



Who Stands for Council?

IT'S PEOPLE LIKE YOU.....

In May 2027, Biddulph residents will elect their next local councillors. Are you passionate about your community? Do you have innovative ideas for the council? Do you have concerns about a specific issue and want to do something about it? If this is you, then we need you. We need people from all backgrounds and experiences to put themselves forward for election.

BIDDULPH TOWN COUNCIL

Biddulph Town Council, based within the Town Hall, is the first tier of Staffordshire's three tier system of local government, County, District and Town/Parish Councils operating in the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Biddulph Town Council, created in 1974 to greater represent the people of Biddulph, is your local council, and is responsible for the management of the Town Hall, Biddulph Grange Visitor Centre, the 'Bus Hub', burial grounds, allotments, tourism, community events, grant assistance to local groups, etc. Although the smallest of the councils operating in the town, it has a varied workload, impacting the lives of those living in the town.

Biddulph has 22 unpaid councillors, elected by residents every four years, representing five geographical areas (known as wards). Councillors engage with residents, local groups and businesses to understand their needs, make policy and take key decisions on the council's budget, service and projects.

Biddulph Town Council has 11 employees (paid); 7.1 FTE (full time equivalent).

STANDING AS A CANDIDATE

You don't have to be a member of a political party to stand; you can be an independent councillor—you'll need to build your profile, so local people know who you are.

If you want to represent a political party, then the next step would be to get involved with your party locally. This will help you find out more about what the role entails. It's up to the political parties' local groups to decide whether to select you as their candidate.

Whether selected by a party or standing as an independent candidate, you must be officially nominated. Ten people (registered electors in the ward where you wish to stand) must sign your nomination papers.

The local election process for Biddulph Town Council will begin in March 2027 when a Notice of Election will be published on the Town Hall noticeboard and on our website. You can request a nomination pack from the Returning Officer at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

More information can be found on the government's 'Become a councillor' page: <https://www.gov.uk>.

The Local Government Association's 'Be a councillor' campaign is also helpful: <https://www.local.gov.uk>

WILL IT TAKE UP A LOT OF TIME?

Unlike a normal job where your contract sets out how many hours you're expected to work, when it comes to being a councillor, it's definitely true that 'you get out exactly what you put in'.

The number of hours you need to spend will be determined by the number of committees you agree to be appointed to.

We try to keep August free of meetings each year, but some may take place, depending on council business.

Consider the impact on your family, you'll need their support and understanding as you may spend a lot of your spare time on council business.

WILL I GET PAID?

There is no salary for being a Biddulph Town Councillor; it is a voluntary role. An allowance is available to cover reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred whilst carrying out council duties, such as travel expenses.

THE ROLE OF A COUNCILLOR

Town Councillors are champions of the community and give residents a voice on the decisions a Town Council makes. They play a key role:

- Regularly attending meetings of the council, and of any committee, or other working group.
- Dealing with issues raised by constituents.
- Actively being aware of issues, inside and outside the council, which affect either their ward or the wider community.
- Working in partnership with other local organisations to identify and pursue local needs and aspirations, encouraging community action.
- Participating in local forums and events that collectively provide a focus for community activity and development.
- Representing the council in an ambassadorial role, articulating the council's policies and views, as well as projecting the good image of the council and Biddulph.

WHO CAN BE A TOWN COUNCILLOR?

Any person over 18 who is a British citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union can be a councillor if they are registered to vote in the area or have lived, worked or owned property there for at least 12 months before an election.

You cannot stand for election if you work for the council you want to be a councillor for, or for another local authority in a political restricted post; are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order; have been sentenced to prison for 3 months or more (including suspended sentences) during the 5 years before the day of an election or have been convicted of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court.

Applications are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief.

DO I NEED SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS?

No special qualifications are required to become a councillor, other than having a keen interest in your community and the town and being available for council meetings (which usually take place on Tuesday evenings). Having or being able to develop the following skills, knowledge and attributes will help you:

COMMUNICATION SKILLS —including listening and interpersonal skills, public speaking skills, the ability to consider alternative points of view and to negotiate, mediate and resolve conflict.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND ANALYTICAL SKILLS— to get to the bottom of an issue and to think of different ways to resolve it, including considering the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

TEAM WORKING—to work with others in meetings and on committees.

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS— to plan and manage time, keep appointments and meet deadlines.

ENGAGING WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY—making yourself available through meetings, the media, public forums, via email and on the telephone.

Skills gained through work, raising a family, caring for relatives, volunteering or being active in community or faith groups are highly valuable. Life experience is probably the best thing you can bring to the role.

WHY BECOME A COUNCILLOR?

People decide to become a councillor for a variety of reasons, usually because they want to make a difference in their community.

You may already be involved in our community in some way, for example, in a parent council or a voluntary group and are looking to take the next step. Or, you may be thinking that your neighbour or friend would make an ideal candidate. Why not show them this information and encourage them to stand?

Being a councillor requires commitment, patience and resilience and can be demanding and stressful but is very rewarding and interesting too.

COUNCILLOR REV YAN YAN CASE — INDEPENDENT

Supporting the flourishing of our local community and helping people develop a strong sense of belonging has always been central to my professional life as a Methodist Minister. Serving as a local councillor represents a natural extension of this commitment, shaped and motivated by my faith and dedication to public service.

Through my business background, I hope to contribute to the development and sustainability of our local businesses, recognising their vital role in the prosperity and wellbeing of our town.

I greatly appreciate the Town Council's ongoing commitment to improving Biddulph and value the natural beauty and local attractions that make our town distinctive.

I hope to support the council in further strengthening Biddulph's profile, attracting more visitors, and enhancing its reputation on a wider regional and national level.



COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH — INDEPENDENT

As someone who takes part in a lot of community events, including running charity events within the town, I always wondered what else I could do to support people in Biddulph. I saw councillor's at the various events, working alongside the Town Council team.

I was asked by a member of the public to stand, I did and was elected!

It's really interesting work and really great to be able to support the town and be an advocate for it's residents.



COUNCILLOR NIGEL YATES — LABOUR & CO-OPERATIVE

I've always been interested in politics, and believe that it should be a force for positive, inclusive change.

Getting involved in local politics is something that has always been on my mind, but work commitments previously prevented me from committing the time that I felt was required to make an impact.

I have to say in hindsight, I should have done it earlier, as I've found the role very rewarding and would recommend it to anyone who truly cares about their town, its environment, and its residents.



BECOMING A COUNCILLOR– FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does the Town Council actually do?

Town and parish councils play an increasingly important role in local communities. As local government evolves, they are taking on more responsibilities, assets, and powers. As a councillor, you would help shape decisions that benefit your town and influence its future.

What Town Councillors DO:

- Represent residents and raise local concerns.
- Comment on planning applications.
- Help look after local amenities.
- Support local events, businesses, and community projects, using a small local budget.
- Work with larger councils on issues such as roads, housing and community safety.

What Town Councillors DON'T do:

- Make final decisions on major planning applications or stop housing developments independently.
- Control national policies such as immigration.
- Run services such as the NHS, police or schools.
- Fix potholes (this is the responsibility of the county council).

Is there an age limit?

As long as you're 18 or over, you can stand to become a town councillor. Having councillors of different ages and backgrounds helps ensure decisions are well-informed and reflect the whole community.

How much time does it take?

Most councillors attend one full council meeting each month (except August and December), along with any committee meetings they are part of. Meetings are usually held on Tuesday evenings and last around two hours. You would receive agendas and papers in advance, to prepare for discussions.

I've never been a councillor before, will I feel out of my depth?

You'll be supported as you get started, with training, guidance and advice available. There are plenty of opportunities to learn, ask questions, and build your confidence over time.

Can I be a councillor if I work full time?

Yes, many councillors successfully balance the role alongside work, family and other commitments.

Supportive employers can make a big difference, and you may be entitled to time off for public duties under employment law. If you're self-employed, it's worth considering how your schedule can accommodate council responsibilities. If you're unsure, speaking to a current councillor can give you a realistic picture of what's involved.

Why become a councillor?

Being a councillor gives you the chance to make a real difference in your community.

It's also a valuable opportunity to develop skills in leadership, communication, and decision-making, while gaining practical experience.

Most importantly, you'll help shape local decisions, represent your community, and contribute to improving everyday life in your area.