

How to become a Town Councillor

Town Council elections are held every four years. To become a Councillor you have to be elected; 18 Councillors are elected in 6 wards, for the Dover Town Council, this may differ dependant on the Council in which you wish to stand.

People who want to be elected to a Council are called candidates.

Candidates can be nominated through a political party, or individuals can stand in their own right.

You can stand for election to a parish or town council if:

- You are a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union;
- You are 18 years or older on the day you become nominated for election;
- You are registered as a local government elector for the parish for which you want to stand;
- You have, for a 12 month period, up to the date of the election, occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish;
- Your principal or only place of work during that same 12 month period has been in the parish;
- You have during the whole of that same 12 month period resided in the parish or within 4.8 kilometres (3 miles) of it.

You may, of course, qualify under more than one of the above categories.

You cannot stand for election if:

- You are employed by the parish or town council or hold a paid office under the council (including employment by any joint boards or committees of the council);
- You are the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order;
- You have, within five years before the day of the election, been convicted in the United Kingdom of any offence and have had a prison sentence (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine;
- You have been disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (which relates to donations and other offences) or under the Audit Commission Act 1998.

No experience is needed to stand for election as a Councillor. To stand as a candidate, a form known as a nomination paper must be submitted. You can get a Nomination Paper from the District Council at Whitfield. The nomination paper gives details of your name, address (in full) and political description (if any) that will be used during your campaign. The nomination paper has to be signed two people who support your nomination to stand as a candidate.

Anyone signing the nomination paper must be included on the Register of Electors for the Ward you want to be elected in. If someone signs your nomination paper and they are not included on the correct Register of Electors, it will be invalid.

It does not cost anything to stand for election and there are strict rules on how much you can spend on your election campaign.

A detailed Guide for Candidates can be downloaded from www.dopolitics.org.uk.

If you want to stand for election you should contact the Election Office on 01304 872344 or email elections@dover.gov.uk.