

Who can stand?

Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated and on polling day:

- ♦ be at least 18 years of age
- ♦ be a British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or qualifying national of an EU member state

The candidate should check the most up-to-date guidance on the [Electoral Commission website](#) with regard to qualifications.

A prospective candidate must also meet at least one of the following four qualifications on the day they are nominated and on polling day:

1. they are registered as a local government elector for the parish or town council area in which they wish to stand; or
2. they have, during the whole of the previous 12 month period, occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the parish or town council area; or
3. their main or only place of work during the whole of the previous 12 month period has been in the parish or town council area; or
4. they have, during the whole of the previous 12 month period, lived in authority area for Dorset Council or in the parish or town council area (or within 4.8 km/3miles of it)

A person **cannot** be a candidate if at the time of their nomination or their election:

- ♦ they are employed by the parish or town council or hold a paid office under that council; or
- ♦ they are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order in England or Wales; or
- ♦ they 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 election day (ie, since 2 May 2019); or
- ♦ a person may also be disqualified from election if they have been convicted or reported guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court, or if they have been disqualified from standing for election to a local authority

What's the nomination process?

Key information about the nomination process and administration - this part of the election process generates and results in a lot of errors by candidates. With 1500 parish and town councillor seats that means a spike in questions you might receive as well as the elections team at Dorset Council. The aim of the support this time around for May 2024 is to where possible **'get it right first time'**:

- ♦ A straightforward form, but using less than straightforward language!
- ♦ If a town or parish is warded – must state which ward
- ♦ Must include the candidate's surname and other names in full; however, candidates may use a commonly used surname(s) and/or forename(s)

- ✦ A candidate may choose to use a description which will appear on the ballot papers – HEALTH WARNING!
- ✦ A separate form is included for the candidate's current home address which must be completed in full
- ✦ Each nomination paper needs to be signed (subscribed) by TWO electors who are registered as local government electors for the parish or town (or ward)
- ✦ The electoral number of each elector must be entered on the nomination paper

There's more!

- ✦ Consent to Nomination - in order for a nomination to be valid, the candidate must also give their consent to the nomination and state that they are qualified to stand for election
- ✦ The candidate must also provide their date of birth
- ✦ The candidate must sign and date the consent to nomination before the deadline for delivery of nomination papers
- ✦ The candidate's signature must be witnessed, and the witness must also sign the form and give their full name and address
- ✦ The Consent to Nomination should be delivered by hand to the Returning Officer with the other nomination papers before the deadline

Standing for a Political Party?

- ✦ Standing for a political party - Candidates wanting to use a description on the ballot paper that associates them with a registered political party, must supply a certificate of authorisation.
- ✦ The certificate of authorisation must be signed by the registered nominating officer of the political party or by someone authorised to act on his/her behalf.
- ✦ If a candidate is authorised to use a party's description on the ballot paper, they can request that the party's emblem is also included.
- ✦ The certificate of authorisation and request to use an emblem must be delivered to the Returning Officer together with the candidate's nomination papers.

And finally..... The Nomination Timetable

- ✦ Nomination forms and information will be made available online from **mid-February 2024**
- ✦ Notice of election will be published on **Monday 11 March 2024**
- ✦ Nominations can be received from **Tuesday 12 March 2024**
- ✦ Must be delivered by hand
- ✦ By appointment – in a variety of locations (Dorchester, Weymouth, Wimborne, Blandford, Wareham) – times and dates to be advised by the elections team
- ✦ Deadline for receipt of nominations by Returning Officer – **Friday 5 April 2024 (4pm)**
- ✦ The **5 April 2024 at 4pm** is also deadline for withdrawal of nomination