



Article 6

How do I Become a Councillor?

Even those who have stood as councillors before may forget what the process was four years ago. While relatively easy, it is strict and if not followed exactly will result in disappointment and rejection for the wrong reasons. The rules are there to ensure that only those who are eligible to stand for election in your community are considered and that those put forward have agreed to stand for election. Councillors are elected by the public and serve four-year terms.

Can I stand as a councillor?

Check your local district council website [insert website address] for the eligibility and disqualification criteria.

The Election Procedure

All Tewkesbury, Forest of Dean and Cotswold Parish & Town Councils will hold elections in May 2023.

A few terms that it helps to explain:

- Returning Officer: person empowered to run an election
- Standing: Putting your name forward for election
- Electoral Register: Names and addresses, together with election identification numbers of all people within a community who are registered to vote
- Election Timetable: dates when specific forms must be publicised or sent in by
- Warded: Areas are split up into what is called 'wards' so that councillors are elected by a specific, smaller number of people who will be aware of their local concerns rather than having to represent all people within a whole parish.
- Expenses: If you do produce your own leaflets/pamphlets you need to declare how much you have spent on this

Step 1: Check for local elections

Speak to your local Councils' Clerk and ask if there are vacancies on the Council.

Email your elections officer <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-Council>

Go to: www.yourvotematters.co.uk

Step 2: Submit your nomination

If you can stand as a candidate, you will need to complete a set of nomination papers for the electoral area you are wanting to represent.

When you complete your nomination papers, you will need to show that you have been formally nominated by a particular number of registered electors in the electoral area you are wishing to stand. These are a proposer and seconder who support your nomination in the Parish/Town or Parish Ward (if the Parish/Town is warded) you are wanting to represent.

Nomination papers must be hand delivered to the district Council and will be checked upon delivery to ensure they are correctly completed. Please check on your local authority website whether an appointment is necessary.

Nomination forms available from all parish and town Council offices and the district authority's website.

Step 3: Nomination accepted, or not

The local authority will notify candidates in writing, via the post; this is the formal Notice of Validity.

Step 4: Nomination made public

The Statement of Persons Nominated is published on the principal authority website following the Close of Nominations.

If there are more candidates than seats, an election will be held. If not, all candidates take office 4 days after 4 May 2023 (excluding the bank holiday). Existing Councillors go out of office on 9 May 2023 and newly elected Councillors take office on this day. New Councillors must sign the acceptance of office before they can officiate.

Step 5: Start campaigning

Planning your Local Campaign

<https://www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor/resources/council-toolkit-planning-your-local-campaign>

Planning your Communications

<https://www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor/resources/council-toolkit-planning-your-communications>

Step 6: Polling Day

The Electoral Commission's website has a host of useful information for Candidates, including rules on spending, attending events and dos and don'ts for campaigning and polling day.

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/returning-officer>

This will be updated as and when the new Election's Laws are laid down.