

# **VOTER ID - FAQ**

## **What is it?**

From 4 May 2023 electors wishing to vote at polling stations in any election, must show photo ID before they receive their ballot paper. Any elector in the Stratford area who does not have one of the required forms of photo ID will be able to get a free voter identification document from Stratford District Council. However, they must be on the Register of Electors to do this.

## **Why?**

In our current electoral system, there is potential for someone to cast another person's vote at the polling station. All you need to do is say a name and address when you go to vote. Voter fraud is a crime. The introduction of this legislation brings the rest of the UK in line with Northern Ireland, where a form of voter identification has been in use since 1985, requiring photo identification since 2003.

## **What are the accepted forms of photo ID?**

Passports, Photo Driver's Licence, A Blue Badge, An Older Person's Bus Pass, A Disabled Person's Bus Pass. A Voter Authority Certificate issued by SDC. Other documents can be found on the SDC Website here - [Voter ID at Polling Stations | Stratford-on-Avon District Council](#)

## **What if they have identification, but it is out of date?**

If they have one of the above documents and it has expired, it will still be accepted if the photograph is still a good likeness of them.

## **What if they don't have one of these forms of ID?**

If they do not have any of these photo ID items, they will be able to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate - a free photographic identification document specific for the purposes of voting.

Applications for Voter Authority Certificates have been accepted from **16th January 2023**. Electors will be able to apply either:

- on-line at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate> by downloading an application form at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>
- by applying in person to Stratford District Council. If this is the case, please contact either Olivia Quinn, Suzanne Carney-Maris or Liz Jaworska.

## **Paper applications?**

SDC can also provide paper applications that can be filled in and returned with an attached photograph and we can process this.

## **Can I apply in Elizabeth House?**

Yes, Olivia, Liz or Suzanne can help them apply in reception and we can take the photo and upload it on our tablets. [Stratford District Council, Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6HX](#)

## **What is needed to apply?**

The elector will need to provide their full name, DOB, NI number, photograph and address at which they are registered. They need to be registered to vote to apply for a certificate. If they do not have their NI number, they will need to provide one or more of the following (depending on the type of identification provided):

- birth, adoption, marriage or civil partnership certificate
- non-photocard UK driving licence
- financial statement (such as a mortgage, bank or building society, credit card or pension statement)
- council tax letter or statement
- utilities bill
- P45 or P60
- benefits statement

If electors do not know their NI Number, they can provide an attestation to verify their identity. Attestations must be in writing, signed, and confirm that the applicant is the person named in the identity document application. It must also state the full name, date of birth, address, electoral number and occupation of the qualifying attestor and the date on which it is made. Finally, the attestor must state they are aware of the penalty for providing false information.

### **What if their name is different to the one on their identification?**

Where an elector's name has changed, for example through marriage or by deed poll, electors may provide additional supporting documents, such as a marriage certificate etc, providing evidence of a name change at the polling station. They can also apply for a Voter Identification Certificate.

### **What if they can't/don't want to produce photo ID and don't want to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate?**

If they don't have any photo ID, wish to not show it, and do not wish to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, they can always apply for a postal vote so long as they are on the Register of Electors. Postal votes do not require photo ID.

### **What if someone says they are an anonymous elector?**

There is a special Certificate for those that have been previously approved as an anonymous elector. They need to be referred to the Elections Office for further advice.

### **What if someone is a proxy voter?**

A proxy voter will need to produce their own photographic identification in the polling station in order to show that they are the named proxy, but they will not need to produce the identification of the elector on whose behalf they are voting.

### **What will the photo requirements be for applications?**

The photo requirements are similar to passport photo requirements e.g. that the elector must be facing forwards, with no other objects or people in the photo, not wearing sunglasses or head coverings (with the exception of head coverings for medical or religious reasons), with no glare or shadows over the face, and be against a neutral background. The online application service will not allow an application to be submitted until a photograph has been uploaded.

### **How will electors get their Voter Identification Certificate?**

They will be posted out to the elector's registered address once the application has been approved.

### **What are the deadlines?**

If electors wish to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate in time for the District and Parish Elections on 4 May 2023, the deadline is 5pm on 25 April 2023. They can apply after that date for a Certificate for future elections.

