

Voters' details on stolen computer

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A laptop computer containing personal data on more than 14,000 voters has gone missing from the offices of a local authority.

On the laptop were the names, addresses, dates of birth, signatures and copies of scanned postal vote application forms and postal vote statements used to confirm the identity of 14,673 voters.

The laptop went missing from the offices of St Albans City and District Council in what is thought to have been an opportunistic theft.

The data was protected by two levels of security, the council said, but admitted there was a "slight risk" it could be accessed.

The local authority is writing to everyone affected to inform them of the situation and the risks involved, a spokeswoman said.

All were residents who had applied to cast their votes by post at the last elections held in the district on June 4.

European and council elections were held throughout Britain that day.

Councillor Julian Daly, Conservative group leader at the council and one of those whose details were on the missing laptop, said it was "troubling" that someone was able to walk off with it.

He said: "That's all the information you need to set up a bank account. It's classic [identity theft](#) territory. That is, assuming they can get at the data. It is troubling that the data was on a portable machine and it was accessible for someone to walk off with it."

The council is working with the police and Northgate Information Solutions, which manages its IT services, to investigate the incident. An internal investigation is also under way, which will determine whether further security measures are required.



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