

Register of Electors

Who uses the FULL electoral register?

- Election staff, political parties, candidates and holders of elected office use the register for electoral purposes.
- Your local council and the British Library hold copies that anyone may look at under supervision. A copy is also held by the Electoral Commission, the Boundary Commissions (which set constituency boundaries for most elections) and the Office of National Statistics.
- The Council can use the register for duties relating to security, enforcing the law and preventing crime. The police and the security services can also use it for law enforcement.
- The register is used when calling people for jury service.
- Government departments may buy the register from local electoral registration officers and use it to help prevent and detect crime. They can also use it to safeguard national security by checking the background of job applicants and employees.
- Credit reference agencies can buy the register. They help other organisations to check the names and addresses of people applying for credit. They also use it to carry out identity checks when trying to prevent and detect money laundering.

It is a criminal offence for anyone to supply or use the register for anything else.

Who uses the open register?

Users of the open register include:

- Businesses checking the identity and address details of people who apply for their services such as insurance, goods hire and property rental, as well as when they shop online;
- Businesses selling age-restricted goods or services, such as alcohol or gambling online, to meet the rules on verifying the age of their customers;
- Charities and voluntary agencies, for example to help maintain contact information for those who have chosen to donate bone marrow and to help people separated by adoption to find each other;
- Charities, to help with fund raising and contacting people who have made donations;
- Debt collection agencies when tracing people who have changed address without telling their creditors;
- Direct marketing firms when maintaining their mailing lists;
- Landlords and letting agents when checking the identity of potential tenants;
- Local councils when identifying and contacting residents;
- Online directory firms to help users of the websites find people, such as when reuniting friends and families;
- Organisations tracing and identifying beneficiaries of wills, pensions and insurance policies;
- Private sector firms to verify details of job applicants.