

Badgeworth Parish Council

Vacancies & Co-options

Procedure for advertising a vacancy on the Parish Council

- A notice to be posted on the notice boards within the Parish inviting written applications.
- Name of the Ward in which vacancy arises and brief information about the Parish (i.e. number of wards, Councillors and meetings)
- Timescale given to submit a **written request** to be co-opted. Place, date and time of co-option meeting.
- Contact details for Clerk to Council for further information. All candidates to complete form which includes eligibility criteria and return to the clerk **before** the meeting confirming that they are eligible to be co-opted.

PROCEDURE AT THE COUNCIL MEETING

The co-option to fill the vacancy must be on the agenda for the council meeting.

The process is as follows:

1. Any applications received will be circulated to Members of the Council in advance of the meeting at which the Co-option is to be considered.
2. Co-option will usually be towards the start of the agenda for the meeting where the co-option will take place.
3. Applicants will be advised that they will be asked to introduce themselves and explain briefly why they are interested in becoming a councillor. Questions from existing Councillors would be expected.
4. Discussion about the applications will take place in open Council session without intervention. Each candidate will be asked questions whilst the other applicants remain outside the hall.
5. **Voting:** the voting is in open session by secret ballot.
 - a) Voting will be in accordance with the statutory requirements in that a successful Candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more Candidates than vacancies, and no one at the first Count receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the Candidate with the least number of votes, and the remainder must then be put to the vote again. This process must, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.
 - b) Where the numbers of Candidates match the number of vacancies a vote is still required and there will be a show of hands to ensure the Candidate(s) receive a majority of support.
 - c) A Council may reject a Candidate with good reasons for doing so but is still under an obligation to fill the vacancy as soon as possible.

- d) After the vote has been concluded, the Chair will declare the successful Candidate duly Elected. If the result is tied, the process should be repeated at least once more before the Chair exercises their casting vote (again by written ballot).

The successful Candidate becomes a Member of the Parish Council upon signing the Declaration of Office and remains a Councillor until the next Election of the Council, or until they voluntarily resign, or becomes disqualified, to hold the position of Councillor.

Note that a Register of Members Interests must be returned promptly to the Monitoring Officer to remain a Parish Councillor.

If a Candidate is a relative of a Councillor, that Councillor should declare an interest and withdraw from the meeting.

NOTE: The qualifications for being a councillor are clearly defined in the Local Government Act 1972.

Badgeworth Parish Council

Parish Councillor Nomination Form

I (insert name) hereby confirm, that I am eligible to apply for the vacancy of Badgeworth Councillor (**Badgeworth/Bentham Ward**), the information given on this form is a true and accurate record and I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified from being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 78A of the Local Government Act 2000 or Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 (contact Elections at Tewkesbury Borough Council 01684 272025 for information)

Signed Dated

Information sought	Your response	Explanatory notes
Date of birth:		A person must be eighteen years old.
Nationality:		A person must be a qualifying Commonwealth, an Irish Republic, or a relevant EU, citizen.
What is your connection to the Parish (e.g. you live there)?		A person must either: • I am registered as a Local Government Elector for the Parish • I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my Co-Option, occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the Parish/Town; or • my principal or only place of work during those twelve months has been in the Parish/Town; or • I have, during the whole of twelve months, resided in the Parish/Town or within 4.8 kilometres of it.
Do you have any reason to believe that you might be disqualified from standing as a Parish Councillor?		The person must not be disqualified. A person convicted of a criminal offence, or a person who is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order might, for example, be a disqualified person. (contact 01684 272025 for information)

Please return completed form to:

| 07840073143 | clerk@badgeworthparishcouncil.gov.uk

What parish councillors do

Parish councillors have a dual role: -

1. They represent the views and concerns of the residents of the parish to the Parish Council itself and, through it, to the district, county or unitary authority;
2. They report back to residents on issues affecting the parish.

The formal part of these roles, especially the first one, is carried out by attending meetings and corresponding with the parish clerk. Individual councillors do not have, and cannot be given, powers to make decisions on behalf of the parish council. This applies to the chairman as much as to the other councillors, although the chairman does have personal responsibilities in connection with the running of formal meetings.

The less formal part of these roles of listening and talking to people, including the local elected members of the district, county or unitary council, will almost certainly take up more of the councillor's time. However, it is important to remember that "rules of behaviour" apply whenever activities of being a parish councillor are being undertaken. Training is available and there are guidance notes from GALC to assist councillors in avoiding pitfalls which can catch the unwary in the carrying out of what might seem the most straightforward of activities. The information will also help parish clerks to advise their councillors both inside and outside meetings and to induct newly elected or co-opted councillors.

The requirement to complete a register of interests is a crucial element of complying with the code of conduct. In rural parishes, and those centred on smaller settlements in particular, the risk of councillors being affected by disclosable pecuniary or other interests can be quite high. Also, it can be difficult to maintain an appropriate distance from local lobby or campaign groups. This is most likely to be the case in planning matters, an issue that should engage particularly those councillors who are also elected members of the local planning authority.