

## **CHIDHAM & HAMBROOK PARISH COUNCIL**

### **VACANCY FOR A COUNCILLOR**

There is a vacancy on this Parish Council for a councillor to be filled by co-option.

**Any person wishing to be considered for co-option should email or write to the Clerk** briefly setting out:

- why they would like to become a Councillor
- any background information relevant to their co-option , and - confirmation of their eligibility to become a Councillor

Please see the Frequently Asked Questions sheet attached for more information.

Please note:

The person co-opted to the Council will be required to sign a declaration that they will conform to the requirements of the Local Code of Conduct for Parish Councils and will be asked to give their consent for the summons to attend meetings to be transmitted to them by email.

For additional information please contact the Clerk.

Mrs Bambi Jones  
Clerk of the Council  
6 Woodlands Park  
Main Road Yapton  
Arundel  
BN18 0EZ  
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E-mail: [clerk@chidhamandhambrook-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@chidhamandhambrook-pc.gov.uk)

# BECOMING A PARISH COUNCILLOR

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What does the Parish Council do?

The Parish Council is the tier of local government sitting below District and County Councils. There are ten councillors for Chidham and Hambrook plus the Clerk who is a paid officer of the council. The Council is funded by residents of the Parish in the form of a "precept" which it determines in its annual budget and is collected by Chichester District Council as part of your council tax.

Council has been involved in various environmental projects around the parish, often in partnership with others such as West Sussex County Council. Whilst there is a natural focus on parish issues and needs, it is also important to look at wider issues and policies which will impact on the parish e.g. from Government, County and District Council, the Environment agency.

The Council has little power but a reasonable amount of influence. A prime example of this is planning applications. The planning authority is Chichester District Council and the Parish Council is consulted on every planning application within the parish.

As a Councillor you would need to attend regular Council meetings which are currently held on the first Thursday of every month and to attend ad hoc meetings to deal with matters requiring urgent attention (say a further 4 meetings a year). There may be opportunities to join various other advisory committees set up by the Council e.g. the Planning Committee, the Finance Committee, the Play and Open Spaces Advisory Committee (POSAC) and to attend meetings with other bodies such as County and District Councils.

### What does a Parish Councillor do?

Councillors represent the electors in their parish ward. They are accessible to residents to listen to their concerns and to deal with them or to pass them for action to the appropriate authorities directly or via the Parish Clerk.

Councillors may represent the Council on local bodies and in meetings with other authorities. They help formulate responses to county or national consultations when relevant local issues are involved.

Councillors can provide leadership on local initiatives. In Chidham and Hambrook councillors and residents put together the Neighbourhood Plan which identifies the key features that characterise the Parish and sets out how change can be managed to maintain the distinctiveness of the area. The document serves as a guide for planning applications as well as a reference for the District Council on the Parish's views.

The championing of local projects and providing leadership over local issues is an important, and rewarding, aspect of a councillor's role. Persistence in dealing with the authorities and utilities is an essential virtue. In everything they do, councillors need to bring integrity and common sense to their approach and look for viable, pragmatic outcomes that can be achieved.

All this work involves time, of course. Meetings have to be attended. Planning applications and other documents have to be reviewed. The work load varies, but an average weekly estimate of 3–5 hours would be reasonable. In return is the immense satisfaction of putting something back into the community.

Councillors have substantial support in performing their duties. First of all there is the Parish Clerk which is a paid position to provide an experienced person to look after the administration of the council as well as to be on hand to offer advice and guidance to the councillors.

Training is available to the new councillor and will cover all aspects of the role. The Council acts very much as a team and fellow councillors are always there to support each other. Help is also available from organisations such as SSALC (Sussex and Surrey County Association of Local Councils). Further information can be found at <https://beacouncillor.co.uk/>

If you would like to know more please contact the Parish Clerk by emailing [clerk@chidhamandhambrook-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@chidhamandhambrook-pc.gov.uk) or by telephoning on 07986 395253.

Am I eligible?	How do I stand for Co-Option?
<p>In order to be a Parish Councillor you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be aged 18 years or over</li> <li>• be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any member state of the European Union.</li> </ul> <p>You must meet at least one of the following on the day you are nominated and on polling/co-option day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be a local government elector in the parish (i.e. on the electoral roll) <b>or</b></li> <li>• have lived in the parish or within 3 miles of it for the last twelve months <b>or</b></li> <li>• have been an owner or tenant of land or premises in the parish for the last twelve months <b>or</b></li> <li>• have your principal or only place of work in the parish for the last twelve months</li> </ul> <p>You do not have to belong to a political party.</p>	<p>Existing Members of Council may co-opt new members if a casual vacancy occurs e.g. when a Councillor resigns, or when there are insufficient nominations in an ordinary election. Vacancies are advertised on the parish noticeboards and website.</p> <p><b>Disqualification:</b></p> <p>A person cannot be a candidate if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are employed by the Council</li> <li>• are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order</li> <li>• have been sentenced to imprisonment (including a suspended sentence) for 3 months or more during the last 5 years</li> </ul> <p>As the full range of disqualifications is complex, you may need to check these before confirming your eligibility to become a councillor.</p>