



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

The London Borough of Hounslow Petition Scheme

Introduction

The London Borough of Hounslow has a petition scheme which helps residents to understand how any petition they submit to the Council will be dealt with.

Hounslow Council welcomes and recognises that petitions are one way in which people can let the Authority know their concerns and ask it to take action.

What is a Petition?

A petition is simply a written document by which ten or more people ask the Council to do something. It is a request for the Council to take some action. This can be positive or negative (e.g. a request for the inclusion of a street in a controlled parking zone or a request to remove a street from a controlled parking zone). The petition can either be in hard copy (on paper) or electronic (the Council has a specific online petition system to help you to do this).

Typically, a petition is signed by many people, indicating that a large group of people supports the request detailed in the petition. Hounslow identifies a petition as a document requesting that the Local Authority takes an action on a matter, and which has ten or more signatories.

What to Include in a Petition?

A petition must set out clearly what action the petitioners would like to see take place. The clearer the statement is the easier it will be for us to respond in the right manner.

The request (also known as the legend of a petition) must be about something that the Council has responsibility for. If the petition is a paper one, this request should be included on the top of each page of signatures so that is clear that the signatories know what it is they are supporting.

The petition should then record the name, address and signature of each individual supporting the petition. One person should be clearly marked as the petition organiser. This is the person with which we will communicate.

There is no formal template needed for any petition so long as the information above is clearly included in it.

How do I submit a petition?

There are three ways to submit a petition to us: by post, electronically or having it presented by a Councillor at a full meeting of the Council.

Paper petitions

You can send a copy of a hard copy petition to:

The Mayor
c/o The Head of Democratic Services
The London Borough of Hounslow
Hounslow House
7 Bath Road
Hounslow
TW3 3EB

You should ensure that you make a copy of the petition for your own records before you send the original to the Council.

Electronic Petitions

You can use the Council's own online petition scheme to set up and submit a petition. This can be found here:

[Petitions | Petitions | London Borough of Hounslow](#)

You may also use non-council electronic petitions sites to create your petition. However, you will need to remember formally to write to the Council with links to the petition upon its completion asking the council to consider it. The Council does not check external sites and so will not process any petition on a non-council electronic petition website unless it has been formally asked to do so.

Councillors

You can ask your local ward councillor to submit a petition to a meeting of the Council; they will briefly introduce it and then formally present the petition to the Mayor who will arrange for it to be processed.

You can find Councillor contact details on the Council website here:

[Your Councillors | London Borough of Hounslow](#)

If you choose this method, please note that the Council meeting itself will not consider the petition at the time it is submitted by the ward Councillor and presented to the Mayor; it is at this stage merely being introduced to the petition process operated by the Authority.

Can a petition be rejected?

There are some petitions we cannot accept or publish on our website. A petition may be rejected if it includes the following (please note that this list is not exhaustive):

- Language which is provocative, intemperate or offensive
- Wording which needs to be amended or is impossible to understand
- Statements which do not request any action
- Statements which are potentially libellous, false or defamatory statements
- Commercial endorsement or promotion of products or services
- Statements seeking actions which are outside the powers of the council
- False or incomplete name and/or address for the petition organiser
- Issues for which a petition is not the appropriate channel (for example, a petition cannot be used to raise a complaint as there is a specific process for this)
- Contains requests which are trivial or intended for humorous purposes
- Party political materials
- Information that may be protected by an injunction or a court order
- Material which is potentially confidential, commercially sensitive, or which may cause personal distress or loss
- The names or details of individual officials of public bodies
- The names of family members of elected representatives or officials of public bodies
- The names of individuals or information where they may be identified in relation to criminal accusations
- The submission is considered vexatious or otherwise improper

Can Petitions Be Dealt With Outside of This Scheme?

The Petition Scheme is the process for petitions where there is no other method of raising your request or request for action with the Council.

Some petitions will relate to matters that are subject to existing procedures. This includes petitions in relating to the following:

- Planning applications and decisions
- Licensing applications and decisions
- Matters where a consultation process is currently operating
- Matters where individuals already have a right of appeal, such as school place allocations.

We are happy to receive petitions on these matters but we will need to treat them in accordance with the relevant rules for these matters (for example, a petition relating to a live planning application will be dealt with as a response to that application and not as part of the Petition Scheme).

During election periods, the Council is subject to stricter guidelines on what information we can publish. This may affect the petitions we can accept and publish on our website and elsewhere, and in some cases may cause a delay in when we can respond to the petitions we receive.

How Will My Petition Be Dealt With?

Once a petition has been received (or reached its deadline date for submission of signature online), the Council will usually deal with it in one of the following ways:

- If the petition is about a minor traffic or parking matter (such as a request for controlled parking), it is referred to the relevant ward councillors and the Council's Traffic Team so that the councillors can identify directly with council officers if they wish the request to be investigated for possible implementation.
- If the petition is on a borough wide matter for which Council is responsible it is usually referred to full Council (although there may be occasions where it is referred elsewhere, such as to the Cabinet).
- As stated above, if the petition relates to an open consultation or planning application, it is referred to the officers organising the consultation or planning application, to be considered as a response to that. Petitioners are reminded that if a petition on a consultation or planning application is received after the deadline for responses to the consultation or planning application, it may be that the petition cannot be considered. You are asked to ensure that the date the Council receives the finished petition is several days before the deadline date for submissions on the consultation or planning application.
- All other petitions are referred to the relevant Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) to decide where they should go for decision – this may be to the relevant area forum, another relevant council body or to officers, if the Cabinet Member deems this the best way forward for dealing with the issue forming the petition request.

Once a petition has been referred to the relevant body or officer, the Council will then consider how it intends to respond to the petition request.

Petition organisers are asked to note that, like all requests, the Council may choose to agree to it and implement it in full, agree with some of it and implement part of it, or it may conclude that it is not able to meet the request at all.

The appropriate officers will then write to the Petition Organiser explaining what outcome has been identified and the reasons for this.

1st July 2021