

Becoming a Parish Councillor.

Anyone who “qualifies” can apply to be on the Parish Council, either by elections or co-option.

Qualifying to be a councillor means you must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- be at least 18 years old
- be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union, and
- meet at least **one** of the following four qualifications:

a) Your name must appear on the register of local government electors for the parish at the time of your nomination and throughout your term of office should you be elected.

b) You have occupied any land or other premises as owner or tenant in the parish/community during 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election/co-option.

c) Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election/co-option has been in the parish area. You do not have to have paid employment to qualify, as long as your main or only place of work is in the parish/community area.

d) You have lived in the parish area or within three miles of it during 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election/co-option.

You may be disqualified as a candidate if:

- You are employed by the parish council or hold a paid office under the parish council (including joint boards or committees).
- You have been declared bankrupt in the last five years and have not repaid your debts.
- You have been convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to at least three months imprisonment (including any suspended sentence) within the previous five years.
- You are disqualified due to corrupt practices under the Representation of the People Act 1983 or the Audit Commission Act.

Elections are held every four years (the last one in 2019) and in between elections if there is a vacancy the District council’s Returning Officer will declare either a by election to take place or that the Parish Council may fill the vacancy by “co-option”.

Co-option means you must apply to the Parish Council (by writing or e mailing the Parish Clerk), normally setting out your reasons for wanting to be a councillor and confirming you meet the qualifying criteria. The Parish Council then meets and considers your application, along with any others. Where more than 1 candidate applies for a seat, the decision must be by overall final majority vote.

Once on the Parish Council you must sign a Declaration of Acceptance (and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct) and complete a Declaration of Interests form which lists all your (and your spouses/partners) interests in the parish which is lodged with ELDC and which is public.