

To the occupier

Voter Registration Form 2010

Don't lose your right to vote **X**

If the details printed in part 1 below are correct, you can confirm this in under 60 seconds by either internet or freephone.

However, any amendments can only be made by completing and posting the form back to us.



by internet: Visit
www.registerbyinternet.com/maidstone



by freephone: Call
0800 197 8631 (24 hours)



Two part security code for freephone or internet registration

Part one:

Part two:

PROMPT RESPONSES KEEPS DOWN COSTS!

If any of the information is incorrect, incomplete or missing, please cross out the names of anyone who no longer lives in the property, and add the full names of anyone who is living in the property on 15 October 2010. You are entitled to register if you are a British, Irish, European or qualifying Commonwealth citizen (see overleaf for more details). Please take care to sign and date the form before returning it to us in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Question:

Do you think that Maidstone Borough Council should elect all councillors once every 4 years (whole council elections)?

Step 1: People living at this address.

For each person you need to include the following details.

Ref	Surname	First name and middle initial	Nationality	Date of birth if 16/17 years old	Tick below if you will be 70 or over on 15/10/10	Tick below if you do not wish to appear on the edited register	Tick tick below if you wish to apply for postal and/or proxy voting			YES	NO
							Postal	Proxy			
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											

Step 2: If no one at this address is eligible to register.

If nobody at this address is entitled to register to vote (including you), please tick the appropriate box below, then complete part 3 and post the form back to us.

- ☐ Property **empty** on 15 October 2010 ☐ This address is a business premises
- ☐ Other reason (please state why below) ☐ All residents are foreign nationals (please give nationality below)

Step 3: Previous address (if you have moved in the last 12 months)

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Step 4: Read the declaration and sign the form

I declare that, as far as I know, the details given on this form are true and correct and that all those whose names and details are entered are British or Commonwealth Citizens, Citizens of the Republic of Ireland, or Citizens of other European Union Member States.

Signed: Date: / / 2010

Print name: Phone no:

Overview

Maidstone Borough Council is considering changing how the Council is elected by deciding whether to move to whole council elections or to remain with the existing system of elections by thirds. This proposal has significant implications for everyone who lives in the Borough. The Council will be making a decision in November 2010 having first sought the electorate's views through this consultation. If the decision is not to accept the proposed changes then the Council will keep to the current arrangements of elections by thirds.

What are the current arrangements?

Maidstone Borough Council has 55 councillors representing 26 wards across the borough (with one to three councillors per ward). The Council currently holds elections by thirds. Councillors are elected on a four year term of office. There are no council elections in the fourth year which is the year for the Kent County Council Elections.

The practical reality is that some people (those that live in single member wards) are asked to vote twice in a 4-year cycle (once for Council elections and once for the County election), some (those in 2-member wards) vote 3 times in the 4-year cycle and some (those in 3-member wards) are asked to vote every year.

What are the alternatives?

The Council can consider moving to a system of whole Council elections. This means that instead of electing a third of councillors every year, electors would vote for all councillors at the same time, once every four years. If the Council resolves to change its election cycle to whole Council elections, the election of all councillors would take place in May 2011 and every fourth year after that.

Benefits of the current system:

- With only one-third of seats contested each year it ensures experienced councillors remain.
- One councillor is elected for each ward at a time, allowing the electorate to focus on the aptitude of particular candidates.
- It is easier for independent and smaller party candidates to stand and be represented when fewer seats are contested.
- Changes in the political direction of the Council are more likely to happen over a period of time, contributing to continuity, as opposed to there being sudden dramatic shifts.

Benefits of a move to a four-year cycle include:

- Political stability, enabling the delivery of long-term commitments.
- Possible reduction of cost to the taxpayer .
- Less potential for voter confusion/fatigue as electors in Maidstone would be voting for all councillors at the same time.
- With all electors voting every elector has an opportunity to vote and to change the political leadership of the Council and therefore its direction.

What do you think?

No decisions will be made without taking into consideration a range of views and opinions. These arrangements are fundamental to local democracy and it is therefore essential that local people and communities are consulted regarding their preferences. Please complete the ballot paper attached to your registration form, detach it and return it to the Council.

About this form

To vote in elections you need to be on the electoral register. This form collects the information we need to publish a revised register, which we do every year. If you do not respond to this form you may not appear on the revised register and you might lose your right to vote. Registering for other services or paying Council Tax does not register you to vote.

You are required by law to give the information asked for in this form. So please fill it in, sign it and return it to us as soon as possible. If you would like more information, our contact details are at the bottom of this page.

We will publish the revised register on 1 December, or shortly before. It will be available at the address given below. If for some reason you have been missed off the register, or your details have changed since 15 October 2010 (for example, because you have moved), you should contact us immediately.

Who can register to vote?

Age

You must be 18 or older to vote. You can register to vote when you are 16.

Residence

People can register only for the address where they are resident. You should include:

- People who are temporarily away – for example, away working, on holiday, in student accommodation or in hospital.
- Any other residents, lodgers or guests (but not short stay visitors) at your address.

Nationality

People who are entitled to register to vote:

- British citizens.
- Citizens of the Irish Republic.
- Citizens of other European Union countries.

EU citizens will be registered as local government electors only (except citizens of Cyprus, Malta, or the Irish Republic, who can vote in all elections). For more information about registering to vote in European Parliamentary elections, please ring the helpline.

- Qualifying Commonwealth citizens. This means Commonwealth citizens who:
 - have leave to enter or remain in the UK; or
 - do not require such leave.

Details of people at this address

For each person, you need to include:

- Name: Surname, first name and middle initials.
- Nationality: This will usually be as shown on the person's passport.
- Whether the person will be 70 or over on 15 October 2010. If so, they will be exempt from jury service.
- Whether the person wants to opt out of the edited register. More details in the next column.
- Whether the person wants a postal vote or proxy application form. You do not need to tick this box if the person is already a postal or proxy voter indicated by a pre-printed ✓.

16 and 17 year olds

Please provide the details of any 16 and 17 year olds in the property. Make sure you include their date of birth so that they can vote as soon as they are 18.

What are the 'full' and 'edited' registers?

The full register lists the name and address of everyone who is registered to vote. The council holds a copy. Anyone can look at it, but it is a criminal offence to supply or use copies for purposes other than those set down in law. More information is available at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

The main use of the full register is to show who can vote in elections and referendums. Credit reference agencies can use it, but only to check your name and address if you are applying for credit and for other purposes specified in law. It can also be used for law enforcement.

The edited register is available for general sale and can be used for any purpose. The edited register can be bought by any person, company or organisation and can be used for commercial activities such as marketing. If you want to opt out of having your details appear on the edited register, please tick the 'Edited register' box. You must also ask each person named on the form if they want to opt out of the edited register.

How to get in touch with us

Our address is: Maidstone House
King Street
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 6JQ

Email: registration@maidstone.gov.uk

Helpline: 01622 602007

If you find it difficult to read this form we can send you a large print version. [We can also provide the form in other languages.] Please ring the helpline.