

Can I be a Parish Councillor?



Q
Boxley
Parish
Council

**Boxley Parish Council.
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Who can be a Parish Councillor?

Roughly speaking if you are over 18 years of age, an elector of the parish or live within 3 miles of the parish boundary then you can stand to become a parish councillor. There are certain other additional qualifications that allow the public to stand e.g. ownership of land in the parish and there are some that disqualify a person from serving e.g. bankruptcy.



Where can I get more information on qualification or disqualification?

From Maidstone Borough Council (Registration 01622 602007) or the parish office 01634 861237.

How long do I serve for?

Elections are held every 4 years but you can of course resign at any point.

Do I have to belong to a political party?

No it is not a requirement. Boxley Parish Council is, at present, non political.

I want more information before I consider this?

Information can be gained in a number of ways.

- Attend some meetings. These are advertised on the parish noticeboards and a list of dates and locations can be obtained from the parish office.
- Have a look at the parish council's website which includes copies of recent minutes of meetings.
- Ask the parish office for an information pack, which gives details on the powers awarded to a parish council and its role in the community.
- Talk to your local parish councillors.
- Read the parish council newsletter.

What type of people serve on a parish council?

Parish councils exist throughout the country and their councillors are as diverse as the communities that they repre-



sent. Some councillors initially stand for election because they are concerned about a local issue; they have got angry at poor service or because they just wish to put something back into the community. Most continue to stand because they realise that they can actually make a difference to their community.

Parish councillors come from all walks of life and their individual experiences, skills and views make the parish council vibrant and diverse. Due to this diversity not all councillors agree with each other all the time. Generally adequate time is given to explore the various views and concerns and then an opinion is reached by voting.

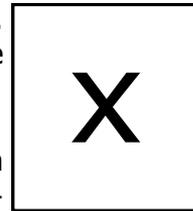
How do I get elected?

There are two ways

Elections every 4 years. Elections were last held on 3rd May 2012. You will have to complete a nomination paper and return this to Maidstone Borough Council. The parish office can again give you more information on this.

Co-option of a parish councillor.

If a vacancy occurs between elections then you can apply to join the council. Notification of a casual vacancy is via advertisement on the parish noticeboards or by telling the parish office of your interest.



What would be required of me?

Some of the Boxley Parish Councillors work and councillors individually decide what they can commit to. Some councillors do more than others because of personal interest and free time. You are however asked to regularly attend the 10 monthly parish council meetings (generally the first Monday of a month, second Monday is there is a Bank Holiday).

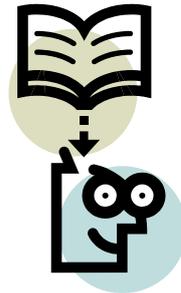
An interest in the community and a willingness to read documents (agenda/reports) and to consider the community's needs and represent these at the meetings is

also expected.

All councillors must agree to work to a Code of Conduct which clearly states what behaviour is required on a day to day basis and what to do in certain situations. There are also Standing Orders on how meetings are held etc. These rules are generally fair and helpful rather than intrusive and further information on these can be obtained from the parish office.

An annual allowance of £476* can be claimed to meet personal expenses.

*Unfortunately this is not available to Co-Opted councillors.



Boxley Parish Council prides itself on being proactive. It welcomes new ideas and interested people to serve the many diverse communities in the parish.