

# ePetitions Guidance

## Introduction

This guide provides some brief information for people wishing to use the e-Petitions system on the Council website.

The full Council Petition Scheme can be found in [Part 3, Section 9 of the constitution](#) and contains additional guidance.

## Who can sign an ePetition?

An ePetition can be signed by a person of any age who lives, works or studies in Lambeth. You do not have to be a registered user to sign all ePetitions but you will need to provide a few basic details, including a valid email address, for verification purposes.

You can only sign an ePetition once. The list of signatories will be checked by officers and any duplicate signatures or frivolous responses removed.

## How to create a new ePetition

An ePetition can be created by a person of any age who lives, works or studies in Lambeth. To submit an ePetition you will need to be a registered user. Registration is a simple process that just requires you to provide us with a few details in case we need to contact you about the ePetition.

On the [ePetitions homepage](#), select the 'Submit a new ePetition' option and follow the prompted steps from there. Your online form will be submitted to the Democratic Services and Scrutiny section who may contact you to discuss your ePetition before it goes live.

## What information should my ePetition contain?

Your ePetition will need to include:

- A title.
- A statement explicitly setting out what action you would like the Council to take (a "call for action").
- Any information which you feel is relevant to the ePetition and reasons why you consider the action requested to be necessary. You may include links to other relevant websites.
- A date for when your ePetition will go live on the website. It may take Democratic Services and Scrutiny up to five working days to check your ePetition request and discuss any issues with you so please ensure that you submit the request at least five days before you want the ePetition to go live.
- A date for when your ePetition will stop collecting signatures. In order to achieve the maximum impact, you may want to set this date so that the ePetition will be submitted prior to a date on which a debate is to be held or a decision taken on the issue. We will host your ePetition for up to 12 months but would expect most to be significantly shorter in length than this.

### **What issues can my ePetition relate to?**

Your ePetition should be relevant to some issue on which the Council has powers or duties or on which it has shared responsibilities, further suggestions including how to have a petition debated at a Council meeting are in the [Petition Scheme](#).

Your petition should be submitted in good faith and be decent, honest and respectful. Your ePetition may be rejected if it does not meet these criteria. More information on subject areas and potential reasons for rejection are included in the [Petition Scheme](#). In addition, during politically sensitive periods, such as prior to an election, politically controversial material may need to be restricted.

The Council accepts no liability for the petitions on these web pages. The views expressed in the petitions do not necessarily reflect those of the Council.

### **Promoting your ePetition**

Whilst the Council will host ePetitions on its website, it will not generally promote individual ePetitions. Raising awareness of your ePetition could be done in a number of ways, such as promoting it on local community websites, discussion forums or newsletters. All it takes is to give people a brief explanation of the issue and then direct them to the site at [the following link](#) to sign up.

### **What happens when the ePetition is complete?**

When the ePetition reaches its closing date, you will no longer be able to sign it online. An officer from Democratic Services and Scrutiny will submit the final petition to the relevant Council department for action.

### **What will happen to the ePetition once it is submitted?**

Once the ePetition has been submitted, it will usually be referred to an appropriate Council officer for consideration. A Councillor will be identified to oversee the Council's response. A response will be sent to you within 10 working days and will be posted on the Council's website.

If, unusually, the petition is to be considered by a committee, you will be invited to attend the meeting.

If you feel that your petition has not been dealt with properly, you have the right to request that the relevant scrutiny committee review the steps that has been taken in response to your petition.

If you feel that your petition has not been dealt with properly you have the right to appeal to a scrutiny committee. The Petition Scheme gives more details or contact Democratic Services (using the details below) for guidance.

### **What can ePetitions achieve?**

When you submit an ePetition to the Council it can have positive outcomes that lead to change and inform debate. It can bring an issue to the attention of

the Council and show strong public approval or disapproval for something which the Council is doing. As a consequence, the Council may decide to, for example, change or review a policy, hold a public meeting or run a public consultation to gather more views on the issue.

### **Can I still submit a paper petition?**

Yes, you can still submit paper petitions; the [Petition Scheme](#) has more details. A petition may also gather names and addresses in both forms you can have a paper version and an online version, although repeat names will be discounted. Both forms should run for the same period of time and must be submitted together. When submitting an ePetition request, please let us know you are running a paper petition as well and this will be highlighted on the website.

Details about paper petitions and the responses they receive from the Council are published on the ePpetitions website.

### **Privacy policy**

The details you give us are needed to validate your support and, beyond your name, will not be published on the website. This is generally the same information required for a paper petition. The Council may contact you in relation to any petitions you have signed, unless you have requested not to be contacted when signing the ePetition. All petitions are a matter of public record and the public have a right to visit the town hall to view the details of those who have signed a particular petition.

### **Contact Details**

For more information and advice, or to discuss a potential ePetition, please contact:

Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny Floor 1, Olive Morris House, Brixton Hill, SW2 1RD

Tel: 020 7926 2170 Fax: 020 7926 2361

Email: [democracy@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@lambeth.gov.uk)

Alternative formats and languages

**If you would like information published by Lambeth Council in large print, Braille, audio tape, in pictures and symbols, or in a community language please call 020 7926 1000.**

Lambeth Council reserves the right to vary these guidelines as and when necessary. However, any changes will not be applied retrospectively.