

Essential information

This section of the document contains our guidance on whether or not you can stand for election at a parish council election in England or a community council election in Wales. Supplementary information, which may only be relevant to some candidates, is provided at the back of this document. You can view this supplementary guidance by clicking on the links within this document or by clicking on the chapter heading on the contents page.

We are here to help, so please contact us if you have any questions.

See our [Overview document](#) for contact details.

In this document, we use 'you' to refer to the candidate. We use 'must' to refer to a specific requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be a minimum good practice, but which are not legal or regulatory requirements.

Deadlines mentioned in this document are generic. We have published a [generic election timetable on our website](#). For scheduled polls we will publish a specific timetable which will be available on our website.

If a by- election has been called, you will be able to obtain a copy of the specific timetable for that election from the Returning Officer.

Revised data protection legislation applies to the processing of all personal data.

Please contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for further information about how the General Data Protection Regulation affects you.

Qualifications for standing for election

1.1 To be able to stand as a candidate at a parish council election in England or a community council election in Wales you must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be a British citizen, an eligible **Commonwealth citizen** or a citizen of any **member state of the European Union**, and
- meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
 - a. You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish/community in which you wish to stand from the day of your nomination onwards. See paragraph 1.11 for further information.
 - b. You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish/community area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election. For more details, see paragraph 1.12.
 - c. Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election has been in the parish/community area. More information is provided in paragraph 1.19.
 - d. You have lived in the parish/community area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election. See paragraph 1.20 for further details.

An **eligible** Commonwealth citizen is a Commonwealth citizen who either:

- does not need leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, or
- has indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom

Disqualifications

1.2 Apart from meeting the qualifications for standing for election, you must also not be disqualified.

The full range of disqualifications is complex and if you are in any doubt about whether you are disqualified, you must do everything you can to check that you are not disqualified before submitting your nomination papers.

You must be sure that you are not disqualified as you will be asked to sign one of the required nomination papers to confirm that you are not disqualified.

It is a criminal offence to make a false statement on your nomination papers as to your qualification for being elected, so if you are in any doubt you should contact your employer, consult the legislation or, if necessary, take your own independent legal advice.

The Returning Officer will not be able to confirm whether or not you are disqualified.

1.3 There are certain people who are disqualified from being elected to a parish or community council in England and Wales. You cannot be a candidate if at the time of your nomination and on polling day:

- a. You are **employed by the parish/community council** or hold a paid office under the parish/community council (including joint boards or committees). For further information, see paragraph 1.22.
- b. You are the subject of a **bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order**. For more information, see paragraph 1.27
- c. You have **been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more** (including a suspended sentence), without the option of a fine, during the five years before polling day.
- d. You have **been disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1983** (which covers corrupt or illegal electoral practices and offences relating to donations). The disqualification for an illegal practice begins from the date the person has been reported guilty by an election court