

Candidate webpage – Q&As

What should I expect as a candidate?

We are running for two seats in Dalston and three in Hackney Downs. This means you will not be campaigning alone! As a team of target ward candidates, you will be the public face of our election campaign in leaflets, social media and (hopefully) the local press.

The typical activities you will be involved in are:

- Door-knocking and speaking to residents (when it is safe)
- Meeting with community and campaign groups in your local area and attending events
- Following up on 'casework' if residents raise a specific issue with you on the doorstep
- Speaking to the press if they show interest in our campaigns
- Recording videos and other material for online use

We ask that candidates commit to a minimum of **2 hours most weeks** after they are selected, rising to **10 hours per week in the 6 weeks leading up the election**. You are not expected to be available at any specific day or time of the week, although we usually run action days on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Click here to see previous Hackney candidates talk about their experiences of running for election [link]

How will I be supported as a candidate?

There will be a team around you to plan, support and help run your campaign, so that your time is kept free for the important public-facing actions described above. We have officers who look after:

- Planning overall strategy for election campaigns
- Organising action days for volunteers to deliver leaflets and knock on doors
- Writing and producing leaflets (although you would contribute to the content)
- The local party's website and social media channels
- Managing our data on voters and canvassing returns
- Campaign finances
- Compliance with electoral law and liaising with the electoral authorities

We are also developing a Scrutiny Group to hold the Council to account on its decisions. We would help you to take part in this, including by formulating and putting questions to the mayor and cabinet members at Council meetings.

Our candidates from previous elections will be on hand to provide mentoring, and we have links with other local Green parties who can offer advice when needed.

As a regional priority ward we will also have support and advice from the London and national Green Party, including VIP visits and phonebanking to boost turnout at action days.

Am I the right person to be a candidate?

We are aiming to recruit candidates from all backgrounds and walks of life. You do not need to have a background in politics or campaigning: we are looking for anyone who is motivated to make their local community a better place and hold those in power to account. We especially welcome candidates from underrepresented groups including women and non-binary people, people of colour, people with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ people.

Although we are running for seats in Dalston and Hackney Downs, **you do not need to live in these neighbourhoods in order to stand there.** We only ask that you are prepared to get to know your ward and its residents well.

There is no one-size-fits-all job description for being a candidate (and then a councillor!), but positive attributes would include:

- Being a team player who can work well with others to an agreed strategy
- Confident and with good communication skills in a variety of media
- Able to listen to and act on the concerns of others, including the public
- Good at identifying and implementing solutions, not just spotting problems
- Capable of handling lots of information and being able to sift out the important details
- Strategic thinking, with an ability to make the links between local, regional and national developments
- Able to prioritise and delegate – you will need to pick and choose what battles you try to fight within the council and not try to cover all the bases
- Well organised and at ease when dealing with people you don't know, so as to be able to handle casework efficiently
- Able to cope with public criticism, and sometimes to defend potentially unpopular positions

There are some basic legal requirements that you need to meet in order to stand as a candidate. If you are unsure about any of these, please get in touch with us:

- Citizen of the UK, Republic of Ireland, Commonwealth or an EU state
- Registered to vote in Hackney, OR you live, work or own property in Hackney
- Not employed by Hackney Council
- Not subject to a bankruptcy order or a prison sentence of 3 months or more in the past 5 years

What should I expect if I'm elected as a councillor?

As a new councillor you will not be on your own. We are aiming to get a team of 5 Green councillors elected. We will make it our priority as a local party to support you and help you make decisions. There is a national Association of Green Councillors (<https://agc.greenparty.org.uk/>), which offers a wide range of support including mentoring, information packs and an annual conference. We will also use our links with other London Green parties who already have councillors as a source of advice.

Being a councillor is not a full-time job, but we do ask that you commit 10 to 12 hours per week on average to the role. The main duties of a councillor involve:

- **Casework:** as an elected representative of your ward, residents will come to you with issues they are experiencing with the Council. This could be anything from potholes on their street, or planning objections, to their child's educational needs not being met. Using your position to make a positive difference to someone's life is one of the most rewarding parts of the role. You won't always be able to fix every problem, but simply listening to people and being the 'human face' of the Council bureaucracy can make a huge difference.
- **Full Council meetings:** these happen every month or two. Questions are put to the Mayor and cabinet members and motions are debated. It's Hackney's equivalent of the Westminster Parliament, where the administration is held to account.
- **Committee meetings:** you may be appointed to one of the committees such as planning, licensing or scrutiny.
- **Speaking with Council officials:** as a councillor you are able to meet one-to-one with (for example) the Director of Public Health, find out what decisions they are making and ask questions.

Councillors in Hackney receive an allowance, which is currently £10,678 per year, plus an additional amount for anyone with caring responsibilities. The Green Party asks all of its elected representatives to contribute a small portion of their allowances to the party so that we can continue to pay our hard-working staff members. For councillors, this means 5% to Hackney Green Party and 2.5% to London Green Party.