e-Petitions

Guidance for Submitting e-Petitions to Lancashire County Council

Democratic Services (July 2024)

Contents

Useful Information

Lancashire County Council has a [Petitions Scheme](#).

The petitions process allows members of the public to let the council know about their concerns or to raise issues that are important to them.

The county council welcomes petitions and recognises that they are an important way of engaging with and hearing from Lancashire's residents.

Anyone who lives, works or studies in the county council area of Lancashire can submit or sign a petition. All petitions sent or presented to the county council will receive an acknowledgement from the county council within five working days of receipt. The county council reserves the right to check the authenticity of names and addresses on all petitions received.

Petitions can be submitted to the county council either on paper or electronically. Petitions submitted to the county council must include:

- A clear, short statement covering the subject of the petition, including what action the petitioners wish the county council to take.
- The name, address and signature of those supporters.

Petitions must be accompanied by contact details, including an address for the petition organiser. This is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition, or if we require any further information.

A petition must either:

- Relate to the county council's responsibilities;
- Relate to a decision the county council has taken;
- Relate to a consultation currently being run by the county council;
- Relate to the county of Lancashire or its communities, as long as the county council is in a position to exercise some degree of influence; or
- Request a referendum on whether the county council should change to a different form of governance.

Before submitting a petition, you should first contact your [county councillor](#) or the [county council](#) to see if the council is already acting on your concerns and to check that the council is the most appropriate body to receive your petition, as sometimes your petition may be more appropriate for another public body.

There are some circumstances where petitions may not be accepted. A petition may be rejected if:

- It applies to a planning application, or a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal or a separate complaints process. These petitions will be dealt with through existing procedures and petitioners will be informed of this.

- It is asking the county council to do something that is not within its power to change or influence.
- It is considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate. We will explain the reasons for this in our acknowledgement of the petition.
- It is the same or substantially the same as a petition submitted within the previous 12 months.
- It relates to the responsibilities of one of the council's partners, including the responsibility of a district council. If this is the case, within five working days of receipt, the petition will be forwarded to that authority for them to deal with and the petition organiser will be informed of this.

If a petition is not considered acceptable, the petition organiser will be informed of the reasons why.

1.0. e-Petitions

An e-Petition is a petition which is published on the county council's website and collects signatures online. This allows petitions and supporting information to be made available to a wider audience than a traditional paper-based petition.

The county council has an e-Petition system which is available on our website using the link below:

https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/mgEPetitionListDisplay.aspx?bcr=1

Via the e-Petition system you can view any previously submitted e-Petitions, including the county council's response to that e-Petition, view and sign any current e-Petitions, or submit your own e-Petition.

2.0. Requesting a New e-Petition

To request a new e-Petition, visit the e-Petitions website (https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/mgEPetitionListDisplay.aspx?bcr=1) and click the 'Submit a new ePetition' link.

2.1. Registering/Logging in to the System

If you're not already logged into the online system, you will be asked to log in. Enter your username and password and click the 'Log in' button to log in.

If you have forgotten your password, click the 'Forgotten your password?' link and follow the instructions to reset your password.

If you're not registered, click the 'Register as a new user' link.

You will need to complete the online form. You will be asked for the following information:

Field	Description
First name	Your first name
Last name	Your last name.
Your email	Your email address. This will also be your username to log in to the system.
Your password	You will need to specify a password. The password needs to be at least 8 characters and contain an uppercase and lowercase letter, and a number.
Confirm password	Confirm your password.
Address line 1	The first line of your address.
Address line 2	The second line of your address.
Town	The town where you live.
County	The county where you live.
Post code	Your post code.

Once you have filled in the form, click the 'Register' button at the bottom to register to the system.

A registration confirmation screen will be displayed. Click the 'Continue' button to return to the log in screen.
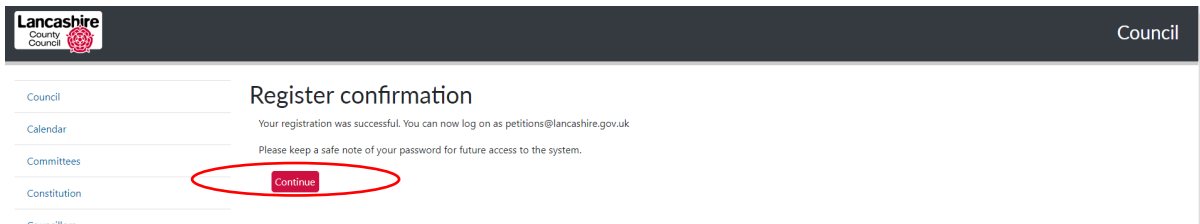
Type your username (email address) and password into the specified fields and click the 'Log in' button to log into the system.

2.2. Submitting a New e-Petition

Once you have logged in, you can provide the details of your e-Petition.

First of all, give your e-Petition a title. This should be something meaningful, clear, easy for members of the public to understand, and suitable to be displayed on the county council's website. Once you have chosen a title, click the 'Continue' button.
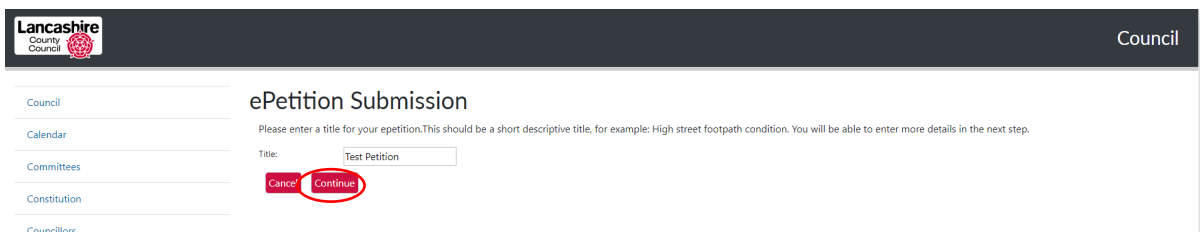
If your e-Petition title is similar to a previous petition, a list of previous and similar petitions will be displayed. Ensure the topic of your e-Petition has not already been submitted.

NB. You can't submit an e-Petition if the same subject has already been submitted within 12 months.
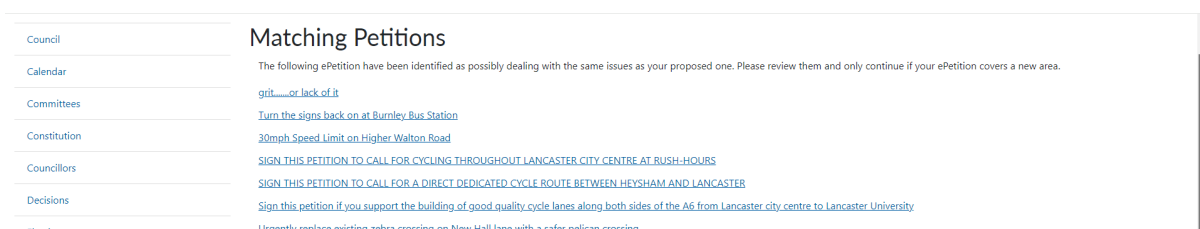
Once you have checked the list and confirmed that the title of your e-Petition doesn't match or duplicate another e-Petition, click the 'Continue' button at the bottom of the page.

Now you can provide more detail about your e-Petition. The information that you will need to provide is as follows:

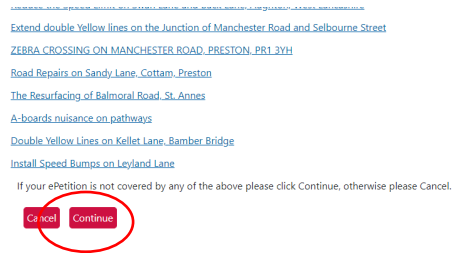| Field	Description
e-Petition title	This will match the title you have already provided, but you can change it on this page if you want to.
We the undersigned petition the council to	This is what you want the county council to do. It should be something that is clear, precise, and within the remit of the county council. Once displayed on our website, the words "We the undersigned petition the council to" will be displayed by default and therefore your text should start from after this text. For example, for this test e-Petition, I am asking the county council to introduce a 'Governor Recognition' scheme (which is something the county council has already done.) Therefore, the text in this field would be: *"Introduce a 'Governor Recognition' scheme for our schools so that they can nominate governors to be recognised for their service and support not only to our schools but for all children and young people in Lancashire."*
More details about your e-Petition	You can enter some background information about your e-Petition in this box. This information will also be shown on the website. This could be more details about the e-Petition, what you have already done to achieve your request, or other information as appropriate. For example, for this test e-Petition: *"The biggest group of volunteers in Lancashire are our hardworking school governors who freely give up of their time to support our schools across the county and deserve to be recognised."*

Organisation	This is an optional field. If you are representing an organisation, you can if you wish, include it's the name here.
Start Date	This is the date you are submitting the e-Petition.
End Date	This is when you would like the e-Petition to end (stop accepting signatures). This must be within 6 months.

Once the form is completed, click the 'Finish' button at the bottom of the page.

You have now submitted your e-Petition request.

You can either click the 'Continue' button, which will take you back to the e-Petition page or click the 'Log off' button to log out of the system.

2.3. What Happens Next?

Following the submission of the e-Petition, you will receive an acknowledgment email.

Your e-Petition will now be reviewed by the council. This will involve contacting the appropriate county council service to ensure that the e-Petition contains no factual errors and that your request is in the county council's power.

Following the review, you will be informed whether:

a) The e-Petition is acceptable and has been published to the council's website, or

b) The e-Petition has been rejected, including the reasons why it has been rejected.

This will happen within five working days of receipt of the e-Petition.

Please note however, in the period immediately before an election or referendum we may need to deal with your petition differently and this timeframe may need to be revised.

If your e-Petition is accepted, it will be published on the council's website for members of the public to view and sign. The relevant county council service, Cabinet Member, and divisional county councillor will be informed of the e-Petition's publication.

If it is published, you will receive a confirmation email. You can view your e-Petition by clicking the 'View your Petition' link within the email.
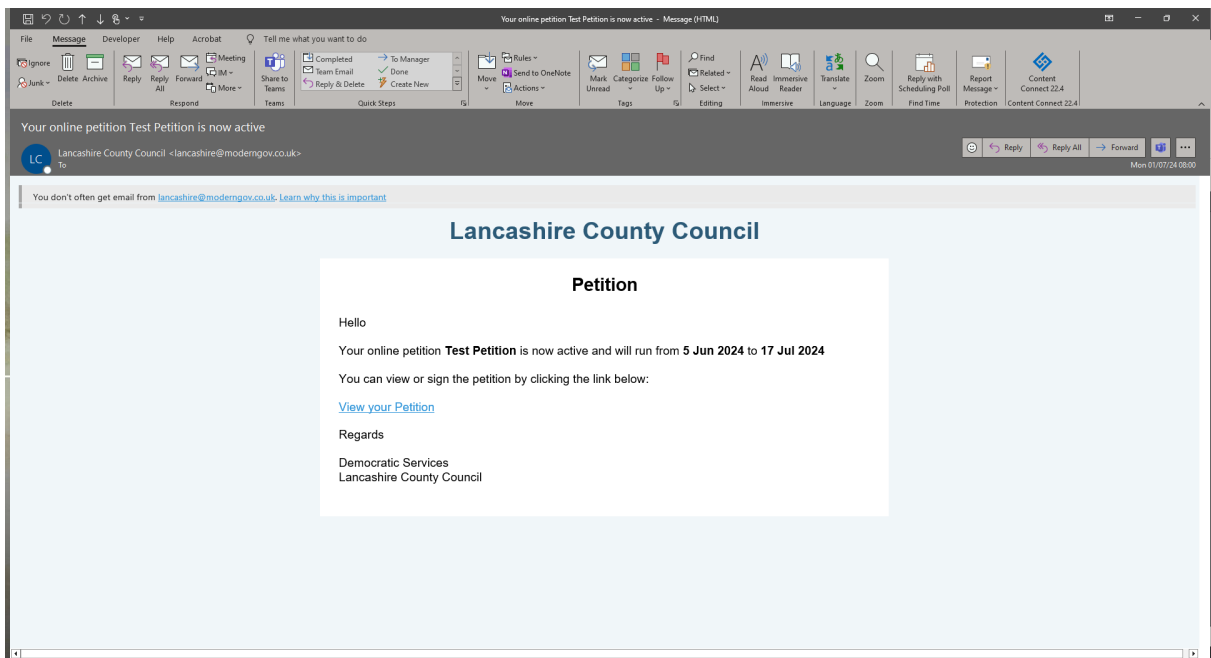
2.4. Providing Further Information Following Submission

Following the submission of your e-Petition, you may become aware of further information that you would like to include. If you would like to add to your e-Petition, please email petitions@lancashire.gov.uk.

3.0. Viewing/Signing the e-Petition

3.1. Viewing your e-Petition

Any e-Petition published to the county council's website can be signed by any member of the public.

You can view e-Petitions available for signature on the county council's website using the link below:

https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/mgEPetitionListDisplay.aspx?bcr=1

Alternatively, you can access your e-Petition directly by clicking the link in your confirmation email.

From your e-Petition's page, you can view details about your e-Petition including how many people have signed it, and sign the e-Petition yourself.

3.2. Signing Your e-Petition

You can sign an e-Petition whilst logged into the e-Petition system or without logging in.
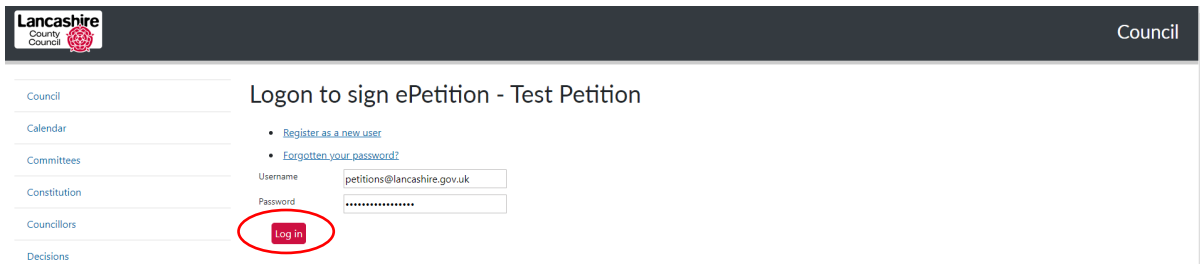
3.2.1. Signing the e-Petition by Logging In

If you are already registered to the county council's website, you can sign the e-Petition by logging into your account and then signing the e-Petition. This is beneficial because you will not need to re-enter your information (name, address etc) in order to sign the e-Petition.

To do this, click the 'Log in to register and sign the ePetition' link.

Enter your username (your email address) and password and click the 'Log in' button.

NB. If you can't remember your password, click the 'Forgotten your password?' link and follow the instructions to reset your password.

You will be asked to confirm that you want to sign your name against this e-Petition. Click the 'Sign' button to confirm.
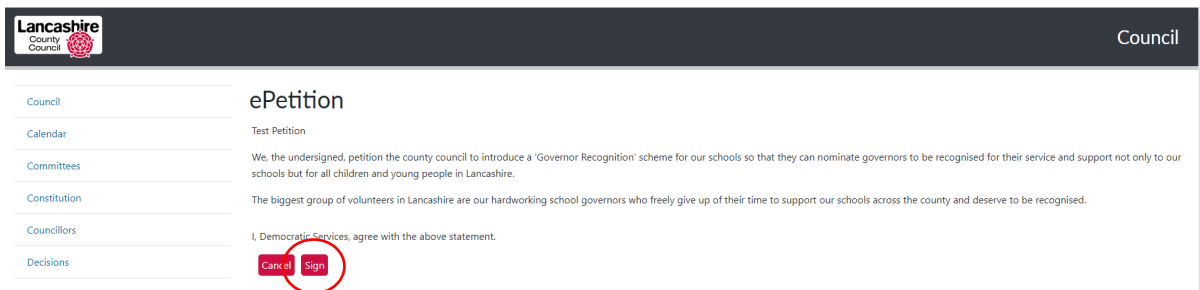

You have successfully signed this e-Petition. You can either click the 'Continue' button to return to the e-Petition page or click the 'Log off' button to sign out of the system.
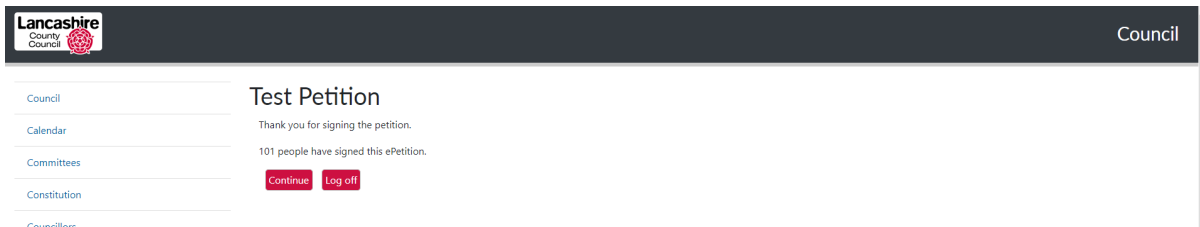
3.2.2. Signing the e-Petition without Logging In

If you are not already registered to the county council's website, you can sign the e-Petition by clicking the 'Sign ePetition' link at the top of the page.
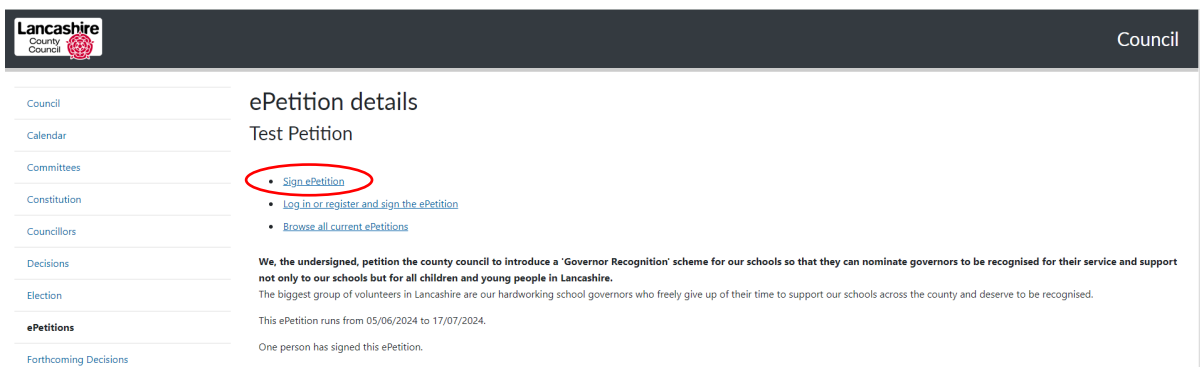
You will be asked to enter your details, including your name, email address, and home address. Once you have completed the form, click the 'Continue' button.

You will be asked to confirm that you want to sign your name against this e-Petition. Click the 'Sign' button to confirm.

You have successfully signed this e-Petition. Click the 'Continue' button to return to the e-Petition page.

4.0. What Happens when the e-Petition ends?

Once your e-Petition ends (stops accepting signatures), you will receive an automated email to notify you, including the number of signatories your e-Petition received.

The county council will respond to all published petitions, no matter how many signatures they receive. The council's response to a petition will depend on what a petition is asking the county council to do. However, every petition will be sent to the appropriate Cabinet Member and the relevant county council service for a written response.

We aim to provide the petition organisers with a response within 28 days of receipt of the signed petition. A copy of the response will also be published to the county council's website.

The response may include information about what the county council has already done to address the concerns, what the council intends to do, or the reasons why the council cannot do what has been requested.

Where a petition is submitted in response to a public consultation being run by the council, the petition will be considered as part of that process and along with other consultation responses. The council will not necessarily respond to the petition separately via the petitions process in this circumstance.

NB. In the period immediately before an election or referendum, we may need to deal with your petition differently. If this is the case, we will explain the reasons and discuss any revised timescales with the petition organiser.

5.0. Further Advice and Support

Should you require any further help with submitting your e-Petition, please email petitions@lancashire.gov.uk.

6.0. Using your Information / Data Protection

6.1. Using your Information

The county council will only use the information you have provided when submitting or signing a petition or e-petition for the purpose of recording your name as a petitioner on the petition.

By submitting or signing a petition or e-petition, you are agreeing that the county council can use any personal information you provide for the purposes connected with that petition.

The names and contact information of the petitioners may be shared with the petition organiser.

6.2. Data Protection

In submitting or signing a petition or e-petition, you understand that Lancashire County Council has a requirement to process your personal data.

Lancashire County Council will only ever process your personal data where it has a clear lawful basis for doing so in full compliance with data protection legislation - UK GDPR and The Data Protection Act (2018).

We will ensure the security and confidentiality of your personal data at all times.

For full details of how Lancashire County Council handles your personal data please see our privacy notice here:

https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/transparency/access-to-information/service-and-project-specific-privacy-notices/democratic-and-member-services/