

## **Frequently asked Questions**

### **Q: What is the Annual Voter Registration form about?**

A: Every year, by law, the registration officer has to prepare new and accurate voters lists. The only way we can get the right information is by sending a form which, by law, every household uses to register. We don't use other council records for registration. For instance, you may be registered for council tax but this does not automatically put you on the register.

### **Q: How do I register?**

A: Please complete and return your annual voter registration form to us by post or fax. Alternatively, you can respond by phone, by text or via internet service. There is more information about the different ways to respond on your registration form. Please respond as soon as you can.

### **Q: My form doesn't have a security number. How can I register?**

If your form does not have a security code you won't be able to use the phone, text or internet. You should complete it and post it back to us as soon as you can.

### **Q: I've lost my form/I've spoilt my form. Can I get another one?**

If you've lost or spoilt your form we can take your details and arrange for another one to be sent to you straight away.

### **Q: What if I don't send my form back?**

A: Everybody must respond - if you do not register, your name can be removed from the register. It is against the law not to register and there is a maximum fine of £1000.

We will send you reminders and, if necessary, one of our canvassers will call to get the information on your doorstep. Doing this is very expensive - you can help to save the council's (your!) money by responding as soon as you can.

### **Q: I registered last year/I registered when I moved in. Do I have to register again?**

A: Yes - you have to renew your registration every year during canvass. For most people the information we have is a year old - we don't know if your situation has changed since then. We have made it easy for you to register - you can confirm your details by phone or on the internet or simply sign and return the form by post. Even if you have registered recently, you must still re-register.

### **Q: The form has been sent to the people who used to live here. Do I need to respond?**

A: Yes. The form is sent to "The people living at" - that's you. Please cross out the names of anyone who no longer lives at your address and write in any new names.

### **Q: I'm moving out soon, so do I need to respond?**

A: Yes. Please send back the form - simply add a note of your new address and the date you are moving in the space provided in the bottom right hand corner of the form. We will transfer your details to the new address if you are staying in the borough. If you are moving to a new council area, we will send on your form to your new registration officer.

### **Q: Will you tell me when I have been registered?**

A: We do not acknowledge your form when we receive it. However, you can check the register after it is published on 1 December to make sure your name is on it.

### **Q: Do I have to vote?**

A: No. Although it is compulsory for all eligible people to register, it is up to you whether you want to vote.

### **Q: I have two homes. Where should I register to vote?**

A: You are allowed to register to vote at both your homes if they are not in the same electoral area and you actually live in both of them for significant periods during the year. Please write a note on the form saying you are also registered elsewhere and give your other address.

By law you will only be able to vote once in an election.

### **Q: Who has access to the register?**

A: The electoral registration officer now makes and keeps two versions of the register - a full version and an edited version. You can see a list of who has a copy of the register on our website - [www.lbhf.gov.uk](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk), under "Who has my details?".

**Q: What is the full register?**

A: The full version lists everyone who is entitled to vote. The law says who can have a copy of it and what it can be used for. This includes electoral purposes, the prevention and detection of crime, and checking your identity when you apply for credit. It is a criminal offence to pass on to anyone else or to use it for any other purpose. The full Register of Electors is held at the Electoral Services Office, Hammersmith Town Hall, where it is available for public inspection under staff supervision. There is more information on the back of your form.

**Q: What is the edited register?**

A: The edited version now leaves out the names and addresses of people who have asked to be excluded from it. It can be bought by anyone and used for any purpose. For example, direct mailing companies may use it to send you information about goods and services. The edited Register is held at the Electoral Services Office, and all the local Libraries where it is available for public inspection. There is more information on the back of your form.

**Q: What if I don't want my details sold from the edited register?**

A: Please tell us by ticking the "opt out" box on the form. If you are registering to vote by phone or internet, you will be able to opt out during the call or online. There is more information on the back of your form. NB. You cannot opt out by text.

**Q: If I "opt out" does this stop me getting credit?**

A: No. It makes no difference. By law, the credit referencing companies can get the full register of electors to check identities. Opting out means that other commercial companies, such as mailing firms and estate agents, cannot buy your details.

**Q: Can I "opt in" if I want to?**

A: Yes, you can simply change this when you confirm by either phone or internet. If you are responding by post, cross out the tick on your form.

**Q: I am a student, where should I register to vote?**

A: Students can register for voting at both their home and term-time addresses if they are in different areas. However, by law you will only be able to vote once in an election.

**Q: I'm a foreign national/refugee/asylum seeker. Do I need to respond?**

A: Yes. Every household must respond, even if nobody at your address is eligible to vote. Simply fill in Part 4 and sign Part 5 of the form if everyone in your household is a foreign national. You can see if you are eligible by checking to the list of countries on the back of the form. If the country stated on your passport is on the list then you are eligible and have to give your details.