



DAPTC ON BEHALF OF CRANBORNE & EDMONDSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

NOTICE OF CO-OPTION

Join our local team and become a Parish Councillor

There are currently eleven councillor vacancies on Cranborne & Edmondsham Parish Council; eight in the Cranborne ward, and three in the Edmondsham ward. The Parish Council is seeking to fill these vacancies by co-option at an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council scheduled for Tuesday 21 July 2026. If you are interested in supporting the parish by becoming a councillor, please read on!

No special qualification is required to be a councillor. It is important that all sorts of people serve as councillors so that all parts of the community are represented. Training for new councillors is also available to help you understand the responsibilities of the role. If you think you'd like to join the Parish Council or would like to know more, please get in touch with the Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils, who will be happy to talk with you about the role and what's involved. Call 01305 224460 or email daptc@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.

How can I apply?

The application process is simple – a one-sided form giving your details and a short statement explaining why you want to become a councillor. **Applications received after 14 July 2026 may not be considered.** At a council meeting, the (currently three) parish councillors will vote on whether to accept the application. This vote is a requirement, even if there are fewer applicants than available seats. Once confirmed by the vote, the councillor signs a declaration and immediately takes their place as a councillor. The whole process is called 'co-option'.

What do Parish Councillors do?

The Parish Council is made up of 12 councillors, who act voluntarily but are holders of public office making local decisions for the parish. They meet at least every other month to discuss and act on issues that are important to the local community. The Parish Council sets a proportion of local taxes to be spent in the Parish, comments on planning applications in the Parish and runs projects that help maintain, improve or enhance the local area. Local Government is changing and Parish Councils are seeing an increase in the responsibilities and opportunities to influence decisions made that affect our local community.

Becoming a councillor is a rewarding experience as you will be able to make a change in your community to help improve residents' lives.

How much time does it take up?

The bi-monthly council meetings have in recent times generally lasted for under an hour, although this depends on the agenda set for the meeting to discuss. In addition to the regular meetings, councillors are required to attend other meetings representing the council, for example acting as a representative on an outside body, community activities or helping develop a new project for the community. Such meetings won't happen every day, so it's not going to take over your life!



How long does a parish councillor serve for?

Once elected, parish councillors sit on the council until the next election – in Dorset that day should be Thursday 3 May 2029.

Am I eligible to be a Parish Councillor?

In order to be a parish councillor you must:

- be at least 18 years old
- be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights
- meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
 - You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish in which you wish to stand from the day of your nomination onwards.
 - You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election.
 - Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your application and the day of co-option has been in the parish area.
 - You have lived in the parish area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your application and the day of co-option.

You don't have to be connected to a political party. If you do become a parish councillor you will have to agree to abide by a Code of Conduct.

You cannot be co-opted if at the time of your application and on the day of co-option:

- You are employed by the parish council or hold a paid office under the parish council.
- You are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
- 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 co-option and the period allowed for an appeal or applications in respect of the conviction has passed.
- You have been disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- You are subject to the notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the period allowed for making an appeal or application has passed.
- You have been convicted of an intimidatory criminal offence motivated by hostility towards a candidate, future candidate or campaigner or holder of a relevant elective office.

What powers do parish councils have?

They have a wide range of powers related to local matters, such as looking after community buildings, open space, allotments, play areas, street lighting, bus shelters, car parks, and more. The council also has the power to raise money through taxation, called the precept. The precept is the parish council's share of the council tax. The precept demand goes to the billing authority, Dorset Council, which collects the tax for the parish council.

For more information and/or an application form, contact DAPTC on 01305 224460 or email daptc@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

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