



**Stockton-on-Tees**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

# **The Role of Ward Councillors**

**A Guide for Registered Social Landlords**

Housing Strategy & Development Service

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# **The Role of Ward Councillors**

## **1. Introduction**

Registered Social Landlords (RSL) are key partners with Stockton Borough Council through management of existing housing, development of new affordable housing and wider social and community investment activities in local neighbourhoods.

Effective working relationships between RSL staff and ward Councillors can make a real difference to the lives of residents. The first step towards this is having an understanding of the role ward councillors play and getting to know the Councillors in your area.

## **2. Stockton Borough Council**

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council provides local services to people living, working or visiting the area. The Borough is made up of smaller areas known as 'wards' of which there are 26 in Stockton Borough.

Stockton also has parish and town councils which reflect local needs and opinion and have the power to provide their neighbourhoods with certain local services. Parish Councils may maintain play areas, village greens, public conveniences or parking areas. The Borough Council consults Parish and Town Councils for their views on all planning applications within their areas.

People are elected as councillors to represent everyone in their area and to serve the council as a whole. There are 56 Councillors with between one and three Councillors representing each ward.

## **3. A Councillor's Role**

The way council decisions in Stockton are made reflects in many ways that used in Westminster, with the most important local decisions being taken by councillors.

Councillors rely on advice from professional Council officers, who then have the task of implementing their decisions. In some cases officers are also able to make routine decisions on day-to-day matters within guidelines delegated by Councillors.

Councils work in partnership with other local organisations such as health, fire and rescue and police authorities. Councillors make sure that these organisations work together to meet the needs of local people.

Councillors represent their wards in a number of ways, for example by:

- meeting people who live or work there
- working with local schools, community associations, youth organisations and residents groups – all working to improve the community
- working to resolve local issues, problems and concerns by working with council staff or people from other organisations who may have expertise or knowledge concerning the matter in hand
- leading local policy on such things as planning, education, waste collection etc
- arranging regular Ward Surgeries

The majority of people who become councillors do so through a political party they feel a natural affinity to, though some choose to be independent of any formal political group. Councillors usually serve for a four year period but can give up their seat at any time. Local elections are usually held in May.

#### 4. Councillors in Your Area

'E-genda' is a 24 hour electronic service available via Stockton Borough Council's Website: [www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/egenda](http://www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/egenda). Here you will find up to date details of all ward councillors in the Borough, the wards they represent and details of their ward surgeries. If you want to 'put a face to a name' you can also download the leaflet "Know Your Local Councillor" which is updated regularly.

#### 5. Further Reference Material

To find out more about local government and the role of councillors go to:-

<b>Local Government Association</b> <a href="http://www.lga.gov.uk">www.lga.gov.uk</a>	<b>Department of Communities and Local Government</b> <a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk">www.communities.gov.uk</a>
<b>National Association of Local Councils</b> <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>	<b>Electoral Commission</b> <a href="http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk">www.electoralcommission.org.uk</a>
<b>Directgov</b> <a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk">www.direct.gov.uk</a>	<b>Improvement and Development Agency</b> <a href="http://www.idea.gov.uk/makeadifference">www.idea.gov.uk/makeadifference</a>
<b>The national body for parish and town councils Audit Commission</b> <a href="http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk">www.audit-commission.gov.uk</a>	

## 6. Useful Stockton Borough Council Contacts

<p><b>Democratic Services at Stockton Council</b> P.O. Box 11, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1LD.</p> <p><b>telephone:</b> (01642) 526193 <b>fax:</b> (01642) 528162 <b>e-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:democraticservices@stockton.gov.uk">democraticservices@stockton.gov.uk</a> <b>website:</b> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk">www.stockton.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Electoral Services</b> P.O. Box 11, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1LD.</p> <p><b>telephone:</b> (01642) 526196 <b>fax:</b> (01642) 528162 <b>e-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:electoral@stockton.gov.uk">electoral@stockton.gov.uk</a> <b>website:</b> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk">www.stockton.gov.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Housing Strategy &amp; Development Service</b> 16 Church Road Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1TX</p> <p>Tel: 01642 526527 Email: <a href="mailto:housing.strategy@stockton.gov.uk">housing.strategy@stockton.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk/housing">www.stockton.gov.uk/housing</a></p>	<p><b>Private Sector Housing</b> 16 Church Road Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1TX</p> <p>Tel: (01642) 527797 Email: <a href="mailto:privatesectorhousing@stockton.gov.uk">privatesectorhousing@stockton.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk/housing">www.stockton.gov.uk/housing</a></p>
<p><b>Benefits - Housing &amp; Council Tax</b> 16 Church Road Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1TX</p> <p>Tel: (01642) 393829 Email: <a href="mailto:benefits.section@stockton.gov.uk">benefits.section@stockton.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk/hsgben">www.stockton.gov.uk/hsgben</a></p>	<p><b>Housing Advice and Homelessness Advice</b> Stratford House, Ramsgate, Stockton-on-Tees</p> <p>Tel: (01642) 528389 Email: <a href="mailto:housing.options@stockton.gov.uk">housing.options@stockton.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk/housing">www.stockton.gov.uk/housing</a></p>
<p><b>Housing Regeneration</b> P.O.Box 34, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1LE</p> <p>Tel: 01642 526078 or 526077 Email: <a href="mailto:housingregeneration@stockton.gov.uk">housingregeneration@stockton.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk/housing">www.stockton.gov.uk/housing</a></p>	<p><b>Affordable Home Ownership Team</b> Municipal Buildings Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1LE</p> <p>Tel: 01642 528352 / 6077 Fax: 01642 526027 Email: <a href="mailto:homeownership@stockton.gov.uk">homeownership@stockton.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.stockton.gov.uk/housing">www.stockton.gov.uk/housing</a></p>

If you would like any further information please contact J. Higgins, Housing Strategy & Development Service, Tel: 01642 526662 or email: [julie.higgins@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:julie.higgins@stockton.gov.uk)