Privacy Notice for Electoral Services

The Electoral Registration Officer and the Returning Officer at South Gloucestershire Council is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) which means it determines how and why your personal data is processed.

This privacy notice explains how we collect, use, store and share your personal information when you apply to join the polling staff database and while you undertake election duties on behalf of the Returning Officer.

This notice may be updated from time to time. Where changes are made, the revised notice will be published on our website and, where appropriate, communicated directly to you.
This privacy notice should be read alongside the Council's Corporate Privacy Notice.

The contact details of the data controller are:
The Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer, South Gloucestershire Council Offices, Badminton Road, Yate, BS37 5AF.

Electoral Services are responsible for compiling accurate electoral registers and impartially administering elections in the local authority area.

We will use this information for maintaining a list of potential and actual voters at elections; the appointment and payment of staff for elections; booking polling stations (and the associated contact and financial information); and maintain lists of candidates and their agents at elections.

We process your personal data under Article 6(1)(c) UK GDPR (compliance with a legal obligation), Article 6(1)(e) UK GDPR (performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Returning Officer), and where applicable Article 6(1)(b) UK GDPR (performance of a contract).

We are collecting this data because we are required to by sections 9, 9A, 9D, 9E and 13D of the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Act 1983, by regulation 23 of the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001, The Elections Act 2022 and by the Representation of the People (Postal and Proxy Voting etc) (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

What personal data do we collect and use?

To provide this service, we will collect and use some or all of the personal information below:

- Basic details about you, for example: name, address, date of birth and nationality.
- Unique identifiers such as your National Insurance Number or date of birth.
- Contact details that you have provided to us.
- Accessibility details that you have provided to us (for the purpose of meeting your accessibility requirements in polling stations – a description is not included, only that you have an accessibility requirement).
- Photographs that you have provided to us (for the verification of identity or the printing of Voter Authority Certificates).
- An image of your signature in relation to the verification of postal votes at the point of application and at an election.
- The name, address and contact information for individuals attesting to an application to register to vote (for the verification of identity).
- Appointed proxy name, address and contact information (for the purpose of voting).

- Scanned application forms and dates of any letters of correspondence.
- Notes about any relevant circumstances that you have told us.
- Details and records about the service you have received.
- Your previous or any redirected address.
- The other occupants in your home.
- If you are 16 to 17 years old, over 18 or alternatively are 76 or over (for the purposes of voting and Jury Service exemption).
- Whether you have chosen to opt out of the 'Open' version of the register.
- Right to work, employment and payroll details for those employed at an election.
- Customer satisfaction survey results.
- Candidate and agent names, addresses and contact details.
- Political affiliation of election candidates and agents.

We get most of this information from you and from what we learn about you through your use of our services, but we may also get some information about you from gov.uk.

Where we have received your data from a third party:

We receive applications to join our election staff database through the GOV.UK Forms service. Information submitted through this service is securely transferred to the elections team and used to create and maintain your record on our election staffing management system.

When you use gov.uk to register to vote, the data you provide will be processed by the Digital Election Service (DES) managed by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). As part of this process your data will be shared with the Department of Work and Pensions and the government suppliers that are data processors for the Digital Election Service. You can find more information about this here: Privacy notice – Register to vote – GOV.UK

When you use MEA (Mobile Election Application) to active an account on the Election Staff database the data you provide is processed by the software provider Civica MEA. You can find out more information about this here: https://mea.civica-xpress.co.uk/privacy

Where we receive your data from a third party, all applications to register, whether by paper or online, are shared with the Department of Work and Pensions, in order to verify the identity of new applicants. MHCLG will use the applications to inform the previous local authority of people who have moved area.

We receive basic details such as name, address, date of birth and nationality, from higher education establishments, care homes, safe houses and South Gloucestershire Council's Housing Benefits and Council Tax departments to aid verifying the identity of new applicants and to aid electors to register to vote.

Who else might we share your personal information with?

Sometimes we may need to share your information, but we will only do so where we have a valid lawful basis to share data. We will only share the minimum information required in each circumstance. We may share some of your personal information with one or more of the following:

Please note that where an electoral register is shared, the information provided is name and address only, along with your voting franchise. The Electoral Register is a public document that is available for inspection, or upon request to Electoral Services. The public Electoral Register lists the full name and address of everyone on the Electoral Register.

- The Department of Work and Pensions for the purpose of electoral registration (verifying an applicant's identity).
- Registered political parties (within the meaning of Section 160(1) PPERA 2000), Recognised third party (within the meaning of section 85(5) PPERA 2000) and

Permitted participants (within the meaning of section 105(1) PPERA 2000) for electoral purposes.

- Elected representatives (MPs, South Gloucestershire District Councillors, West of England Mayor, Police and Crime Commissioner), formal candidates and their agents at elections, The Lord Chancellor, the Secretary of State, Returning Officer for elections and other permitted participants who are able to use it for electoral purposes.
- South Gloucestershire Council (Monitoring Officer), the Police, Security Services, GCHQ for crime prevention or the detection of fraud.
- Credit reference agencies for credit checking purposes.
- People and companies that purchase the 'Open' version of the register (which you have the right to be removed from). The full version of the register cannot be sold and therefore you do not have the right to be removed from the full version. The Open Register contains only an individual's name and address. It does not contain any other personal or contact information.
- British Library, Office for National Statistics, Libraries and Archiving Services, the Electoral Commission, the Boundary Commission for England for statistical monitoring and electoral purposes.
- Courts.
- Those who are entitled in law to see whether you have voted (but not how you voted) such as political parties and candidates at an election.
- Other occupants of your property for the purposes of electoral registration
- South Gloucestershire (finance) for the payment of staff at elections.
- Election staff in order to administer an election, or electoral registration canvassers in order to conduct the Annual Canvass of electors.
- The name and phone number of election staff will be provided to colleagues who work in the same polling station.
- (Acting) Returning Officer for South Gloucestershire Council in the case of Parliamentary elections.
- Where a cross-boundary election occurs with another local authority, the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for South Gloucestershire is required by law to provide copies of the electoral register and absent voting lists to that Local Authority for the purposes of administering the election.

In the case of Anonymous Electoral Registration, no information is ever shared with another organisation except the Electoral Registration number of the Anonymous Elector. We will keep a copy of your Anonymous application to register to vote securely. This is held by a nominated member of the Electoral Services department and their manager only.
We may also use data processors to support our activities, for example by providing systems we need or delivering services on our behalf. These processors are:

- Contracted printers to print your poll cards, postal packs and other electoral material.
- Contracted software suppliers of the electoral register for the purpose of electoral registration and election management.

We will only share information that is necessary and where there is a lawful basis for doing so.

How long we will keep your personal information?
We will hold this information for as long as it is needed, or if we are required to do so by law. In practice this means that your personal information may be retained for the relevant period listed below:

- The Electoral Register – indefinitely as required by law
- Candidate and agent personal information – a maximum of 3 election cycles which is 12 years.
- Polling station information – indefinitely
- Polling station account details and the personal details of polling station key holders – for as long as this is relevant. Data is deleted if a new account or key holder for the venue is appointed.

- Election staff right to work documents will be kept for 2 years.
- Election staff employment records will be kept as long as required by law. When staff leave the election staff data base those records will be retained for 7 years.

Your rights as a data subject:

The law gives you a number of rights to control what and how personal information is used by us, including the right to access a copy of your personal information and withdraw your consent when we rely on your permission to use your personal data.

To update or correct your information if it is inaccurate on the electoral register, please contact us at electoral.services@southglos.gov.uk.
To update or correct your information if it is inaccurate in relation to election staff, please contact us at pollingstaff@southglos.gov.uk.

You have a number of rights in relation to your personal information, including the right:

- to access information we hold about you;
- to request correction of inaccurate or incomplete information;
- to request that information is provided to another organisation where applicable;
- to object to or restrict certain types of processing;
- to lodge a complaint.

If you have any worries or questions about how your personal information is handled contact our Data Protection Officer at DPO@southglos.gov.uk or write to us at:

Data Protection Officer
PO Box 1953
Badminton Road Office
Badminton Road
Bristol
BS37 0DE

Other questions about the data being processed may also be sent to the above address.

For independent advice about data protection, privacy and data sharing issues, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) via their contact page or call them on 0303 123 1113.

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