

Voter ID: FAQs

What is Voter ID?

From May 2023, individuals who wish to vote in person, including those acting as a proxy for another individual, will be required to produce photo ID to prove their identity before being issued with a ballot paper.

It will apply at:

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

Electors must present photo ID to cast their vote in the polling station. If they do not have an acceptable ID, they can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, to be issued free of charge by the Elections office.

Why was it introduced?

The Government's 2019 Manifesto set out their 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 photo ID are acceptable?

- 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
- driving licence issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state
- biometric immigration document
- identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)
- Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- Blue Badge

- national identity card issued by an EEA state
- Older Person's Bus Pass
- Disabled Person's Bus Pass
- Oyster 60+ Card
- Freedom Pass
- Scottish National Entitlement Card issued in Scotland
- 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- Senior SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- War Disablement SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- 60+ SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- Half Fare SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland

If you do not have one of the above forms of ID, you can apply for a [Voter Authority Certificate](#).

Expired photo IDs

You can use expired photo ID documents at the polling station or signing place if the photograph is still a good likeness.

Why are 18+ Oyster Cards not accepted?

The application process for 18+ Oyster Cards and 60+ Oyster Cards is different. The 60+ Oyster Card and application process are suitably secure for photo ID.

The 18+ Oyster Card did not meet the security requirements and is not accepted as a valid photo ID.

What if I do not want to show my photo ID?

If you plan to vote at your polling station, you must show your photo ID.

Alternatively, you can [apply for a postal vote](#) so you do not have to attend your polling station and, as such, not show any photo ID.

I do not have any accepted forms of photo ID

You can apply for a [Voter Authority Certificate](#). These certificates are produced specifically for election purposes and can only be used as ID for voting.

Does this affect postal voters?

As a postal voter, you do not have to present any photo ID to vote.

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

Does this affect proxy voting?

I am a proxy voter

If you are voting on behalf of another individual, you must bring your photo ID to the polling station to vote.

I have a proxy in place

You can vote at the polling station but must present your photo ID.

My photo ID has expired

You can use expired photo IDs at the polling station or signing place if the photo is still a good likeness.

Can I show a photocopy or screenshot of my photo ID?

No. We will not accept photocopies or pictures on mobile phones of ID documents because photo-editing software could be used to edit them, making them susceptible to fraudulent alteration.

Some supporting documents for a name change, such as a wedding certificate, may be certified copies and will be accepted in polling stations to show a name change.

What happens if I do not bring my photo ID to the polling station?

You cannot vote without an acceptable photo ID or [Voter Authority Certificate](#) at a polling station.

If you forget your photo ID, we will ask you to return to the polling station before 10pm with your photo ID to vote.

If your photo ID is lost, stolen, destroyed or damaged after the deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate on 25 April 2023, you can [apply for an emergency proxy](#) from 5pm on **Tuesday 25 April to 5pm on Thursday, 4 May (Polling Day)**.

My name differs on my photo ID from my electoral registration.

The decision on whether a photo ID bearing a different name or an alternative spelling 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.

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

My photo ID does not have my address or is incorrect

As we only verify your name and photo for Voter ID purposes, the address on your photo ID is ignored.

My appearance has changed from what is on my photo ID.

You may be eligible for a Voter Authority Certificate if it is before election day and you have no acceptable photo ID. Please contact elections at 01263 513811 or email electoralservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

Can my photo ID be checked in private?

Each polling station will have a private area, allowing voters to have their photo ID checked privately. We will provide privacy screens for some polling stations or use an existing partition or a separate room.

Will I be asked to remove a face, head covering, or veil for religious purposes to check my photo ID?

Yes. We need to establish the identity of all electors before providing them with their ballot paper, so we require the removal of veils or other head and face coverings.

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

Removing the veil or head or face covering can be done in private and, where appropriate, with a female staff member. If there is not a female staff member on duty, we will arrange for another female staff member to attend the polling station to assist.

Once your photo ID has been checked, you will have the space and privacy to put your head or face covering back on.

If an elector refuses the identification check, they will not be given a ballot paper and cannot vote at the polling station.

What are you verifying when checking my photo ID?

Staff will check the following when verifying your photo ID:

- your name
- your photo

For Voter Authority Certificates, we will also check the following:

- issue date
- expiry date

Voter Authority Certificate: FAQs

What is a Voter Authority Certificate?

You can apply for a [Voter Authority Certificate](#) if you do not hold an acceptable photo ID. Voter Authority Certificates can only be used as photo ID for elections and will enable you to vote.

What is the deadline for applications?

The deadline is **5pm on Tuesday 25 April 2023**.

How do I apply for a Voter Authority Certificate?

You can [apply for a Voter Authority Certificate](#) online. Alternatively, you can [apply by post](#). We will accept scanned copies of applications for Voter Authority Certificates via email. Paper applications may also be posted or handed into the Council Offices.

You are only eligible for a Voter Authority Certificate if you are [registered to vote](#) or have recently registered to vote.

Do I need to provide a photograph?

Yes. If you apply online, the photo requirements will be provided when you complete the form. The photo requirements can be found on the application form if applying by post.

I cannot take a photograph

We can offer a photography service for a Voter Authority Certificate application. Please visit our offices on Holt Road in Cromer or at Fakenham Connect, Oak Street Fakenham, for assistance.

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

Your identity will be verified using the details you provided, and you will be told whether your application has been approved or rejected and what the next steps are.

I do not know my National Insurance number

You can [find a lost National Insurance number](#) on the Government website.

How will I receive my Voter Authority Certificate?

By post, however, you may request during your application to collect your document in person from the Council Offices and will be asked to provide your reason for this request. We will let you know where and when you can collect it; the document can only be collected by yourself.

I have lost my Voter Authority Certificate

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

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

Alternatively, we can arrange an [emergency proxy](#) until 5pm on polling day.

My Voter Authority Certificate has not arrived

The elections office can issue temporary Voter Authority Certificates for voters who submitted a valid application before the deadline but have yet to receive their certificate.

Electors will only be eligible to apply for these **after 5pm on 25 April until 5pm on polling day**.

How long is my Voter Authority Certificate valid?

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