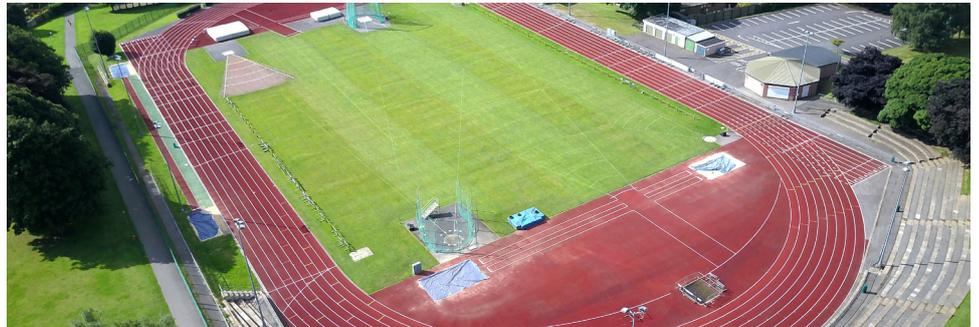


Ordinary people
doing an
amazing role



Become a District Councillor

It's a great role that will benefit you and your local community.

elections@southsomerset.gov.uk





Being a Councillor is a great role

You can make a huge difference and you'll benefit too!

This e-booklet gives an insight into the role and responsibilities of District Councillors, and some information about the Council itself. It also provides information on how to stand for election, with key dates leading to the election on 2 May 2019. We hope you find it useful.

Being a councillor is an opportunity to:



1. Get involved and listen to the views of local people
2. Influence change for the benefit of your community
3. Learn something new every day and enhance your CV
4. Meet and work with people from across the District

As a District Councillor you will help ensure:

1. Taxpayers' money is spent and invested wisely
 2. People get the services they need
 3. That everyone gets treated fairly
 4. Local businesses are supported to develop and thrive
 5. Communities are healthy, self-reliant and active
 6. The local environment is looked after and help to protect it
 7. That people have access to local homes now and for the future
 8. Residents are receiving quality services that are value for money
- 





You can do most of the role at a time that suits you. It can usually fit around day to day life, from full-time work to caring commitments - and allows you to make a valuable contribution to your community. But it does require commitment and dedication and in recognition of this we pay an [allowance](#).

Councillors come from all walks of life and it is important that they represent South Somerset's population as a whole. Different backgrounds and experiences help to produce better services responding to the differing perspectives and needs of the community.

You can make use of the skills and knowledge gained from personal and professional experience and from working with other groups. We will provide you with all the support, information and training you need.



Make a difference in your local area

Do you want to ensure local people have access to good local homes? Are you passionate about boosting recycling rates and protecting the environment? Do you want to ensure local parks and open spaces are protected and better used? Or are you committed to helping local businesses thrive? Perhaps you are already involved in local affairs and want to take the next step. You may be looking for a worthwhile and rewarding way to help your local community.

Decisions made by South Somerset District Councillors affect the lives of everyone in the area in countless ways. Representing a population of over 160,000 across the [district](#) as the local elected representative you will engage with residents and groups on a wide range of different issues and take on an important community leadership role.

On Thursday 2 May 2019, all 60 South Somerset District Council seats, are up for election. This is an opportunity for you to stand as a representative of your local community as a District Councillor.

You will need to have your nomination completed and submitted in person by 4pm on 3 April. The nomination pack can be downloaded and printed [here](#). If you have any queries regarding the election process, or require a pack sent to you, please contact elections@southsomerset.gov.uk.



What does South Somerset District Council do?

In general terms, elected Councillors make choice and decisions that guide the Council staff (officers) to implement according to laws and guidelines. The Council is responsible for delivering a range of services to communities in South Somerset. These include environmental health, planning, waste collection and countryside parks, to list just a few. The Council works in partnership with the police, health authorities, local councils, other public and voluntary organisations and private organisations to improve the quality of life in South Somerset.

Councillors help to:

1. Represent a balanced local view to help make good decisions for the whole community and inform the South Somerset District Council programme of work
2. Protect services by reducing costs and seeking income generation
3. Develop and diversify the economy
4. Protect and enhance the quality of our environment
5. Enable housing to meet everyone's needs
6. Improve the health and wellbeing for all

South Somerset District Council's aim is to be a confident, resilient and flexible organisation, protecting and improving services, delivering public priorities and acting in the best long-term interests of the District.

To support these aims, the Council needs engaged and passionate Councillors to be the eyes, ears and voices of our communities, to help solve local problems and represent local people's needs and interests in Council decisions – South Somerset District Council knows it can only be as effective, in touch and driven as the people who are elected to run the Council.





A day in the life of a councillor



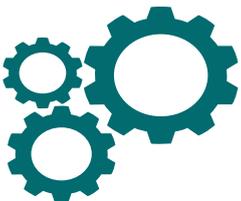
Make yourself available in your ward to discuss ideas, seek solutions and help to resolve problems.



Attending events and meetings as a District Council representative. These include local community groups, Parish and Town Council and partner organisation meetings.



Being the voice of the local community by bringing their views into the Council's policies and decision-making processes.



Play an active part in the development and scrutiny of Council, policies, budget strategies and service improvement.



Decision making by attending Council Committees.



Representing a political party (if a member of a group).



We do not provide services for Education, Highways and Social Services. These are [Somerset County Council's responsibilities](#).

How will I benefit?

Being a District Councillor will provide you with a unique experience and a wealth of knowledge. You will have training, support and tools to help you develop your knowledge and skills. These can be drawn upon for your professional career or to support groups, family and friends.

Councillor Training and Development:

We will provide a full training programme covering

1. All aspects of the Council and its services
2. Technical and skills based training including subjects such as social media and time management
3. Specific training for Committees such as Licensing, Planning and Audit
4. Individual bespoke training to develop the skills and knowledge you have in a way that suits your learning needs

Allowance:

A Member Allowance is provided to cover the costs incurred from carrying out Councillor duties and to reimburse for some of the time. The allowance is paid monthly along with additional payments to cover travelling and subsistence. Some councillors also get additional allowances to cover special responsibilities. For more information on members [allowances](#).

Flexible working:

At South Somerset we take pride in being a flexible organisation that enables officers and Members to work at a time that both works for the Council and the individual.

All Councillors are provided with tools and equipment that will make sure they can carry out a high proportion of their role from any location and at a time that works around other commitments. Meeting times are reviewed to ensure they are at a time that suits, so you can influence the day and timing of meetings. Councillors have to balance the needs and interests of residents, the political party they represent (if any) and the Council. These will all make legitimate demands on a Councillor's time. Employers are legally obliged to provide employees with reasonable time off to carry out elected Councillor duties. Before you consider becoming a Councillor you may want to discuss it with your family, friends and employer.



Key Dates

Publication of Notice of Election

Monday 18 March

Closing date for receipt of Nominations

Wednesday 3 April - 4pm

Closing date for withdrawal of Candidate

Wednesday 3 April - 4pm

Closing date for appointment of Election Agents

Wednesday 3 April - 4pm

Publication of Notice of Election Agents

Wednesday 3 April - 4pm

Publication of Statements of Persons Nominated

Thursday 4 April - 4pm

Last date for Registering to vote

Friday 12 April

Last date for receipt of Postal Vote Application

Monday 15 April - 5pm

Publication of Notice of Poll

Wednesday 24 April

Last date for receipt of Proxy Vote Applications

Wednesday 24 April

Appointment of Poll and Count Agents

Thursday 25 April

First day to Issue Replacement

Lost Postal Ballot Papers

Friday 26 April

Last day for Receipt of Emergency Proxy Vote Applications

Thursday 2 May - 5pm

Last day to Issue Replacement Spoilt or Lost Postal Ballot Papers

Thursday 2 May - 5pm

Day of Poll

Thursday 2 May 7am - 10pm

Verification of the vote

Thursday 2 May 10pm

Counting of the Votes

3 May 9.30am* to be confirmed

Commencement of Councillor Training

Tuesday 7 May

Full Council allocation of members to Committees

Thursday 23 May (evening)

Date for Return of Election Expenses

Friday 2 June





Stand for election

The next District Council election is on 2 May 2019

If you would like to become a Councillor you need to have your [nomination](#) completed and submitted **in person** by 4pm on 3 April, to Brympton Way.

You need to:

1. Decide whether you wish to represent a political party.
2. Decide which Ward you want to represent, a ward is a part of the District that elects one, two or three councillors, depending on its size. Find South Somerset [wards here](#).
3. Contact elections@southsomerset.gov.uk from March 2019 for nomination papers. Get them signed by 10 registered electors from the ward and submit them by 4pm on 3rd April 2019. You don't have to pay a deposit to stand for election to the District Council.

Can you stand for election?



Please see the guidance from the Electoral Commission from this link:

https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/141784/Part-1-Can-you-stand-for-election-LGEW.pdf

For more information, please [click here](#) or contact elections@southsomerset.gov.uk

For more information on the District Councillor role, please [click here](#).

