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# Becoming a local councillor

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**Stratford-on-Avon  
District Council**



**Warwickshire  
County Council**



**Local parish & town  
councils**

Would **you**  
like to **influence**  
the way local services  
are provided?

Have **you** thought about  
getting more **involved**  
in the community?

This leaflet tells you how you can stand  
for election to any of the three tiers of  
local government serving your area



## Who can be a councillor?

### **You CAN stand for election for your local council if:**

- You are over 18;
- You are a British, Commonwealth, Irish or European Union citizen;
- You are registered to vote in the council's area (or if you have lived, worked or owned a property in the area for at least 12 months).

### **You CANNOT stand for election if:**

- You are bankrupt;
- You have been sentenced to three or more months in prison in the last five years;
- You have been disqualified for corrupt and illegal practices;
- You are an employee of the council, or if you hold a politically-restricted post in any council.

### **If you can meet these requirements, and you live in the Stratford-on-Avon District Council area, you can try to become a councillor for:**

- ➔ Any ward of Stratford-on-Avon District Council;
- ➔ Any electoral division of Warwickshire County Council;
- ➔ Your local parish or town council (if you have one);

**If you want to, and if you can get elected, you can be a councillor in all three types of council at once.**

## What do councillors do?

Councillors help make decisions about the way local services are provided, and how the council tax and government grants are spent. The matters they are involved in depends on the type of council.

- **Stratford-on-Avon District Council** provides major local services such as refuse collection and recycling, housing benefits, planning and development control, parks and leisure services, car parking, food hygiene and environmental protection.
- **Warwickshire County Council** provides county-wide services such as schools, libraries, social services, trading standards, planning and development policy, road safety, highway maintenance and civic amenity sites.
- **Parish and town councils** are consulted by the district and county councils on various matters affecting the local area, such as road and housing developments. They can lobby for improvements to services provided by other organisations, and they also provide some local services such as maintenance of village greens and playgrounds.





## Standing for election

The following section tells you how elections are held for the three types of councils:

### **Stratford-on-Avon District Council**

Elections for Stratford-on-Avon District Council are held every three out of four years on the first Thursday in May. However, the ward you live in may not have an election each year. The district council's website, [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk), tells you which wards have elections in which years (or you can phone the elections office on 01789 260208 to find out). Stratford-on-Avon District Council has 53 councillors, 10 of whom make up the Executive, which runs the council. All ward councillors have the opportunity to challenge Executive decisions.

### **Warwickshire County Council**

Elections for Warwickshire County Council are held every fourth year. The next election is due in 2009. Warwickshire County Council is divided into 13 electoral divisions within the Stratford area, each has one councillor serving each division, apart from Stratford South division which has two.

### **Parish and town councils**

Parish and town councils have elections every four years on the first Thursday in May. The district council's website, [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk) gives you contact details for the chairman and clerk of each council.

Parish and town councils vary in size from five to 18 councillors depending on the population of the parish. Meetings are normally held once a month. Some parish and town councils are sub-divided into parish wards. Each parish ward has a separate election and you can only stand in one ward of the parish.

It is common for parish councillors to be elected without a ballot because the number of candidates at an election is less than or equal to the number of vacancies. By increasing the number of candidates you can help to make sure voters get a chance to cast their vote.



## Political parties

You don't need to be a member of a political party to be a councillor. Anyone can stand as an independent candidate. In parish and town councils it is rarer for candidates to stand as party candidates.

For district and county councils, most councillors stand as party candidates (but you don't have to). To stand as a party candidate you must have a certificate from the party nominating officer confirming that you are their candidate.

## Helping local democracy

By standing for election, and letting electors know who you are and what you stand for, you are helping local democracy by giving voters a choice. If you get elected, you will know that you have the support of people who voted for you.

### For more information...

Contact Stratford-on-Avon District Council elections office for all types of elections in the Stratford area:

Phone: **01789 260208**

Email: **elections@stratford-dc.gov.uk**

Fax: **01789 260244**

Write to: The Elections Office, Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 6HX



Elizabeth House, Church Street  
Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6HX

Telephone 01789 267575

Facsimile 01789 260806

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e-mail [environmental@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:environmental@stratford-dc.gov.uk)

website [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk)