

## Comments Received by Electoral Services

**From:**  
**Sent:** 14 February 2018 15:15  
**To:** Elector Card  
**Subject:** photo ID for elections

We've received today letters about the trial of photo ID for elections, which I think is a great idea.

My mother and I both have postal votes; am I right to assume that there will be no change to those?

**From:**  
**Sent:** 12 February 2018 23:43  
**To:** Elections Services  
**Subject:** Interested in learning more about VoterID

Dear Sir,

I recently received a notification that for the 3rd of May Woking borough council elections a photo ID is required to cast a vote. I find myself curious as to why this trial is being run, what are the goals, who and why it was suggested.

All I have been able to find is that the 'government is testing different methods of ID' but no greater explanation is forthcoming. Your contact email was provided from the [www.woking.gov.uk/VoterID](http://www.woking.gov.uk/VoterID) page and I hope you can enlighten me further on this initiative.

Yours befuddledly,

**From:**  
**Sent:** 12 February 2018 13:55  
**To:** Elections Services  
**Subject:** Your photo ID letters & web faqs

Hi

Feedback that I have had from the letters so far, that you need to put in your list of FAQs on the website when you have one.

There is a lot of concern that you have sent the same letter to postal voters, who now worry that you will not send them postal votes & they will have to find a way to get to the polling station.

List of ID on the back of the flyer is too small to read without a magnifying glass, if you are a certain age. Can you consider a large print in any future versions.

The lovely text explaining why we are doing this is not actually getting the message across, my husband read it as meaning that he would have to present himself to be photographed at the polling station before he was allowed to vote. I asked him to read the letter again & again he read the first paragraph and still thought that is what it says. He too was convinced that his postal vote had been removed. He did t read beyond the first paragraph as he dislikes reading too much.

Not sure how many others will not read beyond the first paragraph, but it looks like the

message "bring your ID to vote on May 3rd" & "get your own voter ID from WBC By 2nd May if you don't have one of those on the list" will need to be repeated many more times to get the message across.

Comments on the website pages

Nothing on the faqs on the website about what if my driving licence is expired, (only if passport has expired). My son has to renew his every 3 years & didn't bother after he was 21 as he couldn't afford to learn to drive, but still has an out of date licence.

Nothing on the FAQ about if you take digital bank statements etc for the WBC ID as most people don't have paper nowadays.

Nothing about how to apply online available on wbc website.

Very difficult explanation about attestation on the website, the type of person without other ID are going to be the more of the less educated so there should be a really simple text & picture page explaining how this works, not some confusing text half way down a long application form, which most people in that circumstance will not understand.

Could you even use an easier to understand word than attestation?

Then a simple page saying either produce 4 of these items on the list (click hyperlink to application form/ online application) or ask someone responsible to fill in form here (click hyperlink to different webpage with attestation online form or paper form) to say they know you.

Thanks

**From:**

**Sent:** 15 March 2018 12:50

**To:** Elections Services

**Subject:** 20180315-ELECTION ID CRITERIA

As a serving member of the UK Armed Forces I am very disappointed that 'Military Identity Card' is not one of the approved forms of identification listed.

I fully support the purpose of using personal ID to eliminate election fraud and can see that the list covers a reasonably wide spectrum of the electorate.

However, having served my country for 37 years as a regular and now reserve officer, I find it insulting that my Military ID card is not acceptable for me to vote yet the Government is only too happy for me to place my life on the line in the defence of our country.

I hope that this will be suitably reviewed and amended at the next elections after the 3 May 2018.

Yours faithfully

I would still be interested in knowing under what legal basis I can be prevented from casting my vote in person without photo ID.

Perhaps you would be kind enough to furnish me with the legislation which specifically denies me my right to vote, and under which auspices, this 'pilot' is being carried out.

-----Original Message-----

From:  
Sent: 01 April 2018 15:10  
To: Elections Services  
Subject: Photo ID

Please be advised that I feel refusal to allow me to vote in person without providing photo ID contravenes my legal right to vote.

I wish my objection to be recorded and that it be noted that I will be withholding my vote in the upcoming election.

Thank you very much for your email and explanation of the reason for the ID requirement at the forthcoming election.

I can only respond by advising you that I will attend the Horsell Evangelical Church on the 3rd of May with my Surrey Senior Bus Pass in hand.

Thank you once again

From:  
Sent: 03 April 2018 16:51  
To: Elections Services  
Subject: Voting & ID

For the first time in my life since I was eligible to vote I will not be voting at the election in May 2018.

I object most strongly to having to provide proof of identification. I object to having to provide proof of identification before I am allowed to vote whilst the majority of UK Citizens do not have to do so. I object at the additional cost incurred before being allowed to take up my right to vote. I object to the fact that the Government have given no explanation as to why this has become necessary.

Under the Freedom of information Act would you please provide me with evidence of fraudulent voting and how widespread in the U.K. it has become.

I have a right to vote so please explain why you are making it impossible for me to do so?

I further object to being used as a guinea pig for this project without any explanation of why it is felt necessary.

Is Woking being used because it is an area where Fraudulent Voting has become a problem and if so for how long has this been the case?

I look forward to hearing from you.

18-4-2018

To the Returning Officer for Woking Voting

At this time I am not sure if one is allowed to express an opinion on the 'Voting Scheme' in Woking at this time. But being a W.B.C tax payer I will do so

If I had not had a 'Postal Vote', the person I voted for would not have got my vote.

After years of trusted voting I am not going to have to prove myself to a 'Council Polling Person' before being allowed to vote. This time or at any other time.

Your sincerely

P.S Many other think the same.

**From:**

**Sent:** 21 April 2018 13:12:52

**To:** Ray Morgan

**Subject:** Voter ID

Dear Mr Morgan

How many more times?

And how many more ways can WBC find to let the punters know that ID will be required to vote on 3 May?

What about an hot-air balloon?

Is the cost of this blizzard being met by central government or from Council Tax? Either way it's way, way OTT.

Please get back to me.

**From:**

**Sent:** 30 April 2018 18:08

**To:** Elections Services; Charlotte Griffiths

**Subject:** VOTER ID failings

Dear Elections team

Your system is not working and is failing a huge number of the electorate over the most basic failings of the design of the system. The vast majority of the population who do not have the official list of ID do NOT have the other ID samples either. Of the 8 people in my street I have spoken to ( & have told of at least another 20 who do not have ID) and explained how to obtain a woking Voter ID card, by visiting you & asking for an attestation form for myself or other reliable neighbour to sign, so far the 100% of the 2 who have got as far as the council have FAILED to be given the form. Even when one insisted that she didnt have the list of ID she was told by staff at the WBC reception that there was no option & she had to take the voter standard voter ID form and look for her ( missing for decades) marriage certificate & bring it in with a range of other letters "even if her neighbour signed to say who she was".

She was told by WBC staff such an attestation facility didn't exist!

I eventually went in today to get an attestation form myself for her. The staff at the reception didn't know what I was talking about when I asked for an attestation form, could not even pronounce the word when I insisted that they try to find one from your team & said she had never seen it before when the form turned up!

You are preventing hundreds of people just in my ward from voting, yes maybe only half of those would have voted anyhow, but in the closer fought wards these missing hundreds would make a huge difference to the turnout of poorer and less literate people. on such margins wards are won and lost.

I have for the first time in 20 odd years of canvassing had huge amounts of animosity and aggression in the last week from this disenfranchised minority who see it as a WBC plot to undermine their rights. They are already the most troubled people in the area and you have added to their headaches by advertising and telling them so much about having to have voter ID but then having a website that tells them they cannot apply for an ID card if they dont have the right list of adoptions certificates and gun licences and marriage certificates then refusing to help them accuire the woking voter ID card when they call or visit the council so they are not allowed to vote.

Your statistics of those not voting due to no ID will be flawed as none of these people will bother going to the polling station to register that they have no ID, they just wont bother to miss an hour in their already busy life to tell you how terrible they feel that you have prevented them from voting. How are you going to count those who you have said " you will not be allowed to vote if you have no ID" then refuse to give them ID as they also didnt have the list of paper needed to get ID?

You have picked on the least organised and most vulnerable to produce the paperwork mountain that they are the least competent to find.

The hostile environment of WBC election ID process to the normal voter IS AN INHUMANE DISGRACE!

Regards

From:  
Sent: 01 May 2018 08:27  
To: Elections Services  
Subject: No SMS contact for Woking Council

Hi  
Please explain why you do not provide a SMS texting number for contact by lipreaders, BSL users, and others who cannot phone? It makes getting postal or proxy voting forms more difficult and is a real barrier to citizens involvement in democracy. Likewise with the Voter ID requirements this time round.

Not everyone has Internet or email, and my usual experience of NOT getting a prompt response when I have to use it because I can't phone makes it an unsatisfactory alternative to text from my mobile.

**From:** Elections Services <[Election.Services@woking.gov.uk](mailto:Election.Services@woking.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 02 May 2018 17:44  
**To:**  
**Subject:** RE: Voter ID

Dear

Thank you for your email.

We contacted XX, as requested, to explain the process for obtaining an elector card, and also offered to visit her at home to obtain the necessary photo. However, unfortunately XX declined our offer and therefore has not been issued with an elector card.

Regards  
Charlotte Griffiths

**From:**  
**Sent:** 01 May 2018 21:48  
**To:** Elections Services  
**Subject:** Voter ID

Hi there,

I'm one of the candidates standing for the St John's ward. I've had a resident call me very upset that she doesn't have voter ID and therefore can not vote. Apparently she has no Email and can't get into Woking. I've said there's very little I can do as a candidate but I said I would forward her information to electoral services in case there's anything you can do.

~~XX XX~~

~~XXXXX~~

Thanks,

**From:**  
**Sent:** 03 May 2018 19:59  
**To:** Elections Services  
**Subject:** Voter ID

Dear sir/madam

I want to record that I did not vote today as a protest against the need for id in order to register your vote. I see this requirement creates an additional barrier to voting where low turnout is an issue that needs addressing. I not not believe that voter fraud, the reason for the trial, is at level that would justify the adoption of this measure.

As this is a trial with no steps taken to obtain voter's views, the only way to register my concerns is through abstaining from the voting process; for the first time in 55 years.

From:  
Sent: 04 May 2018 06:13  
To: Elections Services  
Cc: [news@sky.co.uk](mailto:news@sky.co.uk)  
Subject: Local elections 3rd May

To whom it may concern,

It was wrongly reported in the media yesterday that voters were unable to vote due to having inadequate identification, I attended the voting booth with the correct Identification but was unable to vote as the registers were incomplete and incorrect. What will you be doing about this?

From:  
Sent: 05 May 2018 11:55  
To: Elections Services  
Subject: Voter identification

Good morning

Some feedback on the ID pilot:

- 1) I fundamentally disagree with the idea of having to produce ID to vote. It is some combination of racist and pointless; a solution in search of a problem. Requiring ID disadvantages certain groups disproportionately.
- 2) in your well-intentioned attempt to mitigate the second point, you allow forms of ID which are not secure - e.g. I picked up the attached national rail photo card on my way home from work at the station with just a passport photo - no need to prove my ID to get it. Of course I didn't try to use it, just making a point.

Fair enough to have done a pilot. I hope it has demonstrated its worthlessness and will be stopped.

From:  
Sent: 08 May 2018 13:10  
To: 'Elections Services' <[Election.Services@woking.gov.uk](mailto:Election.Services@woking.gov.uk)>  
Subject: RE: Voting and i d

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for this very full and prompt response to my enquiry.

That said I, and I guess with quite a few others, am concerned as to why *Woking volunteered* to be part of this questionable process. Did you not realise the unfortunately discriminatory message you could well be sending to large parts of your electorate?

Living at a time when there is widespread concern (post the Windrush scandal) about race relations in the UK and government policy on the issue did it not occur to the council that this could be seen as pouring fuel on a fire that was already burning pretty strongly?

I'm not sure how many people read manifestos that carefully and I certainly don't remember the issue figuring in the election campaign (or indeed since). I think most of us would feel that smuggling this in through the back door of the Cabinet Office rather than having it fully debated on the floor of the House of Commons would have been more in keeping with what

ordinary British citizens would feel is the spirit of our democracy.

I shall look forward to your response.

From:  
Sent: 03 May 2018 22:43  
To: Elections Services  
Subject: Voting and i d

Dear Sirs,

I would be grateful if you could tell me under what authority Woking , along with some other areas, has required voters to bring special identification documents to the polling booths to allow them to vote.

Yours truly,

From: Comments  
Sent: 08 May 2018 11:12  
To: Charlotte Griffiths  
Subject: Customer Enquiry Received

The following Customer has contacted us with their comments below. Please respond to the customer direct

Kind regards  
Customer Services  
Woking Borough Council

E-mail:

Comment:I went to vote at Oak Tree School on the Hermitage Estate at about 5.20pm on Thursday 3rd May and I have to say I was disgusted by the attitude of the staff.

I found the lady who dealt with me extremely rude. There was no please, when asking for my identification and then when I was asked to take my glasses off, as my passport photo does not show me with my glasses on, again there was no please or thank you. Considering the borough was taking part in a pilot scheme asking for photo identification, I would of thought a smile might of gone a long way and also having manners when asking for the relevant documents.

I would also like to point out that the polling station wasn't exactly busy at this time, which this behaviour whilst not acceptable could be understood.

From:  
Sent: 11 May 2018 14:02  
To: Elections Services  
Subject: Fw: Photo ID

cc Woking Borough Council

Further to your request for feedback with regard to Photo ID, I am disappointed to see you are only asking for negative comments. I see nothing negative about it. The idea behind it being to cut down on fraud, surely that cannot be a bad thing.

Regarding the paperwork required, we were given ample time to get the right paperwork. We



received a letter from Woking Borough council in early February detailing exactly what paperwork was acceptable (which was pretty comprehensive). If you did not have any of the suggested items you were asked to contact the Council to get a free Local Elector Card, You were given three months to get this card, ample time, I think.

I think anything that helps to cut down on fraud is a good thing, so I have only positive thoughts.

**From:**

**Sent:** 14 May 2018 19:38

**To:** Charlotte Griffiths

**Subject:** RE: Impact of VOTER ID

Charlotte,

I wonder if you received my feedback?  
In case you didn't please see below.

When canvassing I found a significant number of people without the required I D. These tended to be in areas of lower economic prosperity. The residents here need encouragement to vote and any barrier is too much for some. So the Council offer for voter I D was a non starter. On polling day they will not have attended to vote and did not have a postal vote either.

Another significant group were those who objected on principle to having to produce photo I D and therefore were not going to vote.

When telling on the day I witnessed two residents with disabled photo id which was not of the type permitted and they both were unable to vote.  
I also witnessed others who were asked to look for alternative I'd or would be unable to vote.

Despite the best efforts of the Council there was still a lot of confusion amongst residents about this pilot.

I was surprised at how many will not have voted as a result, and cannot help to comment that this will possibly have impacted on the most disadvantaged in our borough.

I hope that this is helpful,

I did note all such comments on our Lib Dem calling notes.

With regards,

## Official Complaints

"From:  
Sent: 06 May 2018 14:28  
To: Complaints  
Subject: Local Elections Complaint

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to lodge a formal complaint which involves Douglas Spinks (Deputy Chief Executive) and Charlotte Griffith (Election Manager) regarding the disgraceful treatment of my son during the recent local elections. The fact that a 19 year old who is relatively new to voting (or anyone for that matter) had his democratic right to vote taken away from him is appalling. I will lay out the exact events of the day as below:

I myself went to vote with my acquired elector card in the morning. Whilst voting I questioned my son's ability to vote for later on that day. He has a Validate UK photo ID card which is endorsed by the Home Office. After a discussion with who I was later told was Douglas Spinks, it was agreed he could come along and vote. We returned in the evening also armed with his bank card and bank statement just in case. They recognised me straight away and pulled us to one side from the queue at the polling desks. At which point we were told that during the course of the day the decision had been overturned by Charlotte Griffith and he now would not be allowed to vote.

My son who is obviously at the very start of his voting life looked mortified, embarrassed and shocked. To say I was frustrated by this decision is putting it mildly. I made it very clear that I intended to lodge a complaint.

Overall I think that those involved should be ashamed of their behaviour and decision making on that day. I can honestly say I feel ashamed to live in Woking.

I look forward to your response.

**Response:**

Thank you for your email regarding your son's experience at the polling station on 3 May.

The ID requirements for the pilot were agreed by Council in September 2017. Publicity for the elections and pilot started in February 2018, with every registered elector receiving a letter and leaflet setting out the ID requirements for polling day. Officers have worked to ensure that the message to bring ID to the polling station, and also the correct ID, was spread throughout the Borough, as electors would only be able to vote if they brought the correct form of ID. A requirement for the pilot was that there would be no discretion in the polling station. If electors brought the wrong ID or no ID, they would be given the opportunity to return with the correct form of ID, but would not be issued with a ballot paper without it.

Where electors did not have one of the specified forms of ID, the Council issued free of charge local elector cards that would be accepted in the polling station. The deadline to apply for the local elector card was 5pm on Wednesday, 2 May, to enable electors as much time as practicable to apply for a card, to ensure no-one was disenfranchised. As well as this information being included on the poll card sent to every elector, I also contacted all households in April with a final reminder to electors to ensure they had arranged their ID for polling day.

I have spoken to my colleagues regarding the incident involving your son. The Deputy Chief Executive has confirmed that he advised you that the Presiding Officer would check the

status of the ID of your son's Validate UK ID card, and asked that your son bring his ID with him when he returned to vote, in case this could be accepted. At no point were you advised that your son would definitely be able to vote using this card as ID. Once the Presiding Officer had checked with the Elections Manager, it was confirmed that unfortunately the ID card he had was not part of the list of required ID and therefore could not be used.

I regret that your son was not able to cast his vote on 3 May 2018. As this was a pilot, we will be reviewing the list of ID required and, if the pilot is continued at forthcoming elections, with the agreement of the Cabinet Office and Electoral Commission, we will be amending the list of required ID. Additionally, if the pilot is continued next year, please can I urge your son to check before polling day that he has the correct ID, to ensure that this situation does not arise again.

**Response to Telephone Complaint**

23 July 2018

Dear XX

Local Elector Card

I am writing with regard to the conversation you had with my colleague concerning the issuing of local elector cards. I understand you had a number of queries regarding this process and I hope that I can clarify these for you.

The Government's manifesto in 2017 committed to introducing identification in polling stations, following the publication of Sir Eric Pickles' review of electoral fraud in the UK. The Cabinet Office offered all local authorities in Great Britain the opportunity to pilot voter identification (ID) in their May 2018 local elections to enable the Cabinet Office to identify the best way to implement voter ID nationally. There are five pilot authorities, including Woking, which are all trialling different ID schemes (both photographic and non-photographic). The individual ID schemes have been drawn up by local authorities, working collaboratively with the Cabinet Office, Electoral Commission and Association of Electoral Administrators, who are providing expert support and scrutiny as the pilots are developed. The other pilot authorities are: Bromley, Gosport, Swindon and Watford. Two postal vote pilots are also being run.

The Council considered a report on the ID pilots at its meeting in July 2017, and it was agreed in principle that the Council would participate. A further report was considered and agreed by Council at its meeting on 28 September which set out the proposed ID to be required in polling stations in Woking. In January, the Minister for the Constitution signed the Order (copy attached), to run the pilot in Woking.

The photo ID scheme in Woking is being publicised across the Borough to ensure voters know they must bring ID to vote. They will not be able to vote without it. Where electors do not have one of the various forms of specified ID, they can apply for free local elector card, a locally produced form of photographic ID, which will be accepted in polling stations. The deadline for applications is 5pm on Wednesday, 2 May, to ensure that voters have as much time as possible to get their ID prepared before polling day. Our model is based on the requirements to vote in Northern Ireland, where all electors must show ID in the polling station before being issued with a ballot paper.

Part of the publicity was an information leaflet sent to every elector in February 2018. The leaflet set out details about the election and specific information about what photo ID would be accepted in the polling station. The leaflet highlighted that if an elector did not have one of the forms of specified ID, they would need to apply for a local elector card. Electors were directed to call the Electoral Services team or visit our webpages if this was the case.

To apply for an elector card, electors must provide documentation, which confirms their name and address, and have a photo witnessed, to confirm that the picture is a true likeness of the person applying for the elector card. If electors cannot provide a photo for the local elector card, we are able to take a photo of the elector and provide either a hard copy or a digital copy to be witnessed. Electronic copies of the photo can also be emailed from the witness, confirming the elector's identity.

If an elector applies for a local elector card at the deadline, the elector can either collect the card from the Civic Offices on polling day, or alternatively they can collect their card from the polling station. All polling station staff are employed by the Returning Officer for the election and are bound by secrecy provisions set out in Section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

In drawing up the proposals for the local elector card, there had to be a balance between making the card accessible for electors whilst also ensuring a level of integrity in the

## Appendix C

application process to reduce the possibility of fraudulent applications. The supporting document process is in line with the existing requirements for electoral registration, and any documents received are accessed only by the Electoral Services team and are stored securely.

All elections documentation (ballot papers, marked registers, and other postal vote, polling station and count documents) must be stored securely for one year, in case of a legal challenge. The local elector card applications and documentation will be stored with the other elections documents and will be destroyed as confidential waste after one year.

I hope that I have answered your queries. If you wish to make a formal complaint regarding this issue, please contact Woking Borough Council at [complaints@woking.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@woking.gov.uk) or by post to Complaint, Woking Borough Council, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking, GU21 6YL.