



Gateway to
the history
of Shropshire
and Telford

A short guide to electoral registers

- ◇ These list people **entitled to vote** at elections.
- ◇ Registers were kept from **1832** (but only a few survive for Shropshire before 1880).
- ◇ Only in **1928** did **all** adults (over 21) gain the **right to vote**.
- ◇ Before this, the right to vote depended on ownership of **property, gender and age**.
- ◇ The registers are organised by **electoral division** or **constituency**. Within registers, listings are organised by **parish** or **ward**.
- ◇ The listings in the registers vary, some are arranged by **address** (usually urban areas) - others **alphabetically** by surname.
- ◇ They are useful for **confirming** when person lived at a known address, but the information in the early registers is very limited.
- ◇ Using the electoral registers can involve a lengthy search if you are not sure of area/address.
- ◇ Most electoral registers are on the open shelves in the Search Room so you will need a **Shropshire Archives Reader's Ticket** to see them
- ◇ You are welcome to consult any electoral registers over 10 years old (form the date of publication) for the purpose of **private research** only, during the lifespan of the people listed. They must not be used for marketing or in any way that would contravene the Data Protection Act.
- ◇ Each electoral register has been given a number. There is a list of these in the folder at the start of the electoral registers. The list also shows the parishes contained in each electoral division and tells you how the divisions changed over time.

- ◇ Some additional early registers, mainly for Shrewsbury borough, are available as printed books. The Register of Electors for 1832 is arranged alphabetically by surname [qC55.7]. This covers the whole county.
- ◇ Recent registers are kept in our stores, and you will be asked to sign a researcher declaration before access is given to these.
- ◇ For registers of voters at borough elections before 1832, check our guide to poll books.

◆ Copying

- ◇ We are not able to photocopy from the electoral registers as this may cause damage to the pages and binding.
- ◇ No copies can be made from registers less than 10 years old – only hand written notes for research purposes. There aren't restrictions on the edited version.

◆ Registers held elsewhere

- ◇ We don't hold the **current electoral register**. The full version will be held by at the electoral office at Shirehall and parts at the Council's local offices in Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Wem and Oswestry. Areas within Telford and Wrekin can be viewed at the Civic Offices there. Advance appointments may be necessary and further details are available at www.shropshire.gov.uk and www.telford.gov.uk
- ◇ Copies of old electoral registers are held at the British Library.
- ◇ It is also worth checking the FindMyPast and Ancestry websites are they have indexes for early electoral registers for selected areas as well as some of the recent edited registers.

Shropshire Archives

Castle Gates, Shrewsbury SY1 2AQ
tel: 0345 678 9096, fax: 01743 255355
e-mail: archives@shropshire.gov.uk
web site: www.shropshirearchives.org.uk