



YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

Arnside Parish Councillor Vacancy

If you would like to make an important contribution to the area in which you live by getting involved in making decisions about your local community then this is the position for you.

It's a rewarding and enjoyable experience because you will be able to make changes in Arnside to help improve the lives of our residents.

What is Involved?

Parish Councillors are unpaid volunteers who meet at least once a month. Our purpose is to maintain and improve Arnside for all. You can support this by bringing your skills and knowledge to the Council, by proposing and getting involved in local projects while researching and engaging in conversations with parishioners and others.

Arnside Parish Council consists of eight councillors and three employees, the Parish Clerk, the Finance Officer and the Cemetery Officer. It is an effective team of like-minded people all wanting to make a positive difference. The monthly meetings may last a couple of hours. You may also join committees, working groups and ad hoc meetings.

No special qualification is required to be a councillor. It is important that all sorts of people serve as councillors so that all parts of our community are represented. Training for new councillors is available to help you understand the responsibilities of the role.

What does the Parish Council Do?

Arnside Parish Council makes all kinds of decisions on issues that affect our local community. The most common topics that we get involved with are planning matters (the Parish Council is a consultee), managing and maintaining the services and facilities we are responsible for, helping local groups, and campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities.

It's true to say that on their own, parish councils have limited powers to make decisions, but they do have the ability to negotiate with, and the power to influence, those other organisations that do make the final decisions such as Westmorland & Furness Council and the Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty among others.

In this respect parish councils are quite powerful. The organisations that make the final decisions know that a parish council gives the best reflection of how a community feels about something, and its views will be taken seriously.

The parish council also has the power to raise money through taxation, the 'precept', to help meet its spending requirements. The precept is the parish council's share of the council tax.

Am I eligible to be a Parish Councillor?

You have to be:

- a British subject, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union
- over 18 years of age

and additionally you have to be **at least one** of the following:

- a local government elector for the council area for which you want to stand
- have during the whole of the 12 months occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the council area or within 3 miles of it for the whole period
- have during that same period had your principal or only place of work in the council area or within 3 miles of it for the whole period.
- have lived in the parish area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination.

You **cannot** stand for election if you

- are subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order.
- have, within five years before the day of the election, been convicted in the UK of any offence and have had a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine.
- you work for the council you want to become a councillor for (but you can work for other local authorities, including the principal authorities that represent the same area).
- are subject to certain sexual offence legal orders under the Local Government Disqualification Act 2022 (which disqualifies individuals from standing for election or holding office in local authorities).

You don't have to be connected to a political party.

If you do become a parish councillor you will have to sign up to the Code of Conduct.

Role	Parish Councillor
Responsible to	All people resident within the Parish
Regular liaison with	Other councillors, local authorities, residents
Period of service	Up to four years with possible extension and subject to election
Salary	This is a voluntary position with some expenses payable in certain cases.

Key Responsibilities

- Representing the views of all residents within the parish.
- Running local services which currently include: the public toilets, allotments, the pier and foreshore, some open spaces, the memorial playing field, the cemetery, environmental maintenance, community events. Other services and facilities may be added in future.
- Deciding on how much to raise through council tax (the 'precept') in order to deliver the council's services.
- Influencing and shaping the long term development of Arnside, and as part of the planning process, commenting on planning applications in the parish.
- Improving the quality of life and the environment in the local area.
- Working to identify issues which are important to the lives of the residents you represent.
- Working to bring about improvements through local projects, lobbying other service providers and working in partnership with other parishes and agencies.

Person Specification

- Councillors must meet the eligibility criteria specified in the Local Government Act 1972 section 79, and must not be disqualified by any provision of section 80 of the same Act (see above).
- Councillors should ideally be residents of the parish.
- Councillors must be available to attend meetings on the evening of the second Monday of every month, unless able to submit a reason for non-attendance that is accepted by the Council at the meeting. Further attendance is required at occasional ad hoc meetings.
- Councillors must be able to work productively with fellow Councillors, the Parish Clerk, and local representatives from the unitary authority, community groups etc.
- Councillors must be accessible to residents, and encourage them to raise issues and participate in finding resolutions.
- Councillors must abide by the Code of Conduct, and declare personal pecuniary interests both routinely and in respect of specific projects or proposals. They must prioritise the interests of the parish as a whole over those of individuals.
- Development support is available for new Councillors, including dedicated training events, peer groups and published resources.