating to another person.

Do I have other rights?

Data Protection law allows you other rights; for example if there is an error in your records you have the right to make sure it is rectified or erased.

You have the right to opt out of the open version of the register at any time, and we must remove you from this version and tell the statutory recipients in the next update.

You have the right to be told if we have made a mistake whilst processing your data and we will self-report breaches to the Information Commissioner.

Further information

If you would like to know more about how we use your information, or if for any reason you do not wish to have your information used in any of the ways described in this leaflet, please tell us.

Contact the Data Protection Officer:

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner: <https://ico.org.uk>