Annual Electoral Canvass 2020

Southwark’s Electoral Registration Officer must undertake a canvass of all households in the borough each year to check voter details are correct. This year the electoral canvass is changing.

We will be sending household canvass letters to all residential properties in Southwark from late July, listing the names we currently hold on the register for each household.

Canvass FAQs

Q. Why do you write to my property every year?

The Electoral Registration Officer is required by law to carry out a household canvass each year to determine who should be registered to vote. This includes not only identifying where changes need to be made, but also confirming where there is no change needed to registered elector details.

Q. I am already registered to vote - Do I need to respond?

New canvassing rules allow us to check voter details against other government records. This means some households will not need to respond to the canvass notification.

You must respond if:

- Any information is incorrect on the form, or there are people eligible to register to vote at your address who are not included on the form, OR
- The notification you receive states that you must respond

Please check the form for your property.

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Dear Resident

You must respond so we can check who is eligible to register to vote.

You are legally required to respond to this letter. Please respond by 30-07-2020. The easiest way is online. It takes just a few minutes.

Visit the website
www.householdresponse.com/southwark

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Dear Resident

Is the electoral register information correct for this address?

You must respond if:

any information is wrong, or if there are people eligible to register to vote at this address that are not included.

You do not need to respond if:

all information is correct and includes everyone eligible to register to vote at this address.

Information on who is eligible to register to vote can be found on page 2.

People we have registered to vote at this address:
Q. The form says I am legally required to respond. How do I respond?

To respond please use ONE of the options below:

• ONLINE at www.householdresponse.com/southwark

Residents will be required to enter a two-part security code for their address which is included on their Household Enquiry Form

If nothing has changed, residents may also:

• TEXT ‘NOCHANGE’ followed by their two-part security code to 80212 (If nobody is eligible to vote to include a reason e.g empty, business, 2nd home)

• CALL 0800 197 9871 and when prompted enter their two-part security code.

Responding quickly to this form will save the Council money. The Electoral Registration Officer is required to follow-up the initial form with reminder forms and attempt to contact with the current resident(s). It is also a legal requirement for residents to provide the information requested; if they do not they could be fined £1,000.

Q. How do I remove people who should no longer be registered at my address? (for example if they have moved out)

To make an amendment visit www.householdresponse.com/southwark

• Enter both parts of the security code provided on the paper form
• Remove the names of the people who should no longer be registered at your address

Q. Some or all of the current occupiers are not yet registered, how can they register?

1. Complete the form online at www.householdresponse.com/southwark, enter the security codes provided on the paper form and add the names of the people who should be registered at your address. However, this will not automatically add them to the electoral register.

2. Each new individual must also submit an application to register. This can be completed online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Q. Who should be included on the form?

Everyone who is eligible to register to vote. Residents at the address who are:
• 16 years of age or above
• a British, Irish or European Union citizen, or
• a Commonwealth citizen who has leave to enter or remain in the UK or who does not require such leave

A list of eligible nationalities is available at the electoral commission web site http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/faq/voting-and-registration/who-can-register-to-vote.
If you do not qualify, you still need to inform Electoral Services of this information, otherwise we will continue to request this formation from you.

**Students** – Students may register at both their home address and term time address. They just need to ensure that they do not vote from both addresses in the same election.

**Second home owners** – Second home owners can register at more than one address, but only if they are resident in both, so if they split their time between the two addresses.

Q. Who should not be included on the form?

- Residents at the address who are under 16 years of age
- Residents who are not British, Irish, European Union or Commonwealth citizens
- Visitors staying at the address at the time the Household Enquiry Form is responded to
- Landlords who do not live at the address.

Q. I am about to move, what should I do?

As soon as you move, apply to register at your new address by visiting [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)

When completing your application you must ensure you provide your old address when prompted to ensure that your name is not on the register in two places.

Q. Why is the form not addressed to me?

The purpose of the letter is to identify who should be registered to vote at an address. It is addressed to ‘Resident’ because the person or people that we have registered at an address may no longer be there.

Q. I am paying Council Tax - Why am I not registered to vote?

Paying Council Tax does not automatically add you to the Electoral Register – not all people paying Council Tax are entitled to be registered, and not all people entitled to be registered to vote at an address are named Council Tax payers. The law requires each individual to register to vote themselves to vote.

Q. I do not vote so I don't want to register…

It is not a legal requirement to vote but the law requires eligible residents to register when requested.

There are benefits of being on the register that are unconnected with elections. Credit referencing agencies are entitled to receive the electoral register and use the information contained in it as part of an individual’s credit records, using it as verification of their address.

If someone is not on the electoral register then it may affect their ability to obtain credit, get a mortgage or access other financial services.
Q. I have changed my name, what should I do?

In order to change your name on the electoral register, you will need to provide evidence of your name change, for example a marriage certificate or deed poll.

Please email a copy of your evidence, alongside details of your address and how you would like your name to appear to electoral.enquiries@southwark.gov.uk

Q. There is a mistake in the address on the form, can this be changed?

Please correct the address on the form, please email canvass@southwark.gov.uk

We will investigate and amended as necessary. This change will take effect on publication of the revised electoral register on 1 December.

Q. How do I change my method of voting? (apply for or cancel a postal or proxy vote)

The form will indicate whether each registered elector has a postal or proxy voting arrangement in place.

To request a postal vote or proxy application form please email postal.votes@southwark.gov.uk and the relevant form will be sent to you.

If you wish to cancel an existing postal or proxy voting arrangement, you need to do so in writing by sending an email to postal.votes@southwark.gov.uk

You cannot cancel a postal or proxy application on someone else’s behalf - the request must come from the individual concerned.

Q. I have responded to the form already and I have received a reminder form

It takes over at least a week to print, dispatch and deliver reminder forms. There is always a cross-over period after data for the reminder forms is sent to our print contractors and the forms are finally delivered in which responses continue to be received.

It is not possible to prevent reminder forms from being dispatched if a response is received at this point so this means that in some cases households get a reminder when they have recently responded.

Q. When will my name be added to the electoral register?

If you register by 10 August then you will be added to the register on 1 September.

There are no published updates to the electoral register in October and November.

If you register by 20 November then you will be added to the register on 1 December.

Q. What is the open register?

There are 2 versions of the electoral register- the full version and the ‘open register’:
The full register

Everyone’s name and address goes on the full version of the electoral register. The full version of the register is only used for:

- electoral purposes (including campaigning by political parties)
- preventing and detecting crime
- checking applications for loans or credit
- jury summoning in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The open register

This is an extract of the electoral register, but is not used for elections. Any person, company or organisation can buy a copy of this register. For example, it can be used by businesses and charities to confirm name and address details or for mailing lists.

You may opt to have your name removed from the open register. Removing your details from the open register does not affect your right to vote.

The household canvass form will indicate those registered voters who have opted out of the open register.

Q. How do I remove my name from the open register?

You can request that your name and address is excluded from the Open Register on a permanent basis. You can make your request to the Electoral Registration Officer by emailing electoral.enquiries@southwark.gov.uk

- you cannot do this on behalf of another person
- each individual must inform the Electoral Registration Officer separately that they want to do this

Q. Why can my details on the electoral register be used for non-electoral purposes (such as credit referencing) and why do I have to opt-out of being in the ‘open-register’? Does this comply with the new data protection rules?


Q. When is the next election?

The next scheduled election is the Mayor of London and Greater London Assembly election on 6 May 2021.