

## District and Parish Council Elections – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023...

Every four years, all Members of our District Council and Parish Councils across East Devon are 'up for election'. This is a chance for Trinity residents to elect a councillor to East Devon District Council or to Uplyme, Combyne-Rousdon and Axmouth Parish Councils.

### Time to call time...

I have decided I will not be offering myself for re-election and will therefore be stepping down from East Devon District Council in May.

It has been a great honour to serve Trinity Ward for almost 14 years. Since first election in 2009, I have been re-elected in 2011,15 and 19.

Over four council terms, I have held a wide variety of positions, internal and external. These include, Director of the Exeter Science Park company, as the first buildings were constructed on the park, and Chair of the Exeter & East Devon Enterprise Zone Board. I served across the range of council committees and panels as Cabinet member from 2011, prior to election to Leader of the Council in 2018. After the 2019 election I returned to Cabinet as Finance Portfolio Holder, to guide finances of the authority in the first independent administration.

Most recently, I was elected by peers to Chair the Council through the particularly challenging pandemic and recovery period, from 2021 -22. I was unanimously re-elected to the Chair for the final year of this council to May 2023, where I have represented the district council at numerous civic functions across Devon. As Chair of the Standards Committee, responsibilities include not only behaviour of District Council Members but also that of East Devon Parish Councillors.

It was a particular honour, as First Citizen of East Devon, to lead the East Devon Proclamation Ceremony for the Accession to the throne of his majesty King Charles III. Sadly, this reflected the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, so soon after her Platinum Jubilee which we at EDDC had marked by planting 70 English Oaks across East Devon, one in each town and parish. This network now forms a legacy for her majesty, delivered through rather 'flexible' deployment of my Chair's modest civic budget, and support of council colleagues.

I am making my intention to stand down known early, to encourage Trinity residents to consider standing for election to what can be rewarding, enjoyable, frustrating and challenging Councillor roles. There is no specific profile of a Councillor, we are an eclectic bunch of disparate talents and skills, united in the wish to help shape a better environment and future for those we represent.

**Nominations for 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023 election close 4:00pm Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

## How do I become a councillor?

### What does the District Council do?

EDDC provides local services to residents and businesses. Our main responsibilities are Environmental Health, Planning, Recycling and Refuse Collection.

### What does an EDDC Councillor do?

There are 60 Ward Councillors who represent everyone in their wards as a source of information or point of access to council services. The role is a Community Leader supporting local organisations on local issues, Policy Maker attending meetings to agree council budgets and policies and Scrutineer to review and improve services.

You cannot leave at 5:00pm. The public can (and do) contact you at home at any time of day. Decisions are not always easy, many can be controversial – but we can make a difference.

### How can I become a District Councillor?

You must be 18 years of age or over on the day of nomination (I'm pleased to report that there are now Members in their early 20's). You do not need any formal qualification or experience, but may have special skills or experience you could contribute.

### Do I need to have a political preference?

No, you can stand as an independent candidate or as a political party candidate.

### Does it cost me anything to stand for election?

Candidate election cost are a personal candidate expense or a political party expense.

### Does a Councillor get paid?

District Councillors receive a modest allowance (not changed since my first election in 2009, but under review) and travel expenses.

### Can I get time off work?

The Employment Rights Act 1996 requires your employer to allow you reasonable time off for your work as a councillor.

Full details on becoming either a District or Parish Councillor can be found here.

<https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/becoming-a-councillor/>

If any Trinity constituents are interested in standing for election to represent us on East Devon District Council, I would be pleased to answer (confidentially if you wish!) any questions you might have about the election or role.

### **Cllr Ian Thomas**

Independent Ward Member for Trinity

Chair - East Devon District Council

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