

Become a councillor

information pack



Introduction



As a Chief Executive in local government, and Returning Officer for the Borough of Rushcliffe, I am always delighted to meet people who are willing to stand for election as a local councillor. By putting yourself forward you display a real passion for your community and a desire to help the people who live there.

The next elections are on 4 May 2023 for both the Borough Council and our local Town and Parish councils.

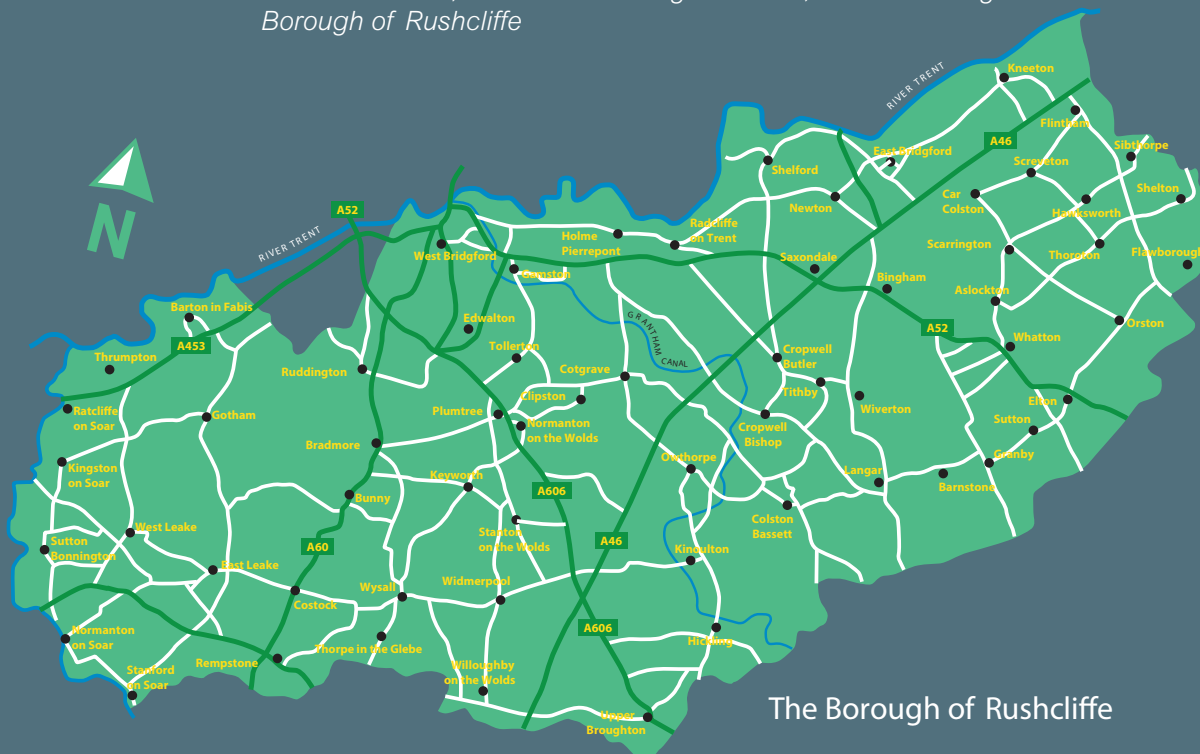
This offers you the perfect opportunity to stand as a representative of your local community and become a Rushcliffe Borough councillor, or a town or parish councillor.

We hope that this pack will be used by anyone who is thinking of standing for election and is interested in finding out about the role of the councillor. We are also running a virtual and in-person Q&A session for anyone that would like to find out more.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest and wish you luck if you decide to stand.

Kath Marriott

Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council, and Returning Officer for the Borough of Rushcliffe



About Rushcliffe and the Borough Council

Rushcliffe lies south of Nottingham and the River Trent. It extends across towards Newark in the north east and Loughborough in the south west, covering an area of 157 square miles. Although parts of the Borough lie close to Nottingham, Rushcliffe has a strong identity of its own.

The main centre of population is West Bridgford, where around one-third of the Borough's 117,671 population live. West Bridgford, a leafy suburb, is where the Borough Council has its Community Contact Centre. The Council's headquarters is also based in West Bridgford, at Rushcliffe Arena. West Bridgford has a lively town centre, offering a range of shops to cater for most everyday needs, with plenty of low-cost parking, and lots of places to eat and drink.

For those who prefer life in the country, Rushcliffe offers the best of both worlds: the delights of rural living coupled with good transport links for getting to work and to other parts of the county and country. Some of the most delightful small towns and villages in Nottinghamshire lie within the Borough boundaries. The largest include Bingham, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Cotgrave, Keyworth, Ruddington and East Leake. Each boasts its own schools, shopping centres, health care facilities and leisure activities.

Rushcliffe is the most affluent district within the county, with low levels of unemployment and crime, and higher than average incomes. Nearly eighty per cent of homes are owner-occupied and a higher than average number of residents are self-employed. According to the latest statistics, there are slightly more females than males

within the Borough, seven per cent of the population are from 'non-white' minority ethnic backgrounds, and residents aged 65 years or older now make up twenty five per cent of the population.

Rushcliffe has a rich sporting heritage with Trent Bridge Cricket Ground, the City Ground, home of Nottingham Forest Football Club, The Bay, home of Nottingham Rugby, and the National Watersports Centre all located within West Bridgford. The area has a wide range of leisure facilities, including leisure centres, country parks, tennis courts, and playgrounds.

The Council is made up of 44 councillors elected every four years by residents within their communities to represent their views and make informed decisions on their behalf. At the present time, these 44 councillors represent four political groups with some councillors choosing to act independently.

- Conservative 27
- Labour 6
- Liberal Democrat 3
- Green 2
- Leake Independents 3
- Independent 3

The Conservative party are in overall control as they have the most councillors.



About local government

The Borough Council is a one of a number of layers of government responsible for delivering local services in a geographical area. A family living in Rushcliffe may receive services from a parish council, the Borough Council, the County Council as well as feeling the impact of decisions made at a national level by Central Government. They may also receive services from other areas of the public sector such as the health service, fire service and police force. It is not always clear who provides which services to residents in an area.

Rushcliffe Borough Council serves the residents of Rushcliffe by providing the following services (either alone or with partners):

- Refuse collection and recycling
- Street cleansing and playground maintenance
- Council tax collection
- Leisure centres (*with partners Lex Leisure and MITE*)
- Edwalton Golf Course (*with partners Lex Leisure*)
- Car parks
- Elections
- Sports development
- Arts and events
- Rushcliffe Country Park
- Planning
- Environmental health
- Housing and homelessness (*with partners Metropolitan Housing*)
- Processing of benefit claims

How the Council operates is set by the Local Government Acts from 1972 and 2000, as well as the Localism Act 2011 and a number of other more specific acts of parliament governing housing, the environment and local council finances. You can find out more at www.legislation.gov.uk

Every four years the Borough Council publishes a Corporate Strategy which sets out what it is going to focus its attention and resources on in addition to delivering its core services to residents. These tend to be development tasks that deliver real change to residents in the Borough. The progress towards delivering these tasks is monitored by councillors and reported publically. You can view the Corporate Strategy as well as the Council's financial plans and other key documents at www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/aboutus/aboutthecouncil/documentsstrategiesandpolicies



So, what is a councillor?

Simply put, a councillor is somebody from a local community elected to represent that community. They do this on many levels balancing the needs and interests of residents, the political party they represent (if any) and the Borough as a whole.

The role and responsibilities of a local councillor include:

- representing the community for which they are elected
- decision-making
- developing and reviewing council policy
- scrutinising decisions taken by the councillors on the Cabinet
- regulatory, quasi-judicial and statutory duties
- community leadership and engagement.

For many councillors, representing their ward is the most important aspect of their role. This can involve a variety of activities but usually means councillors will spend time:

- listening to the views of local people so that they know what problems and issues exist in their ward
- ensuring that the needs of their ward are taken into account when the council is making decisions about how it is run, what services it should provide and how it should spend its money

- working with council officers to bring about improvements to their ward
- holding surgeries where local people can drop in with enquiries about the council or raise issues and concerns about any problems that they have which the councillor can deal with or seek to resolve
- getting involved in local campaigns
- offering support to local schools, community groups, businesses and other organisations.

There are many reasons why people decide to become a local councillor:

- they want to make a difference, be involved in shaping the local community and getting better services
- they want to represent the views of local people and ensure that local community interests are taken into account
- they want to pursue their political beliefs
- they are concerned about particular issues in the borough.

For some, it is an extension of what they are already doing, as they are active in a political party, parish council, or trade union, and they see the next step is to become a councillor.

Here are some of our **current councillors** explaining why they became councillors:



Councillor Tina Combellack

I publish a regular Councillor's update in the Community Newsletters of the Rural Villages and Parishes which I represent and keep abreast of all planning applications. I have used my Communities grant fund to purchase reading books for a local school, helped fund new play equipment, benches, notice boards, IT, defibrillators, film equipment and village clocks throughout the Ward.



Councillor Mike Gaunt

I feel that some of the most vibrant communities in Rushcliffe are those with empowered community groups and enthused local councillors. I think that the work I have been involved with as a parish and borough councillor in my local community have helped Ruddington to buck the trend and thrive as a bustling local community.



Councillor Bal Bansal

It's from little things such as ensuring railings that were broken are fixed, to answering questions about litter bins being emptied to bigger items such as helping the local pre-school install a defibrillator and helping local community halls stay and be used for the community rather than knocked down and lose the history.



Councillor Rex Walker

I helped to raise the significance of fly-tipping problems around the Ward which led to positive action being made (through relationship with WISE) that has drastically increased the investigation and detection of tips and seen instances reduce significantly and prosecutions made.

Standing for Election

To become a councillor you need to stand for, and win, an election. You do not need any specific qualifications to become a councillor but you do need to fulfil certain criteria to be eligible.

To stand for election, on the day of nomination, you must be 18 or over and a UK, EU or commonwealth citizen.

You must also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- be registered, and continue to be, as a local government elector for Rushcliffe from the day of your nomination onwards, or
- have occupied (as owner or tenant) any land or premises in Rushcliffe during the whole of the 12 months before the day you are nominated and the day of election, or
- your main or only place of work during the last 12 months, prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election, has been in Rushcliffe, or
- you have lived in Rushcliffe during the whole of the last 12 months, before the day of your nomination and the day of election.

You can't stand if you:

- work for Rushcliffe Borough Council
- hold a politically restricted post for another authority
- have received a prison sentence (including suspended sentences) of 3 months or more within 5 years prior to polling day
- are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
- have been disqualified under any legislation relating to corrupt or illegal practices or offences relating to donations.

You don't have to belong to a political party or group to stand for election. Rushcliffe has both councillors connected to a political party and those that stand as independents (candidates who do not belong to any political party); however, those working together as a party form the majority and lead the Council.



What do councillors do

Representing your community

Community leadership is at the heart of modern local government. A community leader represents the views of that community and stands up for what that community wants. A community leader will listen to and represent the views of all residents, including helping people on specific individual matters, and make sure public services are delivered effectively in the area.

As a councillor you will find that much of your time is spent dealing with ward matters and representing your community. In some

cases, your role will be to listen and identify whether the Council, or another public service, is best placed to resolve the issue, and in others your role will be to explain Council policy and make sure that the policy has been carried out fairly. You will get help and support to deal with residents' enquiries and complaints from officers at the Council.

Before getting elected, you might want to consider how you are going to engage with your community, making it easy for residents to recognise you and contact you, and for you to get information out to them.



Representing the Council

In contrast to representing your community as a whole, or assisting with the resolution of the problems of individual residents, as a councillor you will also need to represent the Borough (as a collective group of people and as a place) and participate in making decisions as a member of the Council.

Working together with your colleagues, other councillors who represent different areas of the Borough and different political parties, you will need to help form policy, the documents that guide the way decisions are made and services are provided, and help develop the Council's budget and agree the level of Council Tax. Your role on the Council is to plan, run, monitor and develop council business. Councillors are essential in deciding what is in the public interest amongst a range of conflicting issues and views.

All councillors have a seat on Council which meets five times a year, unless an extraordinary meeting is called. All Council meetings start at 7pm and are held in the Council Chamber of Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road in West Bridgford. At the first meeting of Council following the election, the Council appoints a Leader, who then selects his or her Cabinet. Positions on all of the other committees and groups are then allocated in line with the political balance of the Council.

So, following the election you could find yourself being a member of the Cabinet, a scrutiny group or a regulatory committee.

Most meetings are open to the press and public, and many now involve some element of public speaking. All public meetings are now live streamed on the Council's YouTube channel. There are written rules which govern behaviour and procedures at these meetings called 'standing orders' and these enable councillors to take part effectively and fairly. The standing orders form part of the Council's constitution and can be viewed at www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/publicationscheme/1whowareandwhatwedo/The%20Complete%20Constitution.pdf

Decisions and topics for discussion at Council and Cabinet meetings are published in the Council's Forward Plan. The topics under discussion at scrutiny groups are published in a work programme as part of each agenda. You may also be asked to sit on one of the Council's regulatory committees such as the planning committee, which meets monthly or licensing committee, which meets as and when required. The Council, Cabinet or Scrutiny Committees appoint other working groups from time to time. These are not public meetings and generally investigate a single issue in more depth before reporting back to either Council, Cabinet or Scrutiny Committee with a recommended course of action. The Council also has a Standards Committee which promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by councillors mainly through the Council's Code of Conduct.

Here are some of our current councillors describing how they help their community:



Councillor Lesley Way
I have raised the issue of open space fees and how this has been translated into excessively high



Councillor Roger Upton
Since becoming a Rushcliffe Borough Councillor, I believe that I have represented the views of many Radcliffe on Trent residents on a wide range of issues, from planning applications, to fly-tipping, to environmental and climate change issues.



Councillor Lesley Way
I have raised the issue of open space fees and how this has been translated into excessively high management charges covering much more than open spaces. I got this to scrutiny and also via the MP to ministerial level. Scrutiny sent a letter to the then Communities Minister.

Here are some of our **current councillors** explaining their role within the Council:



Councillor Richard Butler

I have a particular interest in planning and development, as well as environmental matters.



Councillor Tina Combellack

I have been Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Communities Scrutiny Group and am now the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Group Chairman. I served on the Standards Committee, Licensing committee and Member Development Group. I am honoured to have been elected Mayor of Rushcliffe and shall shortly take up my Civic Role for the 2022 year.



Councillor Alan Phillips

I currently sit on the Growth and Development scrutiny group, Member Development and Standards committee. I have been a sub on the Governance scrutiny group and regularly sub on the Planning Committee. I am also involved on the Traffic and Transport and the West Bridgford Local Area Forum groups.



Councillor Vicky Price

I am a member of the planning committee, so sit on committee monthly. This involves reading through each planning application that comes to committee and making decisions of whether to award planning permission or not. I also review all planning applications that come through in my ward.



Councillor Gordon Moore

I am currently Cabinet member for Finance and previously I was Chairman of Corporate Governance. I have also been Mayor.

Important considerations

Skills and attributes required

You don't need any specific qualifications to become a Borough councillor but there are skills that will make being a councillor much easier. The most effective councillors are comfortable:

- talking to people either individually or in a group
- representing other people's views
- listening to people's problems and being able to identify the main points
- thinking on their feet
- reading, sometimes long and complex, reports and being able to identify the key points
- forming an argument and participating in a debate
- negotiating with different groups of people to resolve disagreements and conflicts
- using basic IT packages such as email, word processing, the internet and, increasingly, social media to undertake work and keep in touch with their residents.

Councillors also have access to a wide range of e-learning modules (learning that can be accessed in your own time, from home, via a computer). Some of these are mandatory and must be done in the first 12 months of becoming a councillor, others are there for background information or to help you understand more about your role and the work you will be getting involved with. E-learning modules take about 20 minutes each to complete and we focus on a different topic each month.

Councillors joining the Council as part of a political party may also be able to access additional help and support provided by more experienced councillors or by the party. New councillors are also allocated a member of the Council's Management Team as a key contact and first point of call whilst they find their feet.

Additional training offered over the last four years includes:

- Personal effectiveness including resilience and time management
- Managing challenging people and difficult situations
- Understanding local government finance
- Understanding partners and what they do
- Chairing/facilitating skills
- Public speaking

Training and support given to councillors

All new councillors are able to access an informative induction programme to help them find out how the Council works, how they can effectively get involved both at the Council and within their communities, and to increase their skills in key areas. Topics include:

- I've been elected – what happens next?
- Your role in meetings and making decisions
- Council meetings explained – a practical session
- Working in partnership and meeting key partner organisations
- Protecting you and the Council
- Being on the frontline





Help is also offered to councillors by a dedicated support team. The Democratic Services team is here to plan and service the meetings at which councillors make decisions as well as supporting the Council's decision-making process. They will be in touch regularly with information about events and training, meetings and additional information available to councillors, and will try to answer any questions you have about your ward – or they will find you the person who can answer your questions. The Council also has a dedicated councillors' room where you can meet with other councillors, use Council-provided IT equipment and pick up any post that comes into the Council.

Some of the information you will have access to as a councillor is sensitive in nature and is protected by rules of confidentiality and in some cases the GDPR – training is given to ensure you are able to access this information securely and protect it.

You will be given a councillor email address and will be able to access information related to being a councillor such as the papers you need for meetings and background information on the Council's website.

Finding the time

The amount of free time needed to be an effective councillor is often a concern for anyone considering standing for election. It is for you to decide the level of commitment and the amount of time you have available for being a councillor. As well as the requirement to attend council meetings, which generally take place in the evening (except planning which takes place in the afternoon), there will also be ward matters that require your attention and contributing towards your political party if you represent one. It also depends on your role within the Council and the number of duties you decide to take on. It could range from a few hours each week to a few hours every day at busier times.

If you are working, by law your employer must allow you to take a reasonable amount of time off during working hours to perform your duties as a councillor. The amount of time needed will depend upon your responsibilities within the Council and we strongly advise you discussing this with your employer before committing to being a councillor.

Allowances and Expenses

There is no salary for being a councillor. However, you will be paid an allowance to reimburse you for time (paid automatically) and expenses (which need to be claimed for on a monthly basis) incurred whilst on Council business.

Every Rushcliffe Borough councillor is entitled to a basic allowance, currently £5,757 a year, paid into a bank account in 12 monthly instalments. Some councillors are given an additional allowance to cover any special responsibilities such as Cabinet member or a chairman/ vice chairman. The allowance will be reviewed before the 2023 election. For more information about the Members Allowance Scheme please visit the Council's website at www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/councillors/membersallowances.

Code of Conduct

Rushcliffe Borough Council has a written Code of Conduct for councillors which forms part of the Council's Constitution. The Code of Conduct sets out the rules that councillors should adhere to as a councillor, and all councillors are required to sign a declaration of acceptance of office once elected which includes an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct. Breaches of the Code may be considered by the Standards Committee.

The Code is based on the seven Nolan Principles of Standards in Public Life:

- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- leadership.

The Council also has a protocol defining the relationship between councillors and officers (the staff employed by the Council) which also forms part of the constitution. The principles of the protocol are:

- both councillors and officers serve local people, but have distinct roles
- the best service will be provided to local people by both councillors and officers working as one team
- the service given to local people must be efficient, open and accountable
- councillors and officers must act ethically
- officers must be politically impartial
- effective working relationships between councillors and officers must be based on trust and mutual respect.



Here are some of our **current councillors** highlighting their biggest achievements:



Councillor Alan Phillips

Working with local residents to address flooding issues and to resolve of the issues that were causing the flooding. Working closely with council officers at Rushcliffe and the County, contractors and flood prevention teams. Many hurdles had to be overcome before a resolution was found and implemented.



Councillor Vicky Price

Starting to understand the planning process! Building relationships with community groups and councillors from other parties.



Councillor Abby Brennan

I've worked had to improve the street scene in Radcliffe on Trent with new seating, planters and bins on our Main Road. Working with many local residents with a wide variety of issues from flooding, to planning, hedge protection and noisy manholes and being able to help resolve so many cases has been extremely rewarding. I am proud of the difference our small Community Grants have made to so many groups in the village. In my Cabinet role I am delighted to act as the Borough's Armed Forces Champion and to support many projects tackling loneliness and isolation across the Borough, so important following the pandemic, and in pushing forward our environmental and nature conservation agendas.



Councillor Tina Combellack

To have helped the Council transition from their former Scrutiny practice resulting in the procedure under the Corporate Overview system.



Councillor Roger Upton

Getting the Rushcliffe Local Development Plan approved by the Full Council. This specifies where development will take place until 2028, and we are now working on how it needs to be adapted to be relevant until 2038.



Councillor Jen Walker

Being gifted the title of Cllr opens doors in a way I hadn't expected. People do take notice of your ideas and people stop me in the street to 'pick my brain' about community projects and issues they have. The activities I have most enjoyed being part of have been the Covid 19 Mutual Aid Group, helping to secure secondary school places for children and families in our village, Remembrance Services, being part of the working group keeping our High Street vibrant and securing the safe pedestrian and cycle route under the A52.



Councillor Carys Thomas

Just by getting elected a spotlight has been shone on the issues that concern our residents and this is helping to bring change forward. Strengthening the policies on dog fouling and spotlighting the problems caused by noisy fireworks, getting the council to change to using quieter ones in its own displays.



Councillor Penny Gowland

I encouraged and helped a couple of residents to set up a Facebook page and then called a Community meeting. Within about a year a Community Association had been established.

Find out more

Further information on the Council's website

There is lots of information about the Council, the services it provides, its priorities over the next few years and how it is funded, on the Council's website – rushcliffe.gov.uk. These are a few quick links to pages of particular interest if you are thinking about becoming a councillor:

Information about standing for election – rushcliffe.gov.uk/elections/standforelection

Information about the borough's wards – rushcliffe.gov.uk/elections/wardboundariesandmaps

Lots of links to information about the Council's main policies and strategies, management structure, spending and budget – rushcliffe.gov.uk/aboutus/aboutthecouncil/documentsstrategiesandpolicies

The Council's Constitution – rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/publicationscheme/1whoweareandwhatwedo/The%20Complete%20Constitution.pdf

The Council's Corporate Strategy – rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/councilanddemocracy/constitution/Corporate%20Strategy%202016-20.pdf

Further information from other people

Local Government Association – www.local.gov.uk

Local Government Association Microsite – Be a councillor – www.beacouncillor.co.uk

Electoral Commission – www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Electoral Commission – standing for election – www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent

Political Parties

- The Conservative Party – [conservatives.com](https://www.conservatives.com)
- The Labour Party – www.labour.org.uk
- Green Party – www.greenparty.org.uk
- Liberal Democrats – www.libdems.org.uk

Next steps

If you've read all about becoming a councillor, taken a look at our website, been to a few meetings or viewed them on the Council's YouTube channel and even taken a look at some of the resources available online, and you still want to be a councillor – great, it sounds like the residents of Rushcliffe will be lucky to have you representing them.



The next Borough Council election will be held in May 2023 – the nominations period will open in March 2023 and the deadline to submit will be publicised on our website and social media channels. You will need to be proposed, seconded and also to have eight further people as assentors to your nomination. Full details of the electoral process including the nomination procedure are available from our Electoral Services team at: elections@rushcliffe.gov.uk

As a prospective candidate, you will be invited to a meeting to hear about how the election is organised and run, including how we deal with postal votes, where the count of the votes will be held, where the polling stations are going to be and to ask any questions you may have.

It is your responsibility, or your agent's, to present nomination papers to the Returning Officer before the statutory deadline. This will be made clear in advance of the nomination period and in your nomination pack.

In the run up to the election, candidates can have a free copy of the electoral register for the ward for which they are standing which lists residents who can vote at the next election and a map showing the ward boundaries.

It is your choice whether or not you have an election agent to represent you and manage your election campaign. An agent can help you make sure all the forms are filled in correctly and submitted before the deadlines, help you keep a clear and accurate record of financial expenditure, and help you plan your campaign.

If you decide to stand for election and spend money on your campaign, there is a set limit of £806 with an additional 7p for every local government elector registered in the register of electors for the area you are seeking to be elected. If you are standing for a political party, help with election expenses may be available. The Electoral Commission can help you with any questions you may have about expenses pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

Here are some of our **current councillors** talking about what they enjoy most about being a councillor:



Councillor Rex Walker

All the occasions, small and large when I feel that I have made a positive contribution to the communities I represent.



Councillor Mike Gaunt

Helping people and having a voice. I am allowed to raise concerns for people and be their local voice. I enjoy speaking in the council chamber and the political debate.



Councillor Vicky Price

Being more active and visible in the community. Being able to connect people to other people or services that can help them.



Councillor Roger Upton

What I most enjoy about being a Borough Councillor is representing the views of local residents, irrespective of whether or not they voted for me, and hopefully getting improvements for my local community. I really believe that it's changes to the little things in life that can often make real differences. I worked in the public sector all my working life and I like to think that I am still giving a service to the public.



Councillor Carys Thomas

I have particularly enjoyed finding out more about the smaller villages in our ward – their history, traditions, and concerns – often different to those of East Leake where I live and am a Parish Councillor. One of the villages has a ferry – how cool is that!



Councillor Jen Walker

I am able to bring my activism to something that has been able to help our community directly. It is making much better use of my time than merely ranting on Facebook.



Councillor Richard Butler

Helping residents, especially if they have struggle to find where to go for help.



Councillor Bal Bansal

I like helping people. And having the ability to do that, but also having the right contacts within the council to get things done

Diversity

It is very important that residents of the Borough feel represented by the Borough Council. That is why this year we are especially encouraging those from different backgrounds to step forward for election.



As a Borough, Rushcliffe has a lower-than-average percentage of residents from a non-white background – seven percent of our residents compared to 15% across the UK. With a smaller group of people to pull from it is even more important that residents from a non-white background put themselves forward.

Rushcliffe also has fewer young people in comparison with the UK as a whole – less than 8% of our residents are aged between 18 and 24 compared to nearly 10% across the UK, whereas our older residents account for 25% of the Borough's population (over 60s). We feel it is important that younger people are represented on the Borough Council including those with families and in work – residents need to be represented by people who share the same concerns as they do.

We are also keen to welcome new councillors with a disability and aim to work with these councillors individually to accommodate their additional needs. As well as being a Disability Positive Employer we are also looking to make Council meetings more inclusive over the next year – an initiative that is being spearheaded by our new Mayor.

Here are some of our **current councillors** talking about what they wish they had known when standing to be a Councillor:



Councillor Penny Gowland

Candidates must be told that there will be daytime meetings and every ward councillor can expect to have to attend a Planning meeting at some time.



Councillor Mike Gaunt

I would have been interested to know exactly what impact I could have as a local councillor as I feel this would have encouraged me to become one many years ago.



Councillor Vicky Price

That everyone is generally nicer than you expect – how we campaign at election time is not always reflective of how we work together once elected.



Councillor Gordon Moore

I was apprehensive at first but initial training and support from older and more experienced councillors gave me more confidence.



Councillor Jen Walker

As a group we were all new at the same time and the learning curve was huge for us as the largest opposition party. If I am lucky enough to be elected again, I am looking forward to having more knowledge and experience. I would encourage everyone from all backgrounds and skills to put themselves forward because we need diversity. The worst thing for any institution is a form of groupthink where everyone thinks the same.



Councillor Roger Upton

Although it's been a while since I was a new councillor, I remember that I was totally unaware of the amount of day-to-day emails and phone calls about local issues that need to be dealt with, or the amount of planning applications that require a comment. On the positive side, I have enjoyed having made many contributions to improving the life experiences of local residents.



Rushcliffe Community Contact Centre Rectory Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6BU

By telephone: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm

In person: 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, and from 9am to 1pm on the first Saturday of every month.

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