

NEW Voter ID requirements for Elections

Voter Identification Requirements

The Elections Act 2022 was granted Royal Assent and passed into law on 28th April 2022. The new legislation includes changes to absent voting rules, EU citizens' voting rights, accessibility, voter identification and 'votes for life' for overseas electors. You can find out more about the Elections Act 2022 on GOV.UK and on the Electoral Commission.

- You must bring photographic identification with you to vote in person in the May 2023 elections.
- You are now required to show photographic identification at polling stations before you can be given a ballot paper.
- **This will affect all voters who vote in person or by proxy, at the next local election on Thursday 4 May 2023.**
- If you choose to vote by proxy, then the person who you have trusted to vote on your behalf will have to take their own photographic identification to be issued a ballot paper.
- Postal voters will not be affected and will be issued with their postal ballot papers as usual.
- Voters must bring a suitable form of photographic ID to their polling station.

Acceptable photographic identification

Only original documents will be accepted; scanned images or copies will not be accepted. However, expired documents are acceptable if the photo is still a current likeness.

No suitable photographic ID? You need to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate

If you do not have any of the accepted forms of photographic identification, and you want to vote at the polling station, you will need to apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate. This is a new document which Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) will be required to provide, free of charge, to any eligible elector who applies for one.

You will be able to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate online, by paper application form or in person from Monday 16 January 2023. See Voter Authority Certificate section below for more information on how to apply. We recommend that you apply for a Voter Authority Certificate in good time. The deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate in time for the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023 is 5pm on Tuesday 25 April 2023.

Voters who do not produce valid photographic Identification or a Voter Authority Certificate will not be able to vote on polling day. Our team at the polling station have no discretion to allow you to vote so please ensure you have an acceptable form of valid photographic identification or a Voter Authority Certificate with you.

The Voter Authority Certificate

You only need to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate if:

- you do have accepted Photographic Identification
- you no longer look like the photo on your Photographic Identification
- the name on your Photographic Identification is different to your name on the electoral register.

You will be able to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate in the following ways: online, via paper form or in person. **The deadline for application for a Voter Authority Certificate ahead of the next local elections on Thursday 4th May 2023 is 5pm Tuesday 25th April 2023.**

Online - This will be the easiest and simplest way to apply. Please click here

You will be required to upload a digital photograph.

If you are unable to provide a digital photograph you can attach a physical photograph to a paper application form or make an appointment to complete your application in person where a photo will be taken for you - please see below.

Paper Form - The form can be downloaded here.

We will also be able to post a form to you. Please contact us via

- Email - ereg@winchester.gov.uk
- Phone - 01962 848125
- To return the completed form you can either
- Scan as a PDF and email to ereg@winchester.gov.uk
- Post the form back to us using the freepost address Electoral Services Unit, Freepost RTLH-LSAG-HASX. City Office, Colebrook Street, Winchester, Hants, SO23 9ZZ
- Hand the form into our reception at city offices in Colebrook Street Winchester SO23 9LJ between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday or post it in the post box

In person - You can request an appointment to complete your application with one of our team at the City Offices. Help will also be available to check hardcopy application forms and to take free photos where needed. Please email ereg@winchester.gov.uk or phone 01962848125

For every method of application, you will be asked to provide

- Your full name
- Your address at which you are registered
- Overseas electors and service voters will need to provide their declaration and present address
- Your Date of Birth
- Your National Insurance number
- A close-up photograph of your head and shoulders - The photo requirements are similar to passport requirements. Further information can be found in the FAQs.
- Anonymous electors will need to indicate that they have (or have applied for) an anonymous entry on the register.
- Applicants will also be asked if they need to collect their document rather than have it delivered, and to give a reason why.
- Applicants will need also to declare that the information provided is true, and applications will be dated. Whichever method of application you choose the Voter Authority Certificate is printed and delivered through a national central service which uses Royal Mail to deliver the Voter Authority Certificate 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. In certain circumstances, which are agreed on an individual basis, you may be able to collect your document in person from the Council Offices. The document may only be collected by yourself in person.

All of the above with links are on the Otterbourne Parish Council website.

<http://www.otterbourneparishcouncil.org>