

- (b) for the whole of the previous 12 months have:-
  - (i) lived in that area; or
  - (ii) occupied, as owner or tenant, any land or premises in that area; or
- (c) for that 12 months, have had your principal or only place of work in that area.

**You should also note that CRB checks will be conducted on all councillors once they are elected.**

### How do I put my name forward?

You must be nominated by a nomination paper, signed by 10 registered electors of the ward in which you are to stand.

If you are standing as a candidate for a registered political party you would also be required to submit a certificate, from the party's nominating officer, authorising you as a party candidate and use of the party's description and emblem. You should contact the relevant political party.

You must also complete a 'Consent to Nomination' form.

All these documents must be submitted to the Returning Officer at the Town Hall by noon 19 working days before polling day.

### What do I do next?

For more information please contact the Electoral Services team.

The Electoral Commission also produce guidance and information for candidates. View their website:  
[www.electoralcommission.gov.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.gov.uk)  
or telephone: 020 7271 0500.

**Electoral Services  
Torbay Council  
Town Hall  
Castle Circus  
Torquay TQ1 3DR**

**Tel: 01803 207171  
Fax: 01803 207112  
[electoral.registration@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.registration@torbay.gov.uk)  
[www.torbay.gov.uk](http://www.torbay.gov.uk)**

### Equality Statement

We are committed to ensuring that no member of the public or employees is treated less favourably than any other on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion, ethnic origin, age, disability or any other condition that cannot be justified during our contact with you.

This leaflet gives general guidance only and should not be treated as a comprehensive and authoritative statement of the law.



# YOU can make a difference... become a Torbay councillor

This document can be made available in other languages, on tape, in Braille, large print and in other formats. For further information please contact 01803 207171.

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[www.torbay.gov.uk](http://www.torbay.gov.uk)

## How does the council work?

Torbay Council provides over 700 local services such as education, road maintenance, leisure facilities and refuse collection to approximately 135,000 residents and the many visitors to Torbay each year.

The council is run by a mayor and 36 councillors who are elected by the residents of Torbay every 4 years. They are responsible for making decisions on behalf of the community about the services provided by the council.

## What is a councillor?

Local councillors represent the views of the community in set areas (wards). They are your representative on Torbay Council.

*In Torbay, there are 15 wards and in each ward there are either two or three councillors depending on the size of the ward.*

As a councillor you will be a...

**Representative**, for individuals and groups within your ward. You will act as a source of information or point of access to public services, often through regular surgeries which are held in public places such as schools or libraries.

**Community leader**, developing links with all parts of the community and supporting local partnerships and organisations. In this role you will be able to campaign on local issues and win resources for the ward, e.g. money for local organisations or regeneration.

**Policy maker**, attending council meetings on issues such as housing, social services, schools, planning and the environment. These meetings involve debating and approving proposals, for council budgets and policy. The Mayor may invite you to become a Member of the Cabinet to oversee the implementation of the council's policies.

**Scrutineer**, you may become involved in overview and scrutiny, which acts as the council's "watchdog" to improve services for local people by reviewing how services are provided, investigating issues of local concern, holding decision-makers to account and making recommendations for improvement.

## How much of my time will it take up?

It will depend on the extent of your involvement, your political activities, and how much you want to be involved in particular issues. The minimum is likely to be equivalent to one day per week and this can involve weekends. However, the leading councillors spend much more time than this. A councillor's term of office lasts for a maximum of 4 years when elections are held again to elect or re-elect a councillor for a new term.

## What other involvement is there?

The council works in partnership with many other organisations which provide community services. Councillors are appointed to represent the council's view on many of these bodies.

## Do I have to belong to a political party?

No. Councillors either represent a political party or are independent. If they are a member of a political party, their priorities whilst in office are influenced by the priorities of the party.

## What support will I get?

Staff in the Democratic Services Team are on hand to provide support with correspondence, photocopying, expenses etc. You can also get information and advice from all senior council staff. All councillors are connected to the council's e-mail network and are provided with a personal computer. An internet line at your home is also provided. Post is delivered to councillors' homes twice a week.

## Can I afford it?

All councillors currently receive a £7,680 basic allowance plus travelling and subsistence expenses. Those with special responsibilities such as Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs receive additional allowances. Please note that the allowances you receive may affect any benefits that you are being paid and are taxable. If you receive any benefits you should contact the agency that provided them to find out how you may be affected.

## Is there any training?

Being a councillor will give you the opportunity to develop many skills such as public speaking, debating and problem solving. To assist you in your new role a carefully prepared induction programme on the council, its priorities

and challenges will be provided. Further extensive training and development will also be available to you throughout your term to help you develop your skills as a councillor such as personal coaching and IT training.

### *Did you know...*

*Since 2003, there have been 10 elections held in Torbay, including 1 European Election, 1 General Election, 1 Mayoral Referendum, 1 Mayoral Election and 6 by-elections*

## When are they elected?

Each councillor is elected for four years and the next local elections for Torbay Council will be held on 3rd May 2007.

In addition to the elections for Torbay Council, the electorate in Brixham will be voting for the first time for councillors to represent them on the Brixham Town Council.

## How can I become a councillor?

Anyone is entitled to stand as a candidate provided they meet the following principal qualifications. If you wish to stand as a candidate, you must be at least 18 years old and you must be a British citizen, a citizen of the Irish Republic, the Commonwealth or another Member State of the European Union. You must also meet at least one of the following qualifications;

- (a) be a registered elector for the area of the Borough of Torbay at nomination and on polling day; or