



# Prudhoe

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TOWN COUNCIL

Be the Change in  
Your Community  
Democracy  
Starts and Ends  
with You



**Everything we do at Prudhoe Town Council starts and ends with YOU...**

### What is a Town Council?

A town council is a local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the town. It is the level of government closest to the community, with Northumberland County Council above it in the hierarchy.

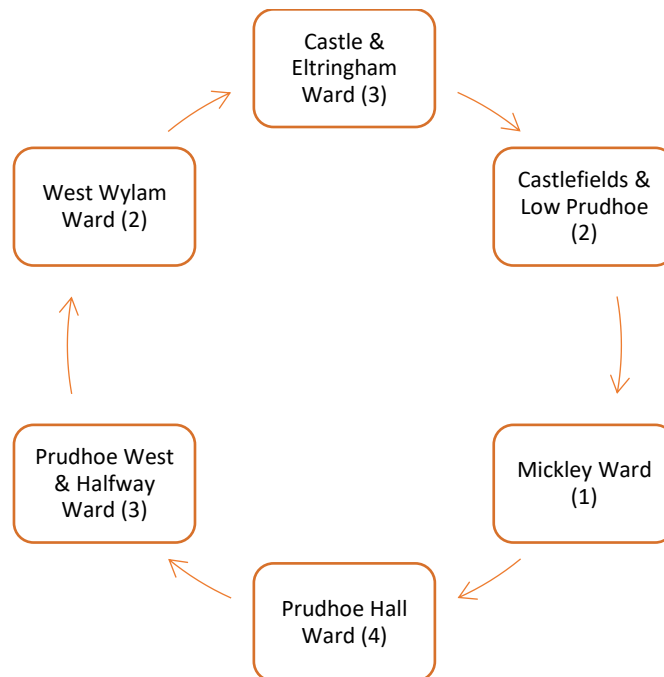
As the authority closest to the people, Prudhoe Town Council is the first-place people will go with concerns or ideas. For this reason, we are a vital part of the community, and we want to encourage you to engage with us.

### Elected Representatives

Prudhoe Town Council has 15 elected representatives who serve as Town Councillors; as democratically elected local representatives, they have a unique and privileged position and the potential to make a real difference to people's lives.

Once elected, Town Councillors sit on the council for a maximum of four years (our last election was in May 2025), if Councillors wish to stay in post they can stand for re-election (all seats in Prudhoe will be up for election in May 2029.)

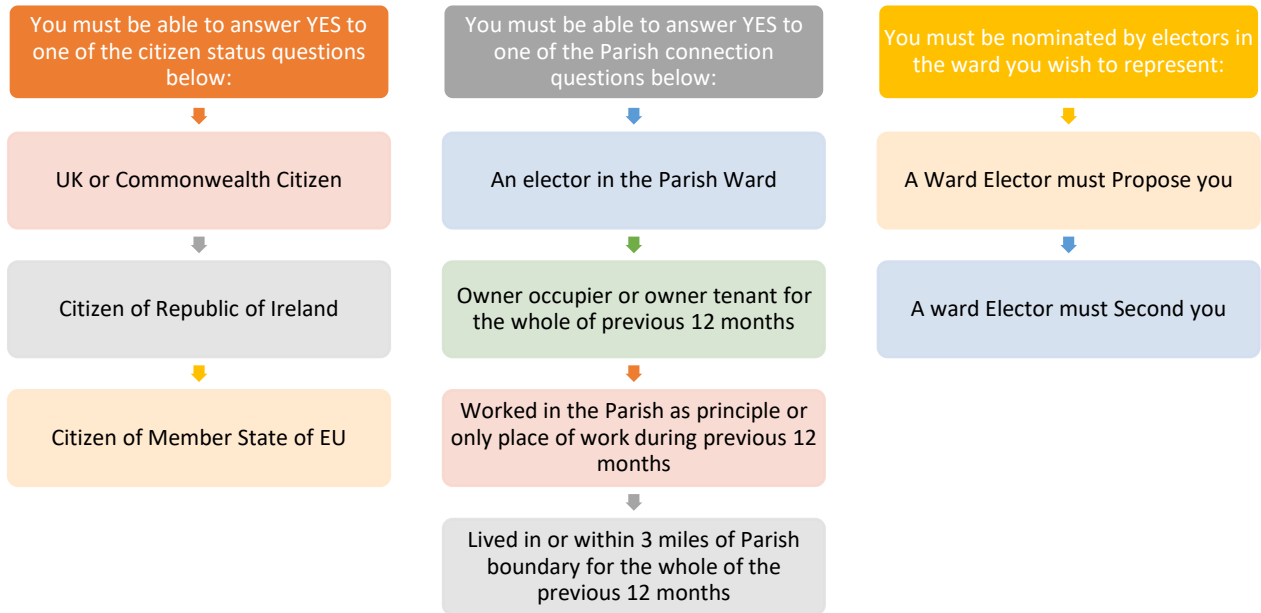
Prudhoe Town Council has six wards; the number of Councillors on each is determined by the size of the electorate, illustrated below:



As well as deciding who is elected to serve on Prudhoe Town Council, residents also have the ability to choose who stands. The eligibility criteria for a Town Councillor is set out below. As well as being eligible, a candidate must be proposed and seconded by electors of the ward they wish to represent, as part of the nomination process.



### Eligibility to stand as a Town Councillor



### Why become a Town Councillor?

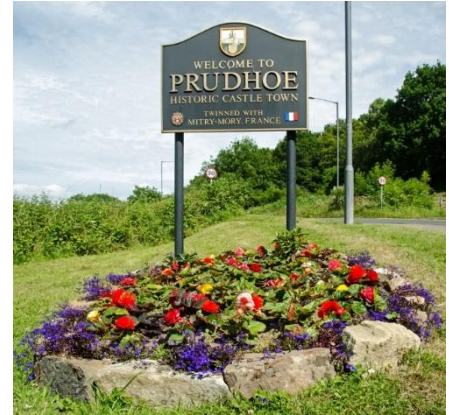
You could be the fresh new talent that Prudhoe Town Council is looking for. Are you ready to help change the face of local government? No other role gives you a chance to make such a huge difference to quality of life for people in your local area.

The diversity of local councils is their strength. Each can make a unique response to the needs of their community with a sensitivity that is more difficult for principal authorities to achieve. The job of Prudhoe Town Council is to represent the interests of the whole community; understanding the needs of different groups in the community (such as young and elderly people) is an important part of a Councillors role.

As a councillor, you have a responsibility to be well-informed, especially about diverse local views. You cannot assume that you represent the interests of all your electors without consulting them.

In recognition of the need for a vibrant local democracy, the Localism Act 2011 sought to decentralise administrative power from the state towards localities, empowering communities to enable them to make better responses to community problems, and over the course of the past few years Town and Parish Councils have found themselves taking on many more responsibilities.

Prudhoe Town Council has taken on formal floral bedding, elements of grass-cutting, play areas, public toilets, litter bins and bus shelters and continually seek to be actively involved in the delivery of many other local services. As we move forward, the public and the Councillors who represent them have an opportunity to engage with key stakeholders in a bottom-up approach to devolution with local solutions to local problems, civic participation and an increased legitimacy of the Town Council and its role.



What issues in your local area matter most to you? Is it the condition of the local park, creating more activities for young people, enhancing services for older residents, making the roads safer, or supporting the success of local businesses? Whether you're already active in your community and ready to take the next step, or you're seeking a meaningful and fulfilling way to contribute, becoming a Town Councillor could be your opportunity to make a real difference. Whatever improvements your neighbourhood needs, you might be the person to lead the change.



You may have a fixed idea of local councillors, but it may be outdated. Today, councillors come from diverse backgrounds and ages. The role is open to anyone passionate about making a difference, regardless of experience or background. So, if you've been hesitant because you don't fit a traditional stereotype, it's time to reconsider, local councillors today represent a much broader and more inclusive group than you might expect.

Groups with diverse members often make better decisions. It's important that councils include councillors who reflect their communities and bring a wide range of skills and life experiences. You don't need formal education or a specific profession, skills gained from raising a family, caring for a loved one, volunteering, or being involved in religious or community groups are equally valuable.

Having or being able to develop the following skills, knowledge and attributes will help you in the role:

- **Communication skills;** these include listening and interpersonal abilities, public speaking, considering different viewpoints, and negotiating, mediating, and resolving conflicts.
- **Problem-solving and analytical skills;** being able to identify the root of an issue and explore various solutions, including considering the advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- **Teamwork:** Collaborating effectively in meetings and committees and completing agreed tasks on time.
- **Organisational skills;** planning and managing your time efficiently, keeping appointments, and meeting deadlines.



- **Community engagement;** being available to connect with your local community through meetings, media, online platforms, public forums, debates, and telephone.



Councils are particularly keen to encourage people from under-represented groups to get involved, such as younger people, people from England's many ethnic communities and disabled people; women are also under-represented on local councils.

There are many different reasons why people decide to become a local councillor. They include:

- Wanting to make a difference and help shape the future of their community.
- Caring about the local area and ensuring it receives the right services.
- Representing the views of residents and advocating for community interests.
- Supporting their political beliefs.
- Using their business or professional skills to contribute.
- Addressing a specific issue they are passionate about.
- Building on their involvement in a political party, trade union, charity, volunteer group, or school governing body.

Whatever your reason, if you've read this far, now is the perfect time to learn more. The best way to understand what it's like to be a Town Councillor is to hear from someone with firsthand experience. Attend a town council meeting, chat with one of our current councillors, or get in touch with the Town Clerk.

### **Town Council Powers**

Prudhoe Town Council has a wide range of powers which are essentially related to local matters, such as looking after community buildings, open space, allotments, play areas, street lighting, bus shelters, car parks and much more.

The council also has the power to raise money through taxation - the precept. The precept is the Town Council's share of the Council Tax, which is collected via the billing authority - Northumberland County Council.

Prudhoe Town Council agrees to its budget in January for the following financial year and based on the money that is required to carry out the plans for the coming year, the precept demand is made; the total amount required is divided by the council tax base, i.e. the number of tax payers in Prudhoe.

Prudhoe Town Council aims to engage with residents on all matters, but it is especially important that we engage with residents on financial matters, especially if there are plans to increase the precept.

### **Other ways to get involved**

All our meetings are open to the public and there is an opportunity at each for members of the public to raise concerns and ask questions. There is also an annual town meeting which



all parishioners are invited to attend; this is an open forum meeting and much less formal than our usual monthly committee meetings.

Residents can contact the Council via telephone, email or via social media and can also call into the Council office within the Spetchells Centre. Any formal communication received by the Council will be received at a public meeting for consideration. Residents can bring to the attention of the council anything that concerns them, either directly or through the Clerk. If matters raised are not the responsibility of the council, the Clerk can bring them to the attention of the proper authority.

The contact details of all Town Councillors are available on the council website and by contacting the office, as well as being published in the Annual Report; residents can raise issues with Town Councillors which will then be brought before the Council.

We actively seek the views of members of the public via survey, surgery and via our events; we encourage you to engage and to tell us how we can improve local participation.

All meetings are advertised on the council notice boards and via our website and social media pages so you will always know what your Town Council is considering by way of the agenda and associated papers. You will also always know what your Town Council agrees as minutes of meetings are published online and available for public inspection.

### Use your vote

In the UK, there are three different ways you can vote.

Most people **vote in person** at a polling station.

However, if you are not able to go to the polling station in person on election day, you can apply to vote **by post** or **by proxy** (where someone votes on your behalf).

How you vote is up to you but please ensure that you do vote for your local representative.

