**Wiltshire**

**Youth**

**Council**

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**school information**

# Youth Councillor role

Becoming a youth councillor is an exciting opportunity to represent the views of other young people at a county level. Candidates should be between the ages of 11 – 17 and either live or go to school/college in Wiltshire. Youth councillors will be required to attend at least one full youth council meeting a month. Wiltshire Youth Councillors will be elected to a one-year term from March 2024 to March 2025. These meetings will be hybrid, which means that if the youth councillor cannot make it in person then they can join via Microsoft Teams. The two Youth Councillors of the school are expected to attend the meeting, the deputy is also welcome to attend.

Each full youth council meeting will have a guest invited who will seek the youth councillors views on important topics such as environmental issues, transport, or mental health the members of youth council will have a say in how policy at the council is shaped.

With support from Wiltshire’s Voice and Participation Service, the Youth Council will take part in activities such as youth inspections, advising on how money is spent for young people and advocating for young people where they live.

# Special advisor role

Special Advisors are young people between the ages of 11-17 years old who speak for an underrepresented group in the community. These groups may include Young Carers, LGBTQ+ young people, BAME young people, military families, and children in care. The Special Advisors will be nominated from various community youth voice forums and will link in with those groups to ensure that their views are being fairly represented on Wiltshire’s Youth Council. Although this role has been created, we would still like schools to actively encourage young people from these groups to stand in their schools’ elections to become youth councillors.

# Wiltshire Youth Council Community seats

Community seats are for people who live in Wiltshire but do not attend school in Wiltshire, there will be a total of three community seats available for young people to be elected too. These seats will be divided into Wiltshire North, Wiltshire West and Wiltshire East. Young people wishing to stand for a community seat must evidence that they are representing a group of young people in their local area, for example a youth club, or worship group.

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| **Wiltshire East** | **Wiltshire North** | **Wiltshire West** |
| Amesbuy | Calne | Bradford on Avon |
| Marlborough | Chippenham | Melksham |
| Pewsey | Corsham | South West Wiltshire |
| Tidworth | Royal Wootton Bassett and Crickdale | Trowbridge |
| Salisbury | Devizes | Westbury |
| Southern Wiltshire | Malmesbury |  |

# Members of Youth Parliament

Once elected youth councillors can stand in an internal election to become a Member of Youth Parliament (MYP), Wiltshire has three seats on the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP). The runners up will be offered the opportunity to become a Deputy Member of Youth Parliament, their role will be to support the MYP with their work and step in when the MYP is unable to attend a Youth Parliament meeting. Youth Councillors can only stand for the constituency they live in, or go to school in **(see areas on page one)**.

By standing for election to UKYP the candidates are agreeing to

* serve a one-year term as one of three members of UKYP for Wiltshire
* be a champion for young people’s issues locally and nationally
* take part in Youth Council meetings
* work with their locally elected councillors and MPs to promote youth voice
* attend regional conventions of the UKYP (three Saturdays per year)
* attend the annual conference of UKYP (a residential weekend away)
* attend an annual debate in the House of Commons
* deliver the Make Your Mark youth voice campaign and other UKYP campaigns

# Campaigning

We recommend that each school sets outs its own parameters for campaigning. A campaign can either be one week prior to the election, or it can be a longer process over a period of months. Students may wish to put posters up, speak to people on their lunch breaks, or even do an assembly. We recommend that candidates should have a designated teacher they can liaise with to support them.

Candidates are told that they should not disrespect or negatively represent other candidates during their campaigns (this could lead to their own disqualification) and should, wherever possible, promote the reading/watching of manifestos as a way of choosing a candidate.

# Voting

Schools will need to provide a list of candidates that wish to stand for election to Wiltshire Council by Friday 15 December 2023. Wiltshire Council will then send each school/ college a link to their individual voting system. Once obtained, the link can be shared with all students on voting week. If the link is clicked it will take that student through to the voting platform and they will select the candidate that they want to vote for. The student will also be asked to complete a survey which tells us what their priorities are as a young person in Wiltshire.

The links will be active from Monday 29 January 2024 to Friday 2 February 2024. Students will be required to provide their name and tutor group. This is to ensure that no one votes more than once. The two candidates with the highest votes will become the Youth Councillors for your school and the runner up from the elections will automatically become the Deputy Youth Councillor for your school. Results will be sent back to the schools and colleges in the week commencing 5 February 2024

# How to get involved

Schools wishing to participate must complete the registration form and return this to **childandyouthvoice@wiltshire.gov.uk**

We will be hosting question-and-answer sessions for schools. Please contact the Child and Youth Voice Team if you would like to attend an information session.