

Sending Your Documents Securely.

Introduction.

A new system has been introduced for security checks on volunteers helping in the prison. It replaces the previous Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and is handled on behalf of the Ministry of Justice by Shared Services Connected Ltd. (SSCL). The same system is used for prison employees and prison volunteers, so some of the information we are required to provide might not seem strictly relevant to our roles. The process is managed entirely online. Applications for clearance are handled in two stages:

Stage I.

First, you will need to provide the prison with relevant information to support your application, including your National Insurance number, a recent photo and several documents. The prison will verify that the chosen documents are suitable before passing them on to SSCL. SSCL will then send you a link to their secure website.

Stage II.

You will then login to the SSCL website and begin filling in the online security vetting application form. You can complete it in stages or at one sitting, but it must be completed within 3 weeks. Experience has shown that it might take an hour or more to complete. To complete the application, you will also need to upload the same documents that you supplied to the prison in stage 1.

The Documents.

You will need to supply suitable documents to prove your right to work in the UK and to validate your identity. Depending on your circumstances, these documents might include such items as a passport, driving licence, mortgage statement, council tax statement, bank statement or utility bill, as well as a recent photograph of yourself. (Details of acceptable documents will be provided when you are invited to apply). As you can see, these will, by necessity, include a lot of sensitive personal data. In addition, your National Insurance number (typically shown on a P60/P45) will be required before the prison can upload your documents to SSCL.

Sending Your Documents.

The prison will ask you to scan and email your documents (as attachments). As explained above, they will then transfer them to SSCL. All transfers of data between the prison and SSCL, and between you and SSCL will be done over a secure connection, so the risk of your data being intercepted is very low. However, the initial transfer of the documents from you to the prison by regular email is not secure and should they be intercepted, it is possible that criminals could use them to steal your identity. If this is a concern, you might wish to consider how to minimise that risk.

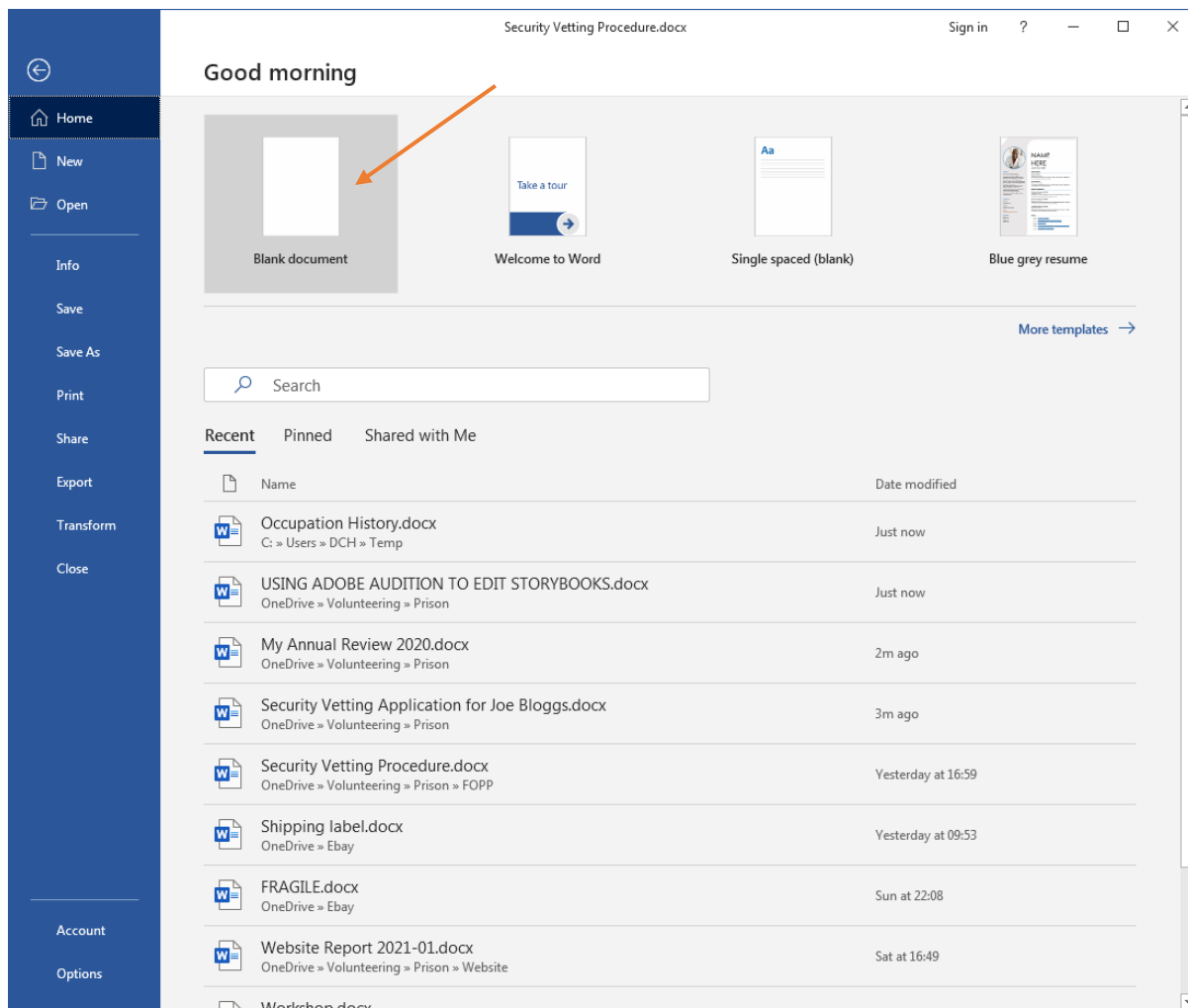
Protecting Your Data – method A.

You can send your documents as an encrypted attachment to an email message. You will require access to Microsoft Word in order to encrypt your documents file. (Although other tools are available to do a similar job, we must use one that is compatible with the software on the prison's computers. This method

has been tested and proven to work by FOPP directors as part of a recent real application. If your email is intercepted, it will not be possible to decrypt it without the correct password.

Using Microsoft Word to Encrypt Your Data.

1. If you are scanning your documents you should set your scanner to produce files of type .jpg and scan each document in turn, saving the files where you will easily be able to find them (e.g. "My Documents"). Later, as part of Stage II, you will need to upload these same documents to the SSCL website. Alternatively, you can use your phone camera to produce image files of your documents.
2. Use Word to create a new blank document. (In this example we are using Microsoft 365).



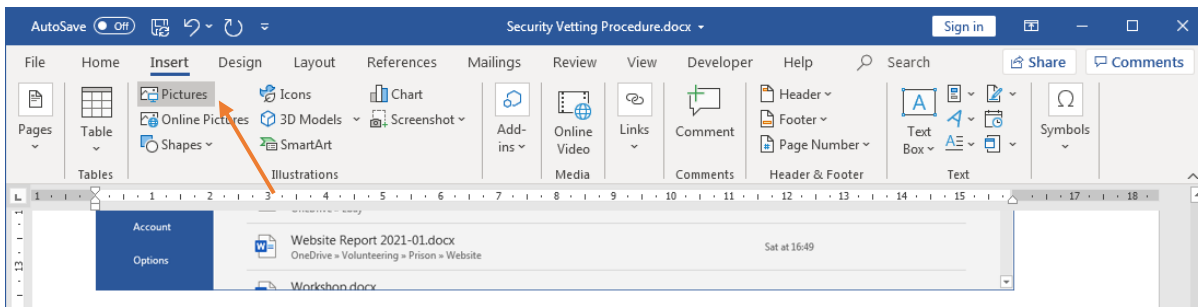
3. At the top of your newly opened blank file you should include some explanatory text such as:

Security Vetting Application for Joe Bloggs (Prison Helper, FOPP).

National Insurance Number YA 78 09 57 X.

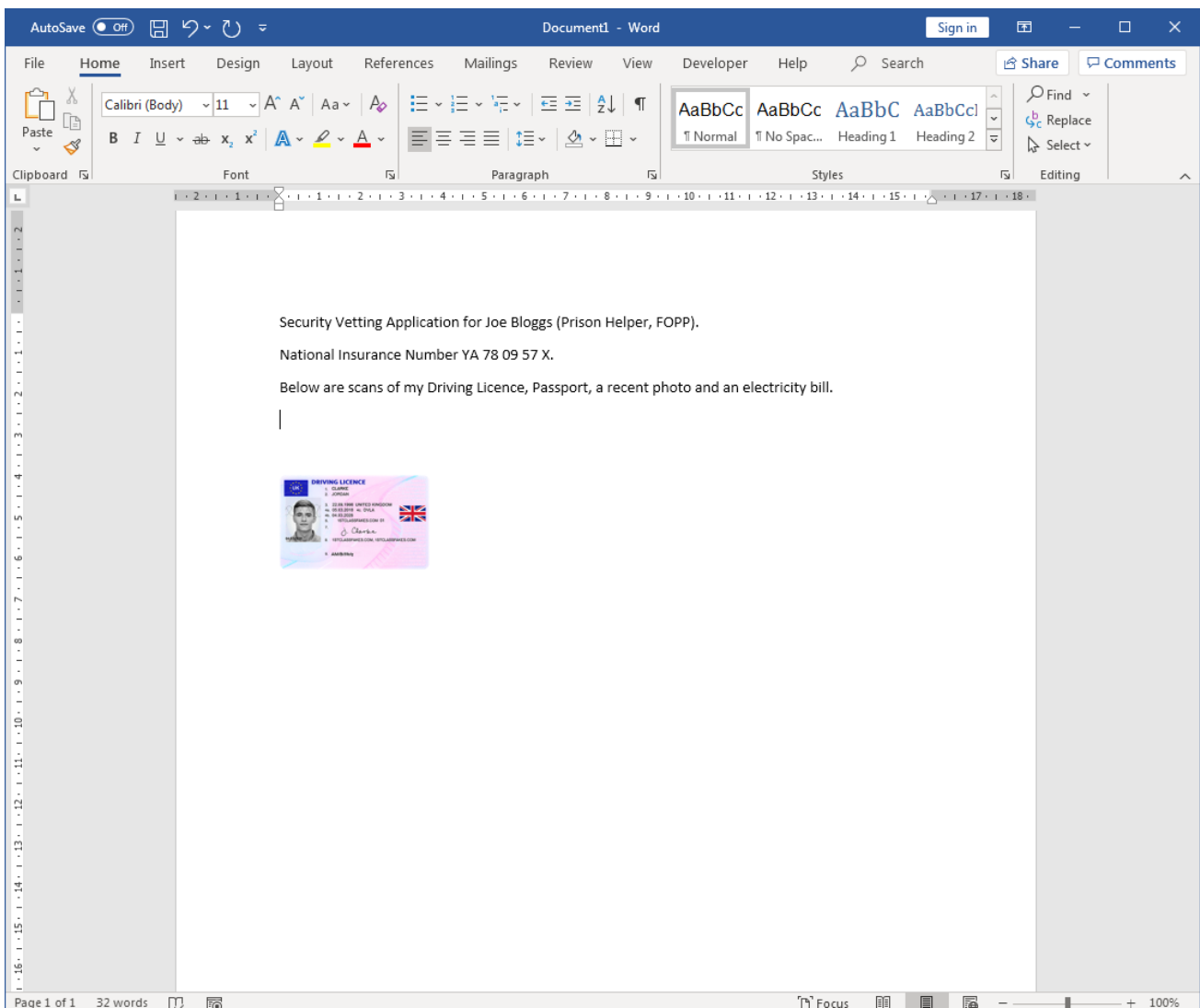
Below are scans of my Driving Licence, Passport, a recent photo, an electricity bill and my latest P60.

4. Now insert the first of your scanned documents as listed; so, in our example this will be the driving licence. From the menus, select Insert/Pictures ...

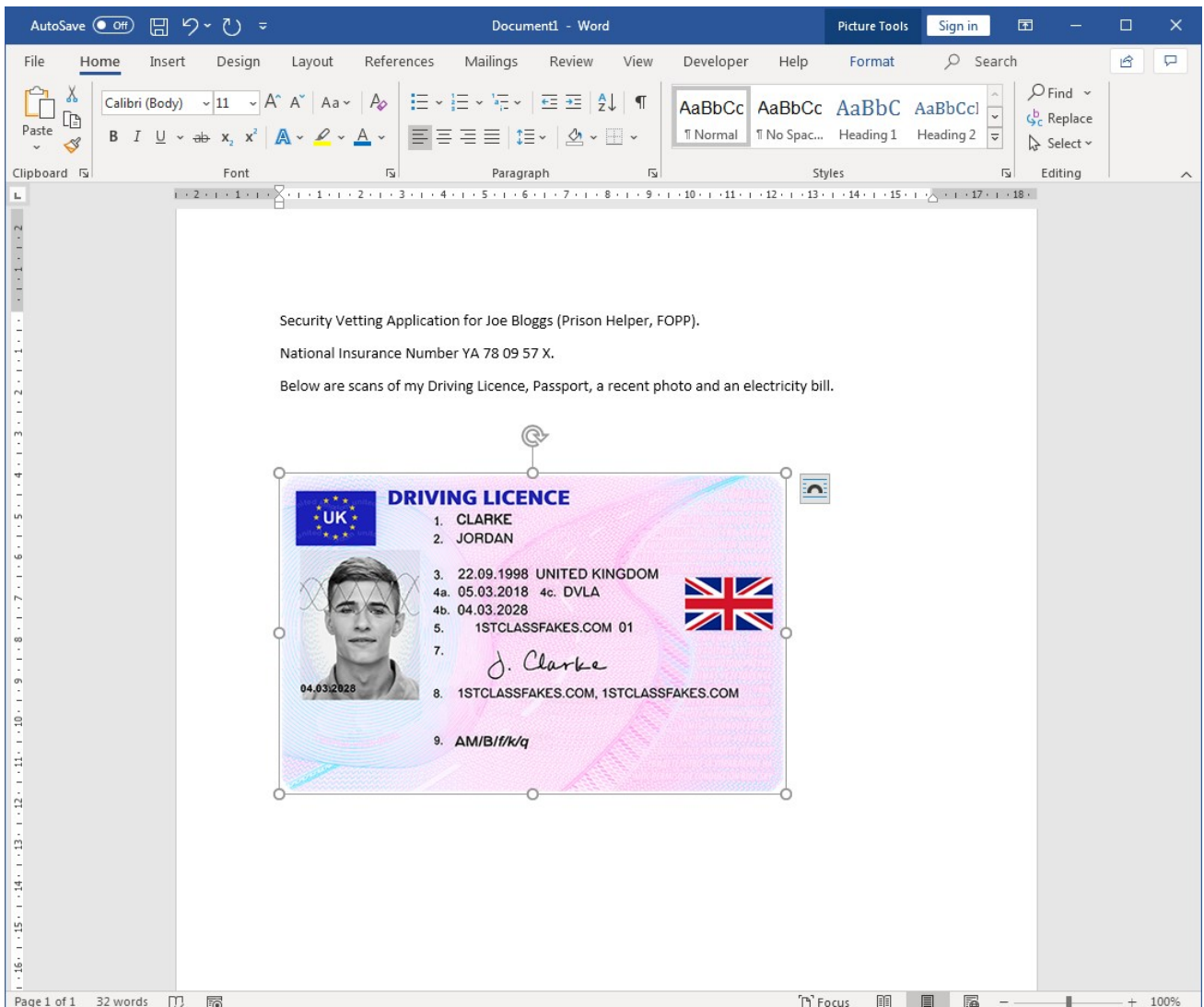


... and choose to insert the image you saved earlier.

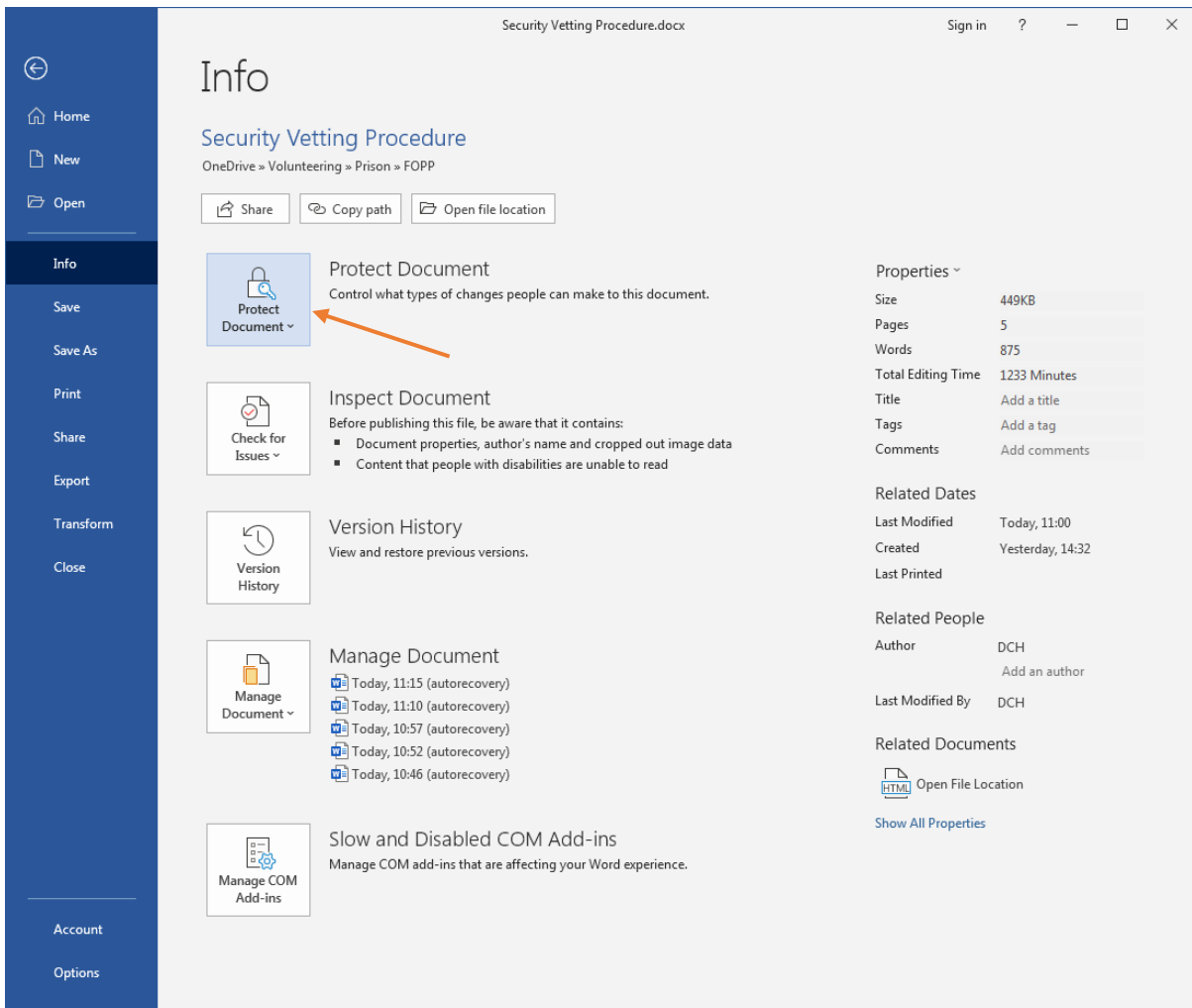
5. Your document will now look something like this:



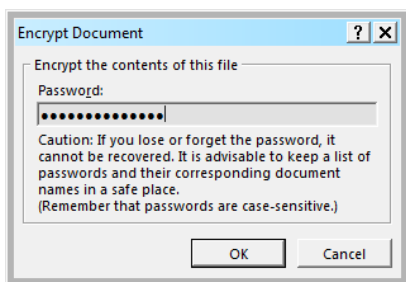
6. You might want to re-size the image to make it easier to read. To do that, click on the image and then click and drag the bottom right-hand corner to stretch the image until it looks more like this:



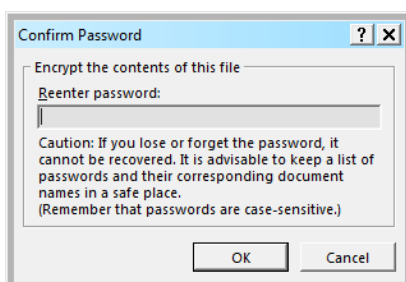
7. If your image turns out not to be the correct way up, you can rotate it by clicking on the 'rotation' handle on the image, as shown above the top centre handle in our example. (Click the handle and keep it clicked while rotating in the appropriate direction. When you are happy with the image, place the cursor at the end of the document (<CTRL-End>) and press <CTRL-CR> (Control-Carriage_Return or Control-Enter) to start a new page.
8. Repeat the above procedure for each of the remaining scans, so all your scanned images are now contained on separate pages in this single Word document. You might like to save the document now, before we produce an encrypted copy. So, for example you might choose (from the menus) File/Save_As/Browse, choose My Documents as the destination folder and give it a suitable filename. In our example we would call it "Security Vetting Application for Joe Bloggs".
9. We are now ready to encrypt the document. With the file open in Word in the usual way, repeat the procedure to save it, but this time give it a different name that makes it clear it is an encrypted file. In our example we would call it "Encrypted – Security Vetting Application for Joe Bloggs".
10. Now from the menus choose File/Info/Protect Document...



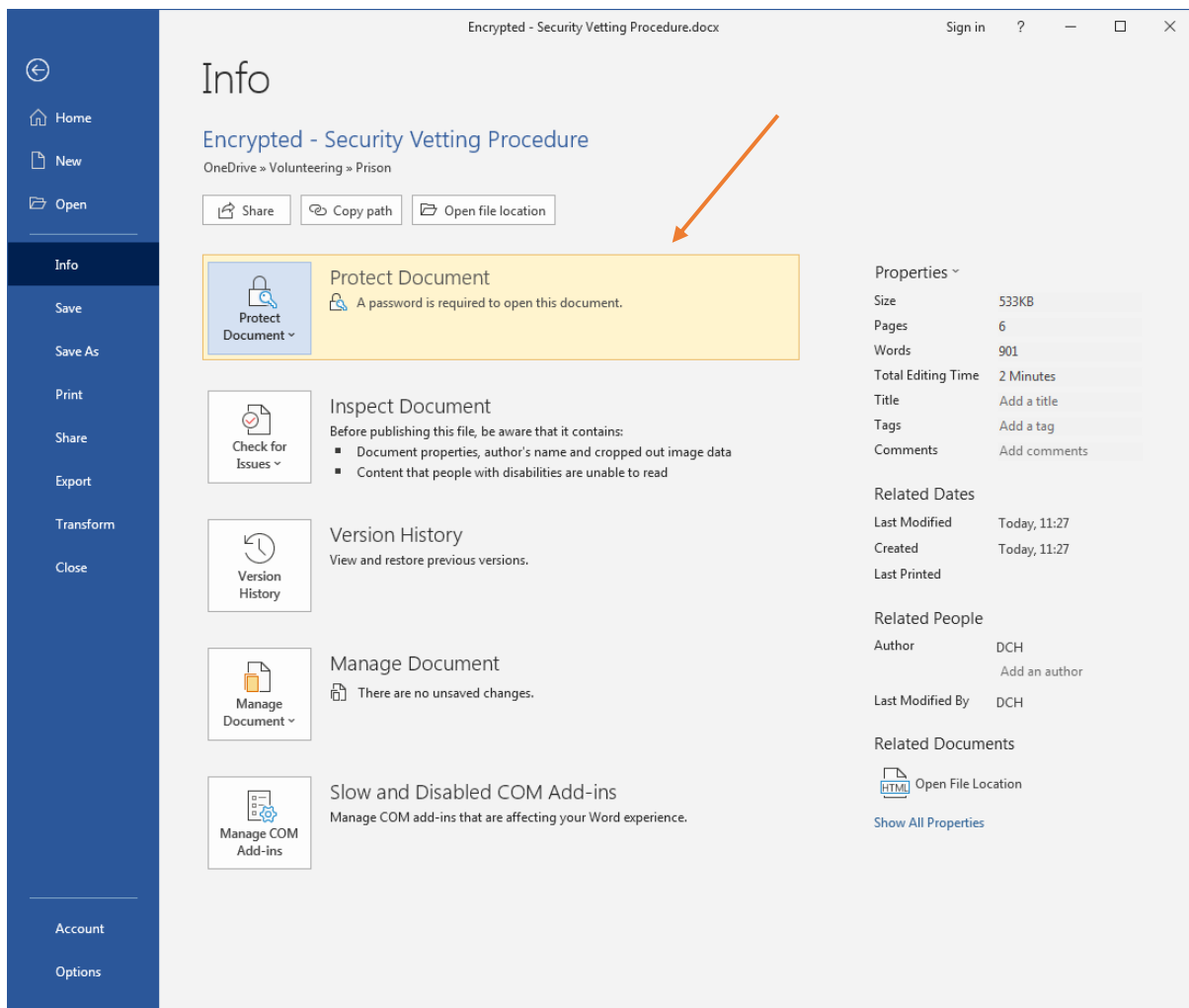
11. ... and from the drop-down list choose "Encrypt with Password":



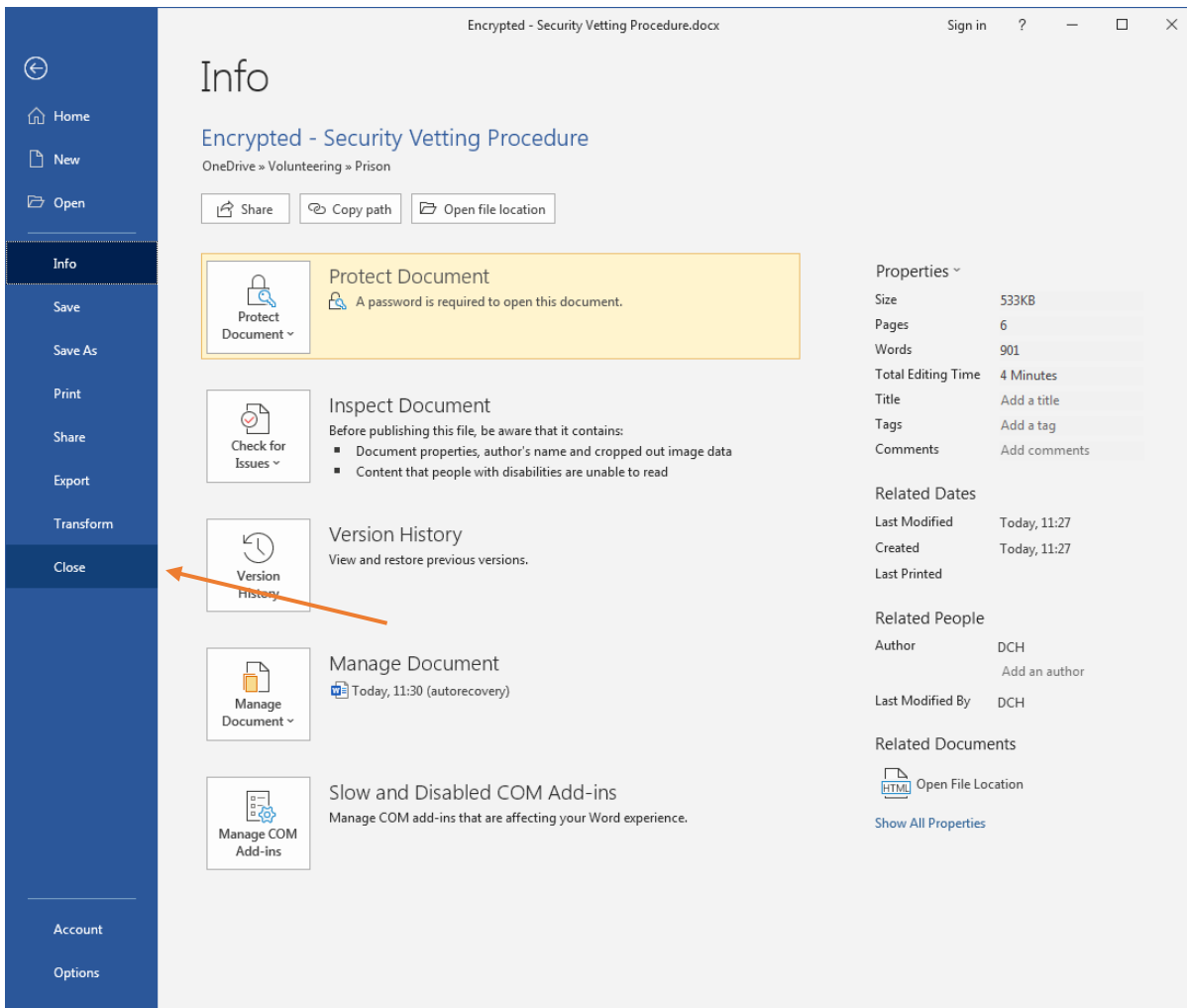
12. Type a suitable password (make sure you will be able to remember it) and click OK. You will be asked to confirm the password:



13. Confirm the password and click OK. You will see that your document is now protected:



14. You can now close the file:



15. Now email the prison with the encrypted document attached. Your email should contain a simple message explaining that the attachment is an encrypted Word document and requires a password to open it. Explain how you intend to convey the password. In this example we are sending the password by email on a different day, but it would be more secure to do so by telephone or text message:

Security Vetting Application for Joe Bloggs (Prison Helper, FOPP).

I'm pleased to send you the required items as an attachment to this email.

The attachment is a password-encrypted Word document. I will send you the password in a separate email tomorrow morning. You should then be able to just double-click the attachment to open it and Word will prompt you for the password.

16. And that's it – all done! But don't forget to let the prison have the password.

Please note:

- Passwords are case-sensitive.
- Make sure the password is "strong" (you can increase the strength by including upper and lower case letters, numerals and additional characters such as /!#?@%, etc.
- Don't forget the password! Without it, the file cannot be opened. If the password is lost, it is not recoverable. (But in the example described, we have also saved a non-encrypted version for this very reason).

Protecting Your Data – method B.

If you don't have access to Word (or a scanner), you may be able to take the documents into the FOPP office in the prison Visitor Centre and ask our Volunteer Coordinator to scan the documents for you and then email them to the relevant prison department. As the FOPP office computer is on the prison's secure network, this will not present any significant risk.

During the present lockdown restrictions this method will not be available. In any event, to prevent overloading our staff or the prison when restrictions are eventually lifted, we would urge everyone to use method A where possible.

Document prepared by David Hobbs 27/01/2021