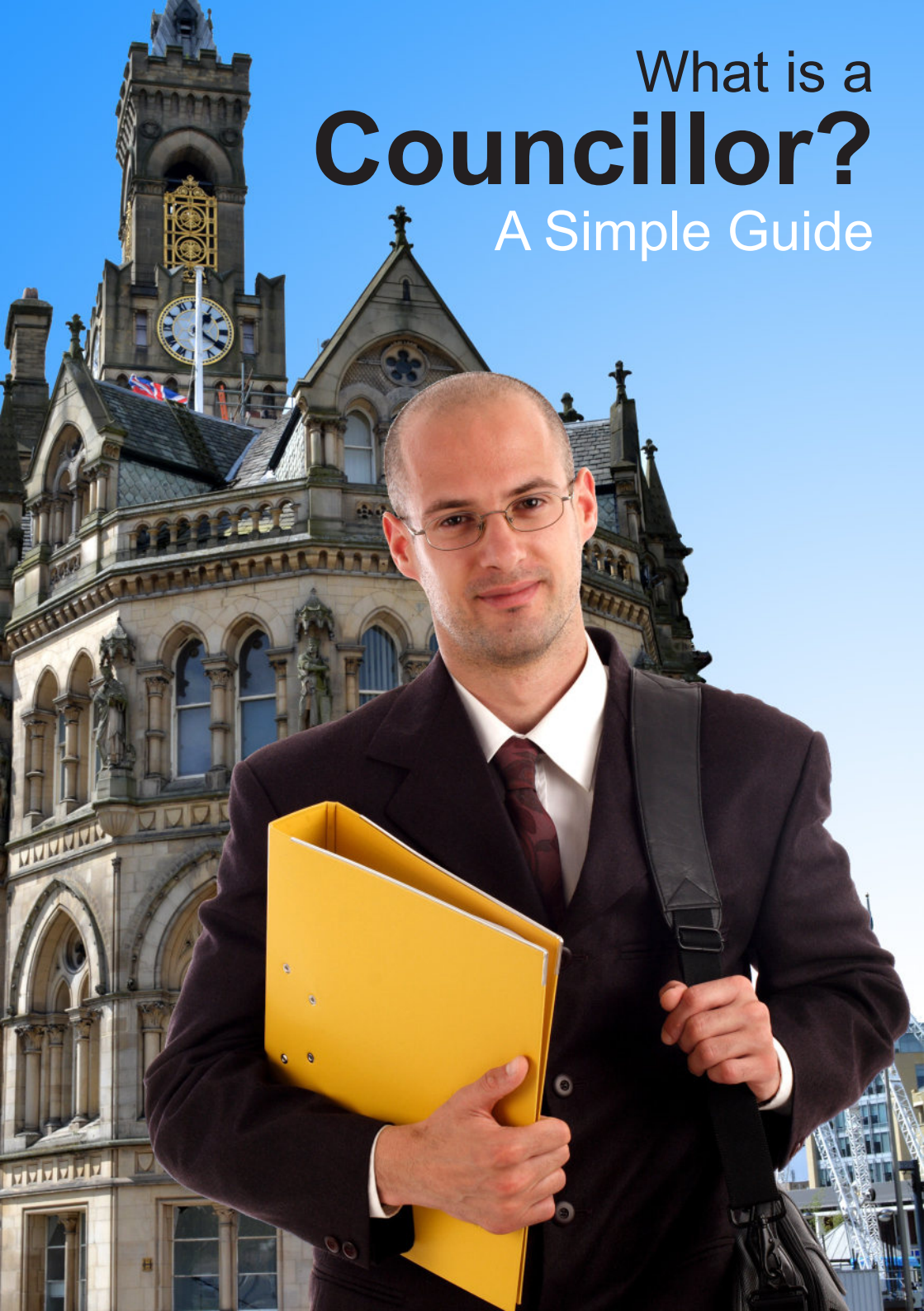


# What is a **Councillor?**

## A Simple Guide





A councillor is somebody who represents people in their ward to the council.

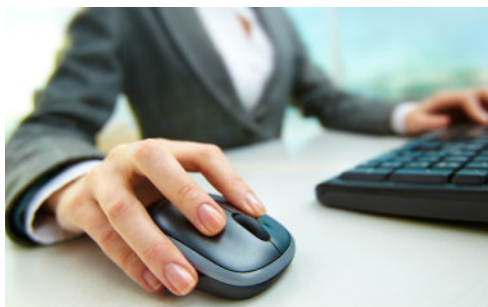
A ward is an area of a town or city. In Bradford we have 30 wards and 3 councillors in each ward.



Councillors are different to MPs. Councillors deal with things locally in the Bradford District like schools, housing and care.



MP means Member of Parliament. They deal with things that affect the whole country.



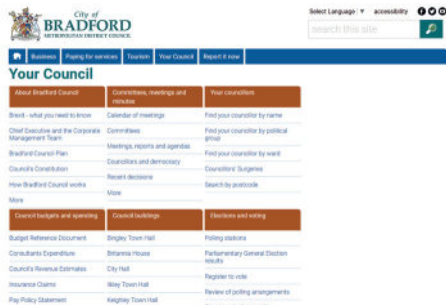
You can find out who your local councillor is on the Bradford Council website.  
[www.bradford.gov.uk](http://www.bradford.gov.uk)

# How to contact a councillor



Most councillors hold surgeries every month. You can go and talk to them with any worries or concerns you may have about services that the council provide.

You don't normally need to make an appointment you can just turn up.



You can find out where the surgeries are on the Bradford Council website.

They are also sometimes advertised in local newspapers and libraries.



You can write, email or phone your councillor.

You have to make sure that you contact the councillors for your ward.

# What does a councillor do?



A councillor does lots of different things as well as representing the people in their ward.

They make decisions about what services the council should provide and how they should provide them.



They work out and review council policies.

Policies are the steps that the council follows to carry out the work that they said they were going to do.



They scrutinise. This means they watch over and check the work that the council are doing.

Some councillors sit on committees like the planning committee and health and social care committee.





Anybody can be a councillor.

You must live or work in the district that you want to represent and be over 18 years old.



You must be nominated as a candidate by ten people who live in the district.

You can then stand for election.



Most councillors are members of political parties but they don't need to be.

Some stand as independents.



Councillors don't get paid a wage but they do get an allowance to cover their time and any expenses. Most councillors have full time jobs and have to fit their council duties around them.



Councillors are up for election once every 4 years.



In Bradford this is done on a rotating basis so three out of four years one of the councillors in the ward is up for election.

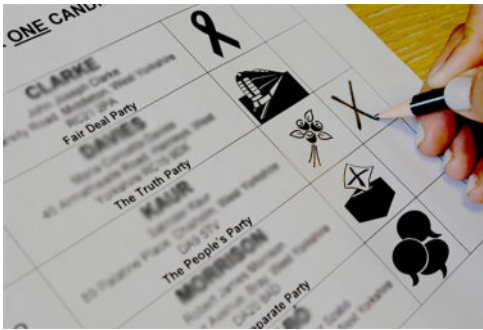


In other councils all three councillors are up for election at the end of the four years.



Sometimes there is a by-election which means that a councillor has left before the four years is up, maybe because they are ill or have died.





Voting for a councillor is really important. It gives you a say on important issues that affect you like roads, recycling, education and social care.

**GOV.UK** Search

Home > Citizenship and living in the UK > Voting

## Register to vote

Register to vote to get on the electoral register, or to change your details. It usually takes about 5 minutes.

You need to be on the electoral register to vote in elections or referendums.

This service is also available in [Welsh \(Cymraeg\)](#).

### Who can register

You can register if you're both:

- aged 16 or over (or 14 or over in Scotland)
- a UK citizen (or an Irish, EU or Commonwealth citizen with a permanent UK address)

You can check which [elections you're eligible to vote in](#).

You can vote when you're 18 or over. If you live in Scotland, you can vote in Scottish Parliament and local elections when you're 16.

### Related content

- [The electoral register and the 'open register'](#)
- [How to vote](#)
- [Contact your local Electoral Registration Office](#)
- [Voting if you move or live abroad](#)
- [Types of election, referendums, and who can vote](#)
- [Apply for a postal vote](#)

To vote in any UK elections you need to be on the electoral register. You are not automatically registered even if you pay council tax.

You can register to vote at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)



If you need help you can phone 01274 432287.

This booklet was made by those who need accessible information working with btm.

For more information or extra copies please contact:

**btm**

the home of accessible information



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