



Argyll and Bute—a great
place to live, work and visit

Becoming a Councillor

Your guide to standing for election in Argyll
and Bute

Arms of Argyll and Bute Council

The Corporate Arms of Argyll and Bute Council reflect

Local government in Argyll and Bute—an introduction

Argyll and Bute is one of Scotland's 32 local authorities. Later in this guide, you can find out more about Argyll and Bute's unique characteristics, its opportunities and challenge

Working with others in a multi-member ward in your local area is a key feature of being a councillor.

A simple principle applies to all councillors in a multi-member ward:

Council ward details for Argyll and Bute local authority area:

Ward No.	Ward Name	No. of Councillors	Areas Covered Include:
1	South Kintyre	3	Campbeltown, East Kintyre, The Laggan, Southend
2	Kintyre and the Islands	3	Colonsay, East Kintyre, Gigha, Jura, South Knapdale, Tarbert and Skipness, West Kintyre
3	Mid Argyll	3	Ardrishaig, Craignish, Dunadd, Furnace, Inveraray, Lochgilphead, North Knapdale, South Knapdale, West Lochfyne

About Argyll and Bute

Geography

Argyll and Bute is bordered by the urban areas of Helensburgh and Dunoon along the Clyde, with Loch Lomond to the East, the Mull of Kintyre to the south, Atlantic Islands to the west, and the Sound of Mull and Appin to the north.

The area's population of 86,260 (2018) is spread across the second largest local authority area in Scotland covering a land area of 690,946 hectares. It has the fifth sparsest population density of the 32 Scottish local authorities, with an average population density of just 0.12 persons per hectare. This compares to a Scottish average of 0.70 persons per hectare. Population growth is a priority for the council and for its community planning partners.

17% of Argyll and Bute's population live on islands, 52.7% live in settlements of 3,000 or more people; conversely, 47.2% of the population live in settlements smaller than 3,000 people, or outwith settlements altogether. 80% live within one kilometre of the coast.

Argyll and Bute has 23 inhabited islands, including Bute, Islay, Jura, Mull, Iona, Coll and Tiree, more than any other local authority in Scotland. The area is also home to several long sea lochs, which bisect the landscape. The physical geography of the area does impact development of the road network and leads to high levels of reliance on ferries for travel.

The importance of the natural environment is indicated by the 121 Sites of Special Scientific Interest that have been designated within the area. Combined, these cover almost 10% of Argyll and Bute's land area.

Economy and Employment



Argyll and Bute's economy is predominantly service based. Over 87% of employee jobs in the area are provided within the service sector (Office Business Register and Employment Survey 2016).

Argyll and Bute has relatively high levels of employment in agriculture and fishing, and low levels of employment in manufacturing and finance.

Unemployment rates in Argyll and Bute are below the national average although, because of the high levels of seasonal employment in the area, rates vary according to time of year.

GVA (Gross Value Added) provides a measure of the overall economic wellbeing of an area. GVA figures show that Argyll and Bute's economy is performing less strongly than the Scottish average.

Because of the rural nature of the area, the pattern of employment in Argyll and Bute is different to the Scottish average. Economies with a high dependence on seasonal industries, such as tourism, agriculture, forestry and fishing, face many challenges. Workers may be presented with only a small window of time to make their income for the entire year. As a result, some people will take multiple jobs during the summer period to maximize their income. Alternatively, workers look for other jobs when the "season" is over. Many opt to commute to other areas to seek employment and reap the benefits of higher earnings. These types of economies are unstable as the impact of the weather plays

Education

Educational attainment in Argyll and Bute is above the national average in a number of measures and currently, on average, 95% per cent of school leavers in Argyll and Bute achieve a positive and sustained destination. The council has the aspiration to ensure that Argyll and Bute is the best place in Scotland for our children to grow up and has set out an Education Vision and Strategy, [Our Children, Their Future](#), to ensure it responds effectively to the changing national and local policy contexts. In doing so, it will ensure the future delivery of education services which support children, young people and communities across Argyll and Bute to achieve the best possible outcomes. This vision will be delivered through the following six key objectives:

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Working together—planning for success

Securing a vibrant future for all people and communities in Argyll and Bute is very much a collective effort. Argyll and Bute Council is a key part of the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership (CPP) a collective of public agencies and third sector organisations working together to achieve an overall strategic objective:

These outcomes are in line with national priorities and will also see Argyll and Bute contributing to the national outcomes for Scotland.

Agreeing these six long term outcomes requires significant commitment and effort from all community planning partners and indeed the whole of Argyll and Bute.

Opportunities and Challenges

Our geography—is a diverse mix: we are a council with islands and a highly rural area with many small and remote communities often separated by water. Ensuring that people have access to the area to live, work, visit and do business, and that we can deliver key services to our communities, is one of the biggest challenges that we work to overcome.

Growing our population

Attracting more people to come to live, work, visit and do business in Argyll and Bute is at the heart of everything we do. With more extremes than most of Scotland, we face increasing costs and challenges to deliver our services, particularly to older people, and alongside this we want to encourage more younger people to move to the area so that our economy can grow.



Employment—developing education, skills and training to maximise opportunities for all and create a workforce which supports economic growth.

Sustainability

Ensuring a sustainable future by protecting the natural environment and mitigating climate change.

Health

Improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

Deprivation

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Our Vision and Values

Argyll and Bute Council is forward looking and ambitious, continuously improving our relationships with partners, customers and employees to ensure that we deliver the right services, by the best people, in the best way. We have a



How the council works

At the heart of every one of Scotland's 32 councils, there are councillors working on behalf of their communities. In Argyll and Bute, 36 councillors are elected to serve for a council term of four or five years (currently five year terms, and those elected in May 2022 will be expected to serve a five year term).

Argyll and Bute Council consists of elected members from different political parties as well as independent councillors who then form an administration to lead the council. Two members are appointed as the Leader and Depute Leader to head the council and the elected members appointed to the role of Provost and Depute Provost take on the ceremonial and civic leadership functions.

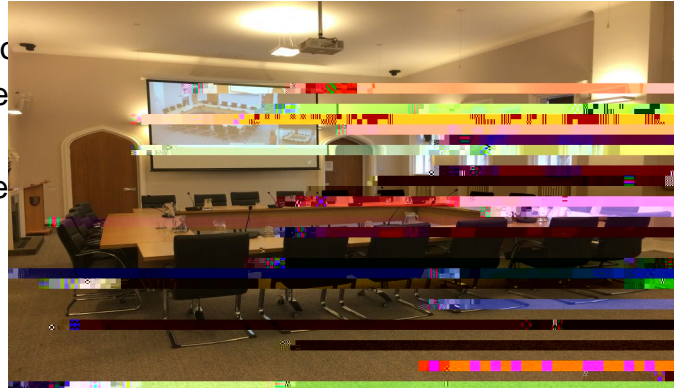
Argyll and Bute Council has a Constitution which sets out how the council operates and how decisions are made. Councillors are responsible for the major policy decisions taken by the council including budget setting, approving key policies and ensuring that services are delivered in line with the priorities of the council and government direction, in order to improve the quality of life within the area and provide essential services.

The council works in partnership with other public agencies across Argyll and Bute, including NHS Highland, Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue Scotland, Highlands and Islands Fire and many more. They come together as the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership. There is an important focus on consultation, engagement, scrutiny, measurement of performance and o t h e

Committees, Meetings and Decision Making

The full council meeting is a public meeting of all 36 councillors, where major strategies and policies of the council are debated and key decisions are made including scrutiny and oversight of other committees and the budget arrangements for the council.

There are also a number of principal committees of which a selection of the councillors will sit on. The political management arrangements are usually determined by each new council and currently they include:



- Policy and Resource Committee
- Community Services Committee
- Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee
- Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee
- Argyll and Bute Licensing Board
- Audit and Scrutiny Committee
- Local Negotiating Committee (Education)
- Employee Joint Consultative Committee
- Area Committees/Business Days (and Area Community Planning Groups)

Beneath these committees there are also sub-committees to deal with specific issues such as the Statutory Harbour Board.

At the time of publication, January 2022, all council and committee business is being carried out on a virtual basis, using Skype for Business and MS Teams video and teleconference technology. Work is



The Role of a Councillor

Becoming a councillor is a rewarding form of public service.

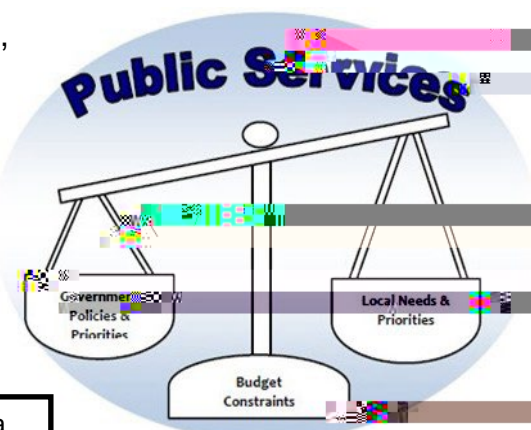
It requires a lot of commitment and hard work. Every day you will have to balance the needs and interests of voters, the broader community, your political party (if you are a member of one), interest groups and the council. This will make demands of your time on top of your own personal responsibilities to family, workplace and friends.

However, the rewards can make it all worthwhile. As a councillor, you will:

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Most of the council's income comes from central government, so the council must work within fairly tight limits when setting budgets. As a result, during regular committee meetings, decisions are made which may take a great deal of time and attention.

Councillors also spend a great deal of time with their constituents and attend local bodies such as community councils, other local organisations and Community Planning Partnership meetings.

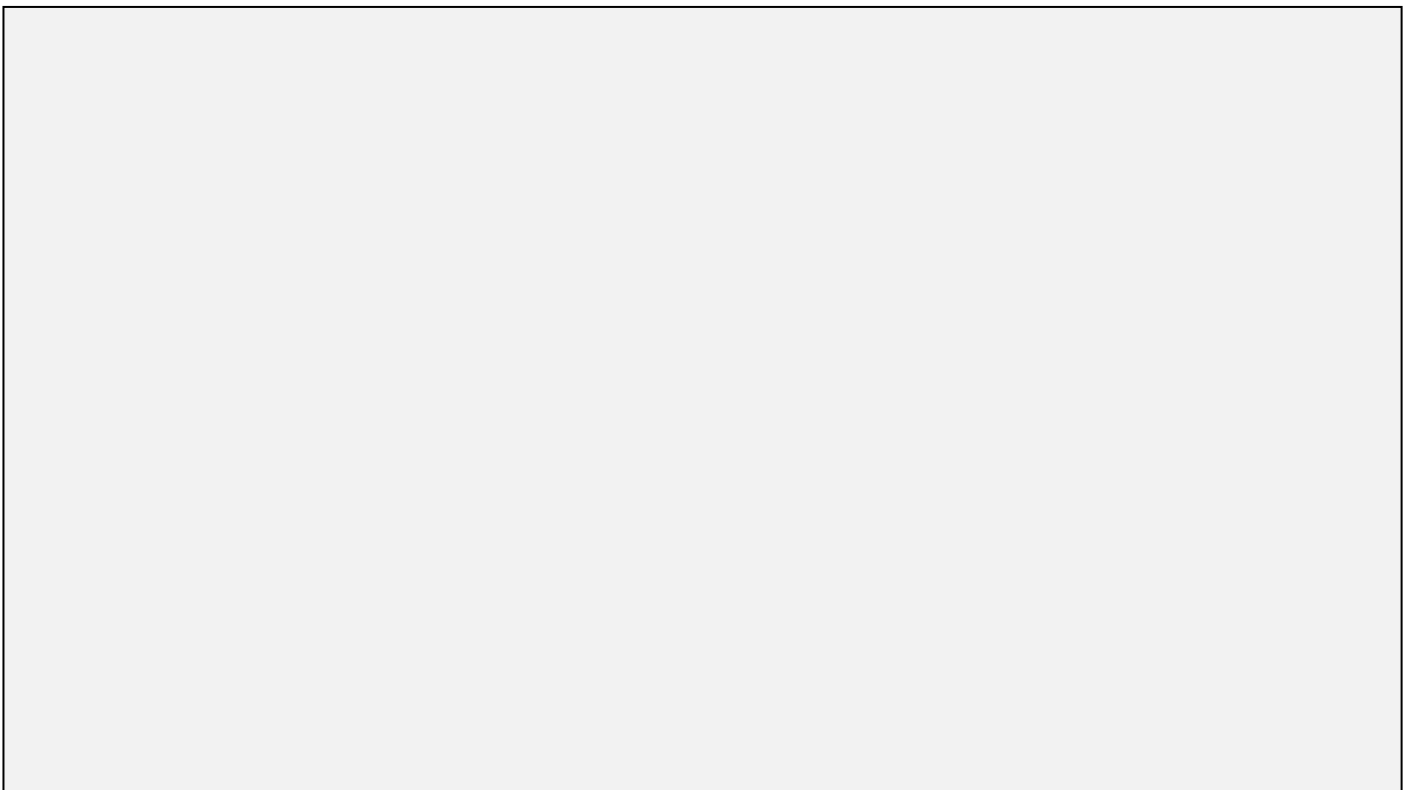


Find more information and background about the role and responsibilities of a councillor and local government in Scotland [Local government: Councillors' roles, conduct and pay gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

What are the requirements to become a candidate?

Most people can stand for election to become a councillor, as long as you are:

- at least 18 years old on the day of your nomination, and
- either a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, or a qualifying foreign national, and
- meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
 - a. You are registered as a local government elector for the local authority area in which you wish to stand on the day of your nomination.
 - b. You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the local authority area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination.
 - c. Your main c.



What skills will I need?

There are certain skills that Councillors should have, or pursue, in order to become effective representatives and decision makers for the local community:

- Communication and presentation skills to express needs of local residents during meetings and become a voice for the council
- Interpersonal skills when managing surgeries and conversing with the community
- Commitment towards representation of the electorate
- Decisive quick thinker
- Maintain an objective,

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Standing for Election

Elections in Argyll and Bute are administered by the Returning Officer for Argyll and Bute, Pippa Milne (Chief Executive of Argyll and Bute Council) and Depute Returning Officer, David Logan (Head of Legal and Regulatory Support Services) and the Election Team, based within the council.

The nomination process

Nearer to the time of an election, five to six weeks before the date of an election (or by-election), the council will place adverts in local newspapers, the council website and outside council office buildings advising of the election, the vacancies available, and notifying interested parties/persons where and when they can obtain a nomination pack.

Anyone interested in becoming a candidate can be either nominated by their registered political party or can apply independently if not a member of a registered political party.

The nomination pack contains a Nomination Form which will require to be completed by each individual wishing to stand for

Election agents, campaigning and expenses

The candidate must appoint an election agent which will be done at the time of nomination, although the nominee can appoint him/herself for this position.

The election agent handles correspondence from the Returning Officer about the forthcoming election as well as handling the candidate's campaign expenses.

Election agents are entitled to attend the opening of postal votes, polling stations, the verification and the counting of votes and will be provided with information about this close to the time.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and any restrictions in place at the time, there will be guidance provided for everyone who will be using a polling station or attending a count—this will be provided online and with packs where possible. Candidates may also wish to check with their political party, if applicable, for any guidance in relation to campaigning and canvassing.

All candidates' campaign material must be in adherence to electoral, civil and criminal legislation concerning published material. Please consult the Elections Office for more information.

Following the election, each candidate is required by law to complete a statement of expenses to show how much money was spent towards their campaign. This must be completed and returned within 28 days of the declaration of the result.

Election expenses are also open to public inspection.

(N.B. Election campaign expenses are not reclaimable from the council.)

Frequently Asked Questions

Do councilors get training?

Yes. Training will be provided because all councilors are

What support is there for councillors?

Dedicated support for elected members is provided by the Governance team through Committee Support (who administer all council and committee meetings) and Member Services (who provide administrative support for councillors). Office

Do councillors get paid?

Currently elected councillors in Argyll and Bute receive basic remuneration of £18,604 per year (as at 1st April 2021); this is normally reviewed by the Scottish Parliament each year. A number of members such as the Council Leader, Provost or other senior councillors who have "significant additional responsibilities" such as Policy Leads or Area Committee Chairperson will earn proportionately more.

Councillors will also be reimbursed on receipt of travel and subsistence expenses necessarily incurred during approved council duties.

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Details of all councillors' remuneration and expenses are published annually.

How much travel is involved?

The amount of travel will depend on the level of responsibility held; for example the Leader and Policy Leads may require to travel to [] and []

Are there rules on standards and ethics for councillors?

The Councillors National Code of Conduct sets out the expected standards of behaviour for Elected Members. A copy of the National Code of Conduct is provided to all councillors when they are elected.

It is also available at www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk

EndNote

TheProtectionof Children

Contacts

If you would like to find out more about becoming a councillor and the election process please contact:

Elections Office
Argyll and Bute Council
Lochgilphead
PA318RT

Speak to the Elections Team—

01546603264

Email: Elections@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Web: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/elections