



# Northumberland County Council

## **This is Your Personal Data ELECTORAL SERVICES**

How we handle your information - Information for the public

Everyone working for Electoral Services has a legal duty to keep and process information about you in accordance with the law.

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

### **Who is the data controller?**

Geoff Paul, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer (including Acting, Counting, Deputy, Local Returning Officer, depending on the type of election/poll)

### **Why is information recorded about me?**

We do this as a legal obligation to comply with the Representation of the People Act 1983 and the Representation of the People Regulations 2001. We use information about citizens, electors and voters to enable us to carry out specific functions for which we are legally required to deliver and to provide you with a statutory service.

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

### **These records may include:**

- Details about you, for example, name, address, date of birth, nationality, email and telephone.
- Unique identifiers (such as your National Insurance number).
- Scanned application forms and dates of any letters of correspondence we send to you.
- Notes about any relevant circumstances that you have told us about.
- Details and records about the service you have received.
- Your previous or any redirected address.
- The other occupants in your home (although only those old enough to register to vote).
- The reason why you might want a postal or proxy vote.
- Scanned signatures for postal and proxy applications.
- If you are over 76 or under 18
- Whether you have chosen to opt out of the Open version of the Register.
- Candidates - political party, election expenses, nominations and agent details.
- Canvass and Election staff - financial details and employment details.

## **What is the information used for?**

Your records are used to help ensure that we provide you with a service that you need. Based on your nationality, we will 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 only under strict control.

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 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 disclosed (shared) include:**

- To contracted printers to print your poll cards, postal packs and other electoral material.
- Share your information with our software providers to help maintain our database.
- To registered political parties, elected representatives, candidates, agents and other permitted participants who are legally able to use it for electoral purposes only.
- Credit reference agencies, the British Library, UK Statistics Authority, The Electoral Commission and other statutory recipients of the Electoral Register as required by law.
- Details of whether you have voted (but not how you have voted) to those who are entitled in law to receive it 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 or detection of a crime or fraud.
- To the Jury Central Summoning Bureau indicating those persons who are aged 76 or over and are no longer eligible for jury service.

## **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 on behalf of Central Government. 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 European Economic Area 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. This data may be sold by us when a request is received but, more usually it is sold by credit reference agencies. By law, you are automatically included in the Open Register when you register to vote. You can opt out of this version at any time and are given this opportunity annually as part of the Canvass to all households.

### **Can I see my records?**

The General Data Protection Regulation allows you to find out what information is held about you, on manual and electronic 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 laws 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 to the register.

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 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 document, please tell us (these rights may be subject to restrictions due to legal requirements i.e electoral law). Contact Electoral Services on 01670 624811 or [elections@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:elections@northumberland.gov.uk)

Data Protection Officer, Fay Cooper, [informationgovernance@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:informationgovernance@northumberland.gov.uk)

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