

Would you like to see a parish council created for Guildford Town?

Your response to this proposal will help us decide whether a parish council is set up.

We want to hear whether you agree with our draft proposals to create a new local parish council.

This is the second of two consultations providing you with an opportunity to tell councillors what you think about the idea. We will consider all the responses and decide in March 2026. This process is called a 'community governance review'.

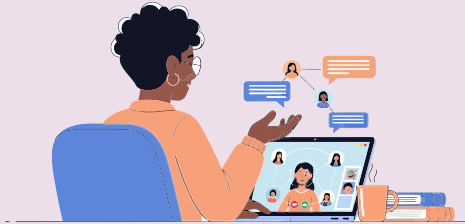
- Read this booklet.
- Complete and return the questionnaire or do it online.

Scan me



What our draft recommendations propose

- Create a parish area called 'Guildford' to cover the ten wards that are currently unparished.
- Form 'Guildford Parish Council' to serve the parish area.
- Name the ten parish wards the same as the existing ten borough wards.
- Elect 24 councillors to represent the ten wards that make up the parish area.
- Charge a precept (a new increase to the amount of council tax paid by each household) to pay for the running of the parish council and the services it may provide.



Although the new council must initially be set up as a parish council, it could decide to call itself a 'town council'. It could then have a ceremonial 'Mayor of Guildford'.

Why set up a new parish council now?

When Local Government Reorganisation happens in April 2027, Guildford Borough Council will cease to exist. A new West Surrey unitary authority, covering a much larger area, will take over.

Parishes won't be affected. Where they already exist, they will keep making decisions on local parish matters. There are parish councils everywhere in Guildford Borough except for an area around the town of Guildford.

We're proposing to create a new parish council, so that you have elected parish councillors representing you, making decisions about local, parish-level services across central Guildford.

Proposed parish council for Guildford

79,905 residents

Guildford Borough Council (GBC exists until May 2027)

151,359 residents

West Surrey unitary council

(takes over from GBC in April 2027)

685,006 residents

(Office of National Statistics)

Make up of the proposed Guildford Parish Council



Ten wards

One, two or three councillors per ward (see map).



Electorate

Electorate 52,064*
Population 79,905**



Precept

£5 to £8.34 a month



Councillors

24



*at 1 May 2025

**2024

The benefits of creating a parish council for Guildford

If created, the new parish council would have a strong connection to local communities, providing local services and aiming to bridge any gap between residents and the new, much larger, West Surrey unitary authority. Guildford residents would then have the same local representation as people living in all other areas of Guildford borough.

The new parish council would be run by parish councillors - local people, elected by residents.

Parish councillors provide an invaluable local presence:

- engaging with residents and businesses to find out what's important
- championing what matters to local people
- influencing decision-making in other tiers of local and central government
- one of the councillors could be the ceremonial 'Mayor of Guildford' each year, maintaining an ancient local tradition.



What services would the new parish council offer?

Parish councils' powers, rights and responsibilities are more limited than a borough council or a future West Surrey unitary authority. However, they can play a vital part in representing the interests of local people, improving quality of life and the local environment.

To begin with, a new parish council would have responsibilities for things like allotments and representing the community on planning matters.

Later it could negotiate with the new unitary authority, landowners and other partners to take on more responsibilities.



Some examples of what other parish councils look after:

- Allotments
- Local arts, events and landmarks
- Community safety
- Tourism and heritage assets
- Street lighting
- Cemeteries
- Parks, playing fields and outdoor gyms
- Drainage
- Lidos and paddling pools
- Village greens
- Community centres
- Litter
- Nature reserves
- Public toilets
- War memorials
- Flagpoles
- Seats and bus shelters



Would my council tax increase?

Setting up a parish council will affect council tax bills. The amount added to fund a parish council is called a 'precept'.

Parish councils set their own precept, which pays for the running of the parish council and the services it provides.

The precept for a new Guildford Parish Council is estimated to be **between £60 and £100 for a Band D property for the first year**. That's about £5 to £8.34 a month.



Setting a parish precept

The parish council could increase its precept each year to fund more services, or lower it if providing less services. There is no cap on the minimum or maximum precept, or how much it can change in any one year.

The newly elected parish councillors would need to:

- Agree what services they wish to offer.
- Seek any necessary consents from the incoming West Surrey unitary authority, landowners, or other organisations.
- Decide how much to raise via council tax to fund those services.

How much do other parishes charge their residents?

In England:

The Average Band D precept for parish and town councils for 2025-26 is £92.22.

In Surrey:

The Band D precepts for the four town councils for 2025-26 are:

- Farnham: £83.45
- Godalming: £122.15
- Haslemere: £58.26
- Horley: £55.21

In larger parish councils in Guildford:

The 2025-26 Band D precepts are:

- Ash: £78.52
- Effingham: £105.87
- Normandy: £113.71
- Ripley: £115.56
- Shere: £108.27
- Worplesdon: £103.34

Some councils in the country set much higher precepts. Given the size of Guildford as a town, it's possible that that a Band D precept could rise over time to be more than the amounts shown above.



Have your say



It's important that you read and understand the proposals being put forward, so you can say what you think is best for your area.

You have until **Sunday 1 March 2026** to respond to this questionnaire, but why not take ten minutes to respond right now, while it's fresh in your mind?

Your feedback will help shape what we decide to do next. We can decide to set up a parish council or leave the area unparished.

How to respond

Complete the questionnaire online:

The quickest and most cost-effective way for you to respond to this proposal is online at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/guildfordcgr2026



Fill out the questionnaire enclosed with this booklet: Once complete please return to our Millmead office either:

- In person (sat nav postcode GU2 4BE) or
- By post to the address below:
Community Governance Review
Millmead House, Millmead
Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4BB
- Take a clear photo of your paper response and email it as an attachment to CGR@guildford.gov.uk

Write to us: if you'd like to submit a longer response you can:

- Email CGR@guildford.gov.uk
- Write a letter and post to the address above.

Need a different format of this document?

If you need a large print version of this document:

- Phone: Customer Services on 01483 505050
- Email: CGR@guildford.gov.uk



Still got questions?

We're running an online presentation to explain this Community Governance Review and answer questions.

Join us on Wednesday 4 February at 7:30pm

Book your place at: www.guildford.gov.uk/CGR

We'll also be around the town at pop-up events during February. Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for more information.



What happens next?

- 6 January to 1 March 2026: This consultation takes place.
- 1 March 2026: Deadline to return your completed questionnaire.
- March 2026: Analyse questionnaire results and write report with final recommendations.
- Mid-March 2026: Full Council considers final recommendations.
- 1 April 2026: If agreed the Community Governance Order takes effect and first steps to set up a Guildford Parish Council begin.
- May 2027: The earliest possible date for elections to any new parish council.

If you would like to learn more about this Community Governance Review or read Frequently Asked Questions visit our website:

www.guildford.gov.uk/CGR

    @GuildfordBC
guildford.gov.uk