



Voters ID FAQs

Mid Sussex District Council

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Voter ID – General FAQs

What is Voter ID?

From May 2023 individuals, who wish to vote in person, including those acting as a proxy on behalf of another individual, will be required to produce an accepted form of photographic ID to prove their identity before they will be issued with a ballot paper.

This will apply at:

- UK parliamentary by-elections
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections
- Local government elections in England

Electors will need to present a form of accepted photographic ID in order to cast their vote in the polling station. If they do not hold a form of acceptable ID, they will be able to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, to be issued free of charge by the Elections office.

Why was it introduced?

The 2019 Manifesto set out the Government's commitment to protecting our democracy.

The Elections Act 2022 aims to ensure our democracy is secure, modern and transparent. Voter ID aims to reduce election fraud and will be rolled out across all Councils in the May 2023 elections.

This legislation has been developed working in collaboration with the electoral sector and implements several recommendations made in the 2016 Pickles Report.

What types of ID are acceptable?

The following types of ID are acceptable for use at the poll:

- a passport issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state, or a Commonwealth country
- a driving licence issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state
- a biometric immigration document
- an identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)
- a Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- a Blue Badge
- a national identity card issued by an EEA state
- an Older Person's Bus Pass
- a Disabled Person's Bus Pass
- an Oyster 60+ Card
- a Freedom Pass
- a Scottish National Entitlement Card issued in Scotland
- a 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- a Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- a Senior SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a War Disablement SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a 60+ SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a Half Fare SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- an Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland

Expired photographic identification documents can still be used as accepted photographic ID at the polling station or signing place, as long as the photograph is still a good likeness of the elector.

Any Electors who do not hold one of the above forms of ID can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate.

Why are 18+ Oyster Cards not accepted?

The application process for 18+ Oyster Cards and 60+ Oyster Cards are different. The 60+ Oyster Card and application process has been concluded to be suitably secure when determining which types of identification would be accepted.

Unfortunately, the 18+ Oyster Card did not meet the requirements of security, therefore is not included on the list of acceptable ID.

What if I do not hold acceptable ID?

If you do not hold acceptable ID, you can apply for a **Voter Authority Certificate**.

These certificates are produced specifically for election purposes and cannot be used anywhere other than as ID for voting.

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These certificates are produced specifically for election purposes and cannot be used anywhere other than as ID for voting.

The certificate will be presented in an A4 paper-based format and will display the following:

- The Elector's name
- A photograph of the Elector
- Date of issue / expiry date
- The appropriate identifier (e.g a code of 20 numbers or letters which is allocated to each Certificate)
- The words 'issued by the Electoral Registration Officer appointed by (local authority name e.g Mid Sussex District Council)
- The recommended renewal date (10 years after date the Certificate was issued)

These certificates will be valid for a period of 10 years with a renewal required at the end of this period.

The deadline to apply for these certificates is 5pm, 6 working days before polling day.

I am a Postal Voter, how does this affect me?

As a postal voter, you are not required to present any identification to cast your vote.

This also applies if you wish to hand in your own or another person's completed postal vote at a polling station.

I am a Proxy / I have a Proxy Vote in place, how does this affect me?

If you are a proxy voter who will be voting on behalf of another individual, you must bring your own ID to the polling station to cast your vote.

If you are the individual with a proxy in place, you can cast your vote in the polling station but must present your own ID to do so.

My ID is expired, can I still use it?

Expired photographic identification documents can still be used as accepted photographic ID at the polling station or signing place, as long as the photograph is still a good likeness.

Will photocopies of identification documents or pictures on mobile phones of identification documents be accepted?

No, photocopies of identification documents or pictures on mobile phones of identification documents will not be accepted as photo-editing software could be used to edit them, thus making them susceptible to fraudulent alteration.

NOTE: Some supporting documents for a name change, such as a wedding certificate, may be 'certified copies' and will be accepted in polling stations for the purpose of demonstrating a name change.

What happens if I do not bring my ID on the day?

If you do not meet the reasons which would make you eligible for an emergency proxy application or it is after 5pm on polling day, you will be unable to cast your vote.

My name is different on my ID compared to the electoral register, what should I do?

The decision on whether an identification document bearing a different name or an alternative spelling of a name from the one on the register can be accepted will be at the discretion of the polling station staff, who must be satisfied that the identification provided is acceptable.

If your name has changed, for example through marriage, you may be required to provide further proof of identity, such as a marriage certificate, providing evidence of a name change.

My ID does not contain my address or the address is incorrect, what should I do?

As we are only verifying your name and photo for Voter ID purposes, the address on your ID is disregarded.

What if my appearance has changed on my photo ID?

On election day, if you forget your ID you will be asked to return to the Polling Station before 10pm with ID in order to cast your vote.

If it is before election day and your appearance has significantly changed and you have no acceptable ID and more recent ID – you may be eligible for a Voter Authority Certificate, please contact the Elections Office for more information.

I would like my ID to be checked in private, is this possible?

There will be a private area in each polling station which will allow voters wishing to have their form of identification to be viewed in private to do so. This may be achieved in a variety of ways and will depend on the room or rooms being used as polling station. For some stations, this may be achieved through the provision of privacy screens or, in others, using an existing partition or a separate room to facilitate this.

If an elector refuses to comply with the voter identification check, they will not be given a ballot paper and will not be able to vote in the polling station.

I wear a face/head covering, this may include veils for religious purposes – will I be required to remove this to check my identity?

As Voter ID requires Presiding Officers establish the identity of all electors before providing them with their ballot paper, we require the removal of veils or other head / face coverings.

We will be providing a private space for ID checking for those who request it.

The removal of the veil or head / face covering can be done in private and, where appropriate, with only a female member of polling station staff present.

Every polling place will have a female member of staff allocated.

Once your ID has been checked, you will be provided the space and privacy to put your head/face covering back on.

If an elector refuses to comply with the voter identification check, they will not be given a ballot paper and will not be able to vote in the polling station.

What are you verifying when checking my ID?

Staff will check the following when verifying ID presented to them:

- The name on the ID
- The photograph on the ID

For Voter Authority Certificates, we will also check:

- The date of issue
- The expiry date

Voter ID – Voter Authority Certificate FAQs

What is a Voter Authority Certificate?

If you do not hold acceptable ID, you can apply for a **Voter Authority Certificate**.

Voter Authority Certificates can only be used as ID for elections and will enable you to cast your vote.

How long is the certificate valid?

These certificates will be valid for a period of 10 years with a renewal required at the end of this period.

What is the application deadline?

The deadline to apply for these certificates is 5pm, 6 working days before polling day.

How do I apply?

You can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate in person, by post or online.

You can apply online via the GOV.UK website by visiting: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>

You can apply via a paper application form which is available online to download and print from the Mid Sussex District Council Website, please visit <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/elections-voting/bring-photo-id-to-vote/> to download the application form.

If you require a paper application form to be posted to you, please contact the Electoral Services Team to arrange this, our details are as follows:

Address: FAO: Electoral Services, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS

E-mail: elections@midsussex.gov.uk

Telephone Number: 01444 477003

We will accept scanned copies of applications for Voter Authority Certificates via email. Paper applications may also be posted or handed in to the Council Offices.

You are only eligible for a Voter Authority Certificate if you are registered to vote or have recently made an application to register to vote.

What do I need to include on the application form?

- Your full name
- Your address or relevant delivery address
- Your date of birth, or if you are unable to provide this – why you are not able to do so.
If you are under the age of 18, you will need to include a statement declaring this
- Your National Insurance Number, if you're unable to provide this you must include a statement as to why
- a statement as to whether you consider it necessary to collect the Voter Authority Certificate in person instead of it being delivered to the relevant delivery address and, if so, the reason why you consider that collection is necessary
- Whether you require the Certificate to be provided in a Braille, easy read or large print explanation of what the document issue is
- a declaration that the contents of the application are true
- the date of the application
- A suitable photograph

What are the photograph requirements?

The following guidance details the photograph requirements for your application:

- facing forward, including your head and shoulders and without any other person visible
- with nothing covering the face – this includes any covering worn for medical or religious reasons
- with nothing covering the head – this excludes any covering worn for medical or religious reasons
- looking straight at the camera, with the camera being in focus and your image sharp and clear
- with a plain facial expression
- with eyes open and clearly visible (e.g., without sunglasses and not obscured with hair, etc.)
- with a plain and light background

These requirements can be disregarded for applicants who may have disabilities which means they are unable to meet one or more of the above requirements.

Where the application is made on paper, in person or via telephone, the photograph supplied must be:

- at least 45 millimetres in height and 35 millimetres in width, and
- no larger than 297 millimetres in height or 210 millimetres in width

Where the application is made via the digital service, the photograph must be:

- at least 750 pixels in height and 600 pixels in width, and
- contained in an electronic file in a standard format image such as JPEG, PNG or GIF which is no more than 20MB in size

I do not have means of taking a photo, can you help?

The Council can offer a photographing service for the purposes of a Voter Authority Certificate application. Please contact the Electoral Services Team to enquire about this.

What happens after I have made an application for a Voter Authority Certificate?

When applying for a Voter Authority Certificate, you will need to provide evidence identifying yourself – initially through providing your date of birth and National Insurance number. These details will then be matched against the Department for Work and Pensions' records in order for your identity to be verified.

If these details are either not provided or do not match against the Department for Work and Pensions' records, we will attempt a local data match. If, however, we have been unable to verify your identity - then we will be in contact to request some documentary evidence or an attestation so that we can manually verify your identity.

You will be notified on whether your application has been approved or rejected. If your application has been approved, we will inform you of the delivery or collection arrangements. If your application has been rejected, we will inform you of the reasons for the refusal.

I do not have a National Insurance Number / I have lost my National Insurance Number, what should I do?

If you do not have or have lost your National Insurance Number, you can locate your National Insurance number via the Gov website [here](#).

You may also find your National Insurance Number on one or more of the following documents:

- Payslips
- P60
- Letters about tax, pension or benefits

If you are still unable to provide your National Insurance Number, you must provide additional evidence to verify your identity.

You will have 28 days after the date in which we determine we require additional evidence to provide this.

This evidence can be provided in either be in a PDF or image file. You will be required to provide the following:

Either;

- Three of the documents from list 2, or;
- One of the documents from list 2 and two other documents that may be from list 2 or 3, or
- Four documents from List 3

We can accept photocopies of the relevant evidence if required.

List 2 - the following documents must have been issued in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, except for the final document in this list	List 3 - any of the following kinds of evidence must bear the applicant's full name as stated on their application
The applicant's birth certificate	A financial statement, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a mortgage statement • a bank or building society statement or a letter from a bank or building society confirming that the applicant has opened an account with that bank or building society • a credit card statement • a pension statement
The applicant's marriage or civil partnership certificate	A council tax demand letter or statement
The applicant's adoption certificate	A utility bill
The applicant's firearms certificate granted under the Firearms Act 1968	A Form P45 or Form P60 issued to the applicant by their employer or former employer
The record of a decision on bail made in respect of the applicant in accordance with section 5(1) of the Bail Act 1976	A statement of benefits or entitlement to benefits, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a statement of child benefit, within the meaning of section 141 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 or • a letter confirming that the applicant is entitled to housing benefit, within the meaning of section 130 of that Act
The applicant's driving licence, which is not in the form of a photocard	
The applicant's driving licence, granted other than in the United Kingdom or Crown Dependencies, which bears a photograph of the applicant, and which must be valid for at least 12 months from the date the applicant entered the United Kingdom	

You may also provide an attestation to verify your identity.

An attestation process involves another individual confirming your identity.

An attestation must:

- confirm that the applicant is the person named in the application
- state that the qualifying attester is aware of the penalty for providing false information to a registration officer
- be in writing and signed by the qualifying attester
- state the full name, date of birth, address, electoral number, and occupation of the qualifying attester
- state the date on which it is made

You will have 28 days after the date in which we determine we require additional evidence to provide this.

How will I receive my Voter Authority Certificate?

Your application will be sent from Central Government via Royal Mail to your registered address. It is estimated that Voter Authority Certificates will be printed within 1-2 days of being sent to the print supplier, and then delivered first class by Royal Mail.

You may request during your application to collect your document in person from the Council Offices. You will be asked to provide your reason for this request, and this may be made available. We will notify you of where and at what times the document can be collected, and that the document may only be collected by yourself in person.

I have lost my Voter Authority Certificate, what should I do?

If your Voter Authority Certificate has been lost, stolen, destroyed or damaged after 5pm, 6 working days before polling day then you must contact the Electoral Services Office as soon as possible.

We can issue you with a Temporary Voter Authority Certificate up until 5pm on polling day.

We will inform you when and at what times the Temporary Voter Authority Certificate is ready to collect in person from the Council Offices.

Alternatively, we can arrange for an emergency proxy until 5pm on polling day.

My Voter Authority Certificate hasn't arrived, what should I do?

The Elections Office can issue Temporary Voter Authority Certificates for voters who submitted a valid Voter Authority Certificate application before the deadline but have not received their Certificate.

Electors only be eligible to apply for these after 5pm, 6 working days before polling day until 5pm on Polling Day.

The certificate presented in the same format as ordinary Voter Authority Certificates, however it will only be valid for this election.

Voters will need to collect their Temporary Voter Authority Certificate from the Mid Sussex District Council offices.

Alternatively, we can arrange for an emergency proxy until 5pm on polling day.

Further Information & Contact Details

Electoral Commission – Voter ID Guidance:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id>

Mid Sussex District Council – Voter ID Webpage:

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/elections-voting/bring-photo-id-to-vote/>

Mid Sussex District Council Electoral Services Team Contact Information:

Address: FAO: Electoral Services, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS

E-mail: elections@midsussex.gov.uk

Telephone Number: 01444 477003