

## **City of London Elections**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

The City of London's website is a good first contact to learn more about the City Corporation and what it does.

Information about this can be found in the sections below but you can also discover more on the City's website at <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/voting-elections/becoming-a-councillor>

#### **Useful Links:**

Information Commissioner's Office guidance on use of data during campaigning:  
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/key-dp-themes/guidance-for-the-use-of-personal-data-in-political-campaigning-1/>

Queries regarding spending and donations:

Email: [pef@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:pef@electoralcommission.org.uk)

Tel: 0333 103 1928

Any other campaign queries:

Email: [infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk)

Tel: 0333 103 1928

City of London Electoral Services site:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/voting-elections/forthcoming-elections>

Speak for the City site:

<https://www.speakforthecity.com/>

## **Standing for Election – the Criteria**

### **Q: How do I know if I can stand for election?**

**A:** To stand for election as a Common Councilman in the City of London, you must meet all of the requirements listed below at A-C and at least one of the requirements listed below at D – F. You do not need to live or work in the Ward in which you intend to stand.

#### You must:

- A.** be aged 18 years or over; and
- B.** be a British, Irish or Commonwealth citizen, or a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights; and
- C.** be a Freeman of the City of London

For those who are not already, the City will arrange for the freedom to be given and at no cost. For more information on how to apply to become a Freeman, please contact the Chamberlains' Court: [courtassistant@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:courtassistant@cityoflondon.gov.uk) or visit: [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/law-historic-governance/freedom-of-the-city](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/law-historic-governance/freedom-of-the-city)

#### You must also fulfil at least one of the following requirements:

- D.** be registered on the City of London Ward Lists; or
- E.** own freehold or leasehold land in the City. In practice, this can be as simple as having a nominal interest in a small space. For example, this could be just a very small part of an office. (It should be noted that while this would make people eligible to become a candidate for election it would not make people eligible to vote in City elections as that requires actual occupancy of the premises concerned. It should also be noted that if the land is transferred, conveyed or leased (as appropriate) to more than four persons, the maximum number of owners who can qualify under this provision is limited to the first four named in the transfer, conveyance or lease); or
- F.** have resided in the City for the whole of the 12 months preceding the date of nomination and until the date of election

### **Q: Do I need to represent a political party?**

**A:** Candidates may represent a political party if they wish, however the vast majority of current members are independent.

### **Q: How do I become a candidate?**

**A:** Candidates must submit nomination papers for the election they intend to stand in. Nomination papers have to be signed by 5 voters in the Ward. See below for information about how to find out who your voters are and how you can communicate with them.

There is a specified period during which candidates must submit their nomination forms. **This period runs from 25 days before the Wardmote until noon, 19 days before the Wardmote.**

## **The times you can submit nomination papers are as follows:**

9:15am-5pm, apart from the 19<sup>th</sup> day before the Wardmote, where the time is 9:15am – Noon.

Please make an appointment in advance to submit your nomination paper by contacting Electoral Services at [electoralservices@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:electoralservices@cityoflondon.gov.uk) or call 0207 332 3497

### **Q: How do I obtain the nomination papers?**

**A:** The nomination papers and other forms and information regarding the election will be available from the Electoral Services Office at Guildhall shortly before the start of the election as part of a candidate pack. They will also be made available online at

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/voting-elections/forthcoming-elections>

You can contact the Electoral Services Manager (details below) if you wish to be added to the mailing list of potential candidates, so that you can be kept informed about when the candidate pack is available and when your papers will need to be submitted.

It is important to understand that if a potential candidate does not submit valid nomination papers before the deadline then they cannot stand in that election.

Ward Lists will need to be requested from the Electoral Services team. A disclaimer for signing is available with the nomination packs and needs to be completed before we can supply a ward list to you.

### **Q: Are all nominations accepted?**

**A:** All nomination forms are checked by the City's Electoral Services team to ensure that they have been completed correctly and that the 5 voters in the Ward who have nominated a candidate are eligible to do so and have not subscribed more nomination papers than there are vacancies.

Candidates must also state which of the criteria for becoming a candidate they meet as outlined above). The Electoral Services team can check nomination papers informally before they are finally submitted. This will allow candidates to correct any errors prior to submission. If the nomination forms are not correctly completed when they are formally submitted then they will not be accepted.

It should be noted that all candidates' nomination forms are available for inspection by the public after the close of nominations until the day before the poll.

### **Q: Do I need a deposit**

**A:** No payment will be required at any stage.

## **Campaigning**

### **Q: What is an election agent and do I need to appoint one?**

**A:** Election agents are responsible in law for the proper management of a candidate's election campaign, including finances and literature, and should be knowledgeable of the relevant legislation surrounding the campaign. You can appoint a named person to be your election agent, or you can act as your own agent. If you do not appoint an agent, you automatically become your own agent.

**Q: When will I know who I am standing against?**

**A:** The “statement of persons nominated”, which is a list of candidates standing in each Ward, will be published and also emailed to you.

**Q: Are there any limits on campaign expenses?**

**A:** From the day after a person officially becomes a candidate until polling day, candidates have a limit on how much they may spend on their campaign. This is £460 plus 9p per voter.

Following the election, a candidate’s election agent (or the candidate if they have no agent) must submit a declaration of the expenses incurred, including copies of receipts and invoices. Information regarding expenses will be included in the detailed Guidance to Candidates and Agents which is part of the candidate pack. This will give general advice on what is and is not covered by the expenses spending limit. The Electoral Commission can also provide guidance and advice to candidates.

It is important to note that money spent before a person becomes a candidate counts against the spending limit if the goods or services purchased are used after the person becomes a candidate.

**Q: Will my expenses be reimbursed?**

**A:** Expenses will not be reimbursed.

**Q: Are there any rules around campaign literature?**

**A:** Yes. All campaign material (printed and electronic) should include an imprint (footer) so that it is clear who has produced it and on who’s behalf. This is covered in more detail in the Guidance to Candidates and Agents which is part of the candidate pack. If you have any queries please contact the Electoral Commission.

**Q: Are there any debates or hustings between the candidates?**

**A:** A “Wardmote” or Ward Meeting, will take place in each ward the day before the election (the timings and venues will be confirmed nearer to the elections). All voters in the Ward are invited to attend the meeting, and candidates will have the opportunity to address the meeting. Voters will have the opportunity to ask candidates questions.

**Q: Will there always be a poll?**

**A:** If there are no more candidates than there are seats available the election is uncontested, and those candidates standing will be declared to have been elected. If there are more candidates than there are seats, then a poll will take place.

**The Electorate**

**Q: Who is allowed to vote in City elections?**

**A:** In addition to City residents, many businesses and other organisations are eligible to appoint voters in City ward elections. The annual update of the Ward Lists (the register of voters) takes place through the autumn and the deadline to register to vote in the 2025 elections was 30 November 2024.

**Q. How do I know who my electors are and how can I communicate with them?**

**A:** A copy of the Ward List (the register of voters) for the ward you are standing in will be available shortly before the start of the election. The List contains the names of the people who are registered to vote. A disclaimer for use of the Ward List is included in

your packs. We will need to receive this before you can have a copy of the requested Ward List.

Please be aware that these Ward Lists are subject to data protection legislation and may only be used for electoral purposes. Care must be taken of them. The legislation surrounding data handling can be found <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection/the-data-protection-act>.

## **The Election**

### **Q: How do voters cast their vote?**

**A:** Like all other UK elections, voters can either vote at their allocated polling station, or chose to vote by post. Voters may also appoint someone to vote on their behalf (a proxy) if they have a particular reason why they cannot attend their polling station on polling day.

### **Q: How will voters know where to vote?**

**A:** Each voter is allocated a polling station. Each Ward has at least one polling station - a couple of the larger Wards have two. Voters will be sent a Notice of Election letter at the beginning of the election, and then a couple of weeks before polling day will be sent a poll card. These will advise them of the location of the polling station in their ward.

Voters will also be able to find out this information on our website:

[www.speakforthecity.com](http://www.speakforthecity.com)

### **Q: When will voters be able to cast their vote?**

**A:** Polling Stations will be open on polling day between 8am and 8pm. If a voter has arranged a postal vote, their ballot paper will be sent to them on or around 10 days before polling day and their completed vote must be returned by 8pm on polling day.

### **Q: How many candidates can a person vote for?**

**A:** A voter may vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies. In this instance it is one vacancy per ward, therefore one vote can be cast.

### **Q. When are postal votes opened?**

There will be a postal vote opening session conducted at the Guildhall prior to and on polling day. Candidates have the right to attend the opening(s) for their Ward. All candidates will be informed of the time and place of the opening(s), in writing with at least 48 hours' notice. Please note that ballot papers will be kept face down throughout this process

### **Q: When and where are the votes counted and the results announced?**

**A:** The count for the election will take place directly after the poll closes at a venue in the Ward – often this will be at the polling station. Candidates and their Agents are entitled to attend and scrutinise proceedings. The result is announced officially at a second, adjourned Wardmote (ward meeting) which will take place when the counting of votes has been completed.

## **After the Election**

### **Q: What happens if I am elected?**

**A:** If you are successfully elected as a Common Councilman you will be asked by the Returning Officer who is presiding over the Wardmote meeting to make a Declaration of

Office and sign up to the City Corporation's Code of Conduct for Members. You will subsequently be admitted formally at a meeting of the Court of Common Council.

**Q: How will I know what is expected of me if I am elected?**

**A:** There will be a comprehensive induction programme for all new members coordinated by the Town Clerk's Office at Guildhall.

**Contact:** Saira McKechnie  
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