Mid Sussex District Council – Electoral Register Canvass FAQ

Why do I receive a Household Enquiry form every year?

The Electoral Registration Officer is legally obliged to maintain an accurate register of electors, and the annual canvass allows for the correction of any omissions or errors that may have occurred throughout the rest of the year.

Why should I respond to the form?

You are legally obliged to respond accurately to the form, and could face a fine if you do not do so. If no response is received from a household for two consecutive years the Electoral Registration Officer is legally entitled to remove any existing entries from the register. If you are not on the electoral register you will not be permitted to vote at any election. As credit reference agencies use the electoral register for identity verification purposes you could face difficulties when applying for credit if you are not registered.

Why is the form not addressed to me personally?

Household Enquiry forms are specific to an address, not an individual. We need to make sure that the form is delivered even if there are no current registrations or the details held are incorrect.

What do I do if the information on the form is correct?

We still need you to respond so that we can be certain that the register is accurate. If the information is correct you can respond using the internet, freephone or sms text services. There is no need to return the form in the post if you use these services, please destroy the form after using them.

Why is the internet/freephone/sms text not available for my property?

If there are a larger number of electors registered at a given property it is regarded as multiple-occupancy and treated differently from the majority of properties in the district. To avoid confusion because of the additional sheets provided and to avoid incorrect information being returned to the electoral services office these properties are restricted to a postal only response.
How do I alter or correct any of the pre-printed details?

Simply visit www.registerbyinternet.com/midsussex and make the necessary changes. If returning the paper form, cross through anything that needs amending and write the correct information next to it. Please remember to sign the form before sending it back to us.

What do I do if I'm not already included on the form?

Simply visit www.registerbyinternet.com/midsussex and make the necessary changes. If returning the paper form, write your name, and the name of anyone else who is also not registered, along one of the blank lines, indicate your nationality, whether you are 70 years of age or older, whether you wish to opt out of appearing on the open register and if you are 16 or 17 years of age give your date of birth. Then sign the form and return it in the pre-paid envelope.

How do I remove someone who no longer lives at my address?

Simply visit www.registerbyinternet.com/midsussex and make the necessary changes. If returning the paper form, cross through their names and sign the form before returning it to us. Please remember to add your own details if they are not already included.

What is the open register?

The open register is a version of the electoral register that can be bought by individuals or companies. You can opt out of appearing on this register by ticking the box on the Household Enquiry form. You would still appear on the register used for elections and for credit verification.

Why is there a box relating to jury exemption service for the over 70s?

The court service uses the electoral register to determine members of the public eligible for jury service. Each year the council supplies them with a register that excludes electors who are ineligible because of their age. Please note: we do not deal with exemption from jury service. Further information can be obtained from http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/infoabout/jury_service/index.htm

What should I do if a member of my household is working away from home for an extended period, or is studying at university?

To ensure that they are not inadvertently disenfranchised please check with the person that they have registered, or will be registering, at a different location before removing them. It is not an offence to be registered in two different locations, so if the move away is known to be temporary their existing registration can be left in place. Please note: it is an offence to vote twice in the same election.

I am not sure whether I am eligible to be registered because of my nationality?

All British, Irish, Commonwealth and European Union citizens are entitled to be registered, if you are not sure if this includes you please see our list of eligible nationalities below.
The Household Enquiry form asks for dates of birth of 16 and 17 year olds. My children are younger; can I include them on the form as well?

Please do not include anyone younger than 16 on the form. They can be registered at a future canvass once they have reached the appropriate age.
I am moving house very soon, what should I do? Do not complete the form, leave it behind for the next residents. When you get to your new home apply online; simply visit: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote You will need your national insurance number & date of birth.

What is the deadline for responding to the Household Enquiry form?

The very last day for response is 13 November 2015, prior to publication of the register on 1 December 2015. Responses received after this date may not be included until January 2016.

Who will have access to my details on the register?

The full register can be viewed under supervision by anyone. This can only be done at the District Council offices. The full register is also provided to various organisations according to their legal entitlement. These bodies include elected representatives such as councillors, registered political parties, the Electoral Commission, the Court Service and the British Library.

I have a concern that having my details on the electoral register means that my personal safety might be put at risk from certain individuals discovering my location?

Please contact the electoral services office to discuss your situation. There is a process of anonymous registration which might be suitable for you. There are quite stringent conditions that need to be met before someone can be registered anonymously.