



WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

GUIDE TO ELECTIONS 2017

Created by:

Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC)
Community First



WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Guide to Elections 2017



2017 Elections

This year local council elections take place on:

Thursday 4th May

In addition to general elections for Wiltshire Unitary Councillors, there will also be elections for Parish, Town and City Councillors in Wiltshire and in some parts of Swindon.

These elections are known as **Ordinary Elections**:



Ordinary Elections are held every four years.



All current members of the council stand down and all seats become vacant.



Existing councillors who want to continue must stand for re-election. If there are more nominations than seats, a poll is held on 4th May.



If there are enough councillors for the number of seats or fewer councillors than seats, they are elected unopposed.

To stand for election to a parish or town council you need to be:



A UK or Commonwealth citizen; or



A citizen of the Republic of Ireland; or



A citizen of another Member state of the European Union; and



Aged 18 or over.

To be eligible to stand for an election for a particular parish you also need to:



Be registered as a local government elector for the parish; or



In the past 12 months have occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish; or



Work in the parish (as your principal or only place of work); or



Live within three miles of the parish boundary.



An election timetable has been previously circulated, this outlines the events leading up to and following the elections, including timings of meetings.

You are **disqualified** from standing as a candidate if:

- ✗ You are a paid employee of that local council.
- ✗ You are currently subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order or debt relief restrictions order.
- ✗ You have been convicted for the failure to register or declare disclosable interests under the Localism Act 2011.
- ✗ You have, within five years before the election, been convicted of any offence and been sentenced to not less than three months' imprisonment (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine.
- ✗ You have been convicted of offences involving corrupt or illegal practices.

ROLE OF A LOCAL COUNCIL



Local Councils are the collective voice of their communities.

They act as the employer of the clerk and other officers. They also have a range of powers and can provide, maintain and/or contribute to services in their communities. Such as:

- Village halls, community centres, recreation and leisure facilities.
- Local youth projects.
- Bus shelters, car parks and community transport schemes.
- Crime reduction measures.
- Cycle paths and traffic calming measures.
- Festivals, celebrations and tourism activities.
- Allotments, parks and open spaces.
- Litter bins, street lighting and street cleaning.
- Community safety schemes.
- Tourism

Local Councils & Councillors

LOCAL COUNCIL FUNDING



Local Council Income

Local Councils can raise money to spend on public purposes through their precept which is collected through the local Council Tax. Most of that money is invested back into the local community to improve facilities and services.

Many Local Councils also supplement the precept with grants. Sometimes they own property, and can use the money from rents or leases. They can also generate income through running their community facilities.

ROLE OF A COUNCILLOR



Local Councillors

A Councillor is an elected representative, with a normal term of 4 years in office. A Councillor is the holder of a public office and is not a volunteer.

A Councillor represents the Council externally and listens to local people. He or she attends Council meetings, making informed contributions and raising matters for the Council to consider and decide whether to take action.

Whilst a Councillor can participate in the decision-making process, he or she has no authority to make decisions about Council business on his/her own. A Councillor is also subject to a Code of Conduct and should be transparent in financial and other interests relating to Council business.

Becoming a Councillor

WHY SHOULD I STAND?

Be part of a team locally and join 80,000 councillors across England and Wales, who are working to make their communities better for residents.

Make a difference
in your local
community

Be part of the
democratic
process

Influence decision
making where
you live

Help support
local services and
facilities

Act as a link
between residents
and the Council

Influence decision
making where
you live

Bring your skills
and enthusiasm
to the council

Help to improve
the quality of life
in your local area

Influence how locally
raised money is
spent locally

Be involved with
the most local of
local authorities

Help to prepare
and sustain the
community for the
future

Be part of a team
locally and join
80,000 others in
England & Wales

Local Council Elections 2017

Important Information



Publicity

During the period between the notice of an election and the election itself, councils should not publish any publicity on controversial issues or report views in such a way that identifies them with any individual members.

It is permissible for councils to publish factual information which identifies the names of candidates at elections. Councils should not issue any publicity which seeks to influence voters.

Councils must not publish, or arrange for the publication of, any material which appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party or persons identified with a political party.

CHECKLIST FOR NOMINATION FORMS

Candidates will need to fill in all their personal details and those of the people nominating them. The candidate and those nominating will be asked to fill in their Electoral Register number.

This is the code on the front of the Electoral Register i.e. A Village might be 'SX' then this is followed by the number that appears next to the candidate's name, or next to the name of the person nominating them.

The entry in this box will therefore read something like:

SX 413



Nominations

Candidates must have their form completed and signed by those nominating them.

It will help to copy the numbers of those nominating you when you obtain your own Electoral Register number.



Don't forget to:



Get everyone mentioned to sign the forms.



Ensure that all addresses are in full with no abbreviations.



Include the whole Electoral Register reference letters and numbers

Election Timetable (Key Dates)

Be careful not to miss important dates:

This timetable covers the local council elections taking place on 4 May 2017:

The days which are disregarded in calculating the election timetable are Saturday, Sunday, bank holidays and any day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

Please note:



This page is intended as a summary of key dates. For more information about the events listed below, see the full election timetable.

Date	Event
Not later than: Mon 27 March 2017	Publication of Notice of Election.
From date on Notice to: 4pm Tues 4 April 2017	Individual submission of nomination papers.
4pm Tues 4 April 2017	Deadline for withdrawal of nomination or submitting a nomination.
4pm Weds 5 April 2017	Publication of Statement of Persons Nominated
Tues 25 April 2017	Publication of Notice of Poll
Thurs 4 May 2017 (07.00 - 22.00)	DAY OF POLL
Mon 8 May 2017	Change of Council
Not later than: Mon 22 May 2017	Annual meeting of the Council and declaration of 'Acceptance of Office'
Not later than: Mon 5 June 2017	Completion of Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
Not later than: Mon 12 June 2017	Co-options to fill casual vacancies
From: Tue 13 June 2017	Fill outstanding vacancies on the Council



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For more information contact:

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WILTSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (WALC)

The Parish, Town and City Councils of Wiltshire and Swindon play a vital role in the effective management of local community affairs and in encouraging and supporting locally based community initiatives.

Wiltshire's Rural Community Council, Community First provides the secretariat to WALC, in turn helping it to provide specialised support services to Town and Parish Councils.



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