

Older People's Council ELECTION NEWS 2015

This guide tells you all you need to know about the OPC and the forthcoming OPC election.

Election 02 July 2015 – Are You Ready?

The fourth Older People's Council (OPC) election will take place in July this year. Nine older people will be elected for a four year term of office.

The election will be by postal vote on 02 July 2015.

You must be on the OPC electoral register to vote in the election. To be on this register you must be:
on the standard electoral register
a resident of Brighton & Hove
aged 60 years or over

If you are aged 60-69 check if you are already on the OPC register, telephone the Brighton & Hove City Council's Electoral Services Office on 01273 291999. Residents aged 70+ will be automatically registered.

OPC election registration forms are available in the city libraries, One Stop office on North Street and on the OPC website <http://www.olderpeoplescouncil.org/register>

Make sure your registration form is returned to the Electoral Services Office BN1 1ZZ before 17th June 2015.

Election Timetable

Publication of Notice of Election	by Thursday 21 May
Close of the Receipt of Nominations	4pm Friday 5 June
Last Day for withdrawal of Candidature	4pm Friday 5 June
Publication as to Statement of Persons Nominated	Monday 6 June
Last Day for Receipt of application to change ballot addresses and proxy details	5pm Wednesday 17 June
Publication of Notice of Poll	Wednesday 24 June
Issue of Postal Votes	from Thursday 18 June
Close of Poll	5pm Thursday 2 July
Count	10am Friday 3 July Brighton Town Hall

The Older People's Council (OPC) – an introduction

In June 2003 Brighton & Hove became the first Local Authority in the country to establish a directly elected older people's council.

The Older People's Council (OPC) is an independent body set up and supported by the Brighton & Hove City Council. The OPC works in association with the City Council and other large statutory

services (e.g. health) making sure that older people have a say in the services and policies that affect them and the communities in which they live.

The idea of a directly elected body came from Denmark where it is a legal requirement for every town and city to elect a Seniors Council.

The Older People's Council – a brief history

1999 June – October

Brighton & Hove City Council start discussions with older people's groups and organisations to find ways for older people to have a greater say in services and policies that affect them.

2001 March – November

Brighton & Hove City Council agree to establish an Older People's Council and to support a network of older people and older people's organisations to find a way for older people to have a greater say in services and policies that affect them.

2003 June

Nine older people are elected to the first full Older People's Council from an electoral register of 25,000 Brighton & Hove residents aged 60 or over.

To make sure representation is from across Brighton & Hove, the city is divided into 9 electoral zones made up of 2 or 3 electoral wards. Older people in each zone elect one member to the OPC.

2007 June

Election to the second Older People's Council

2011

Election to the third Older People's Council.

The Older People's Council – making a difference?

Too often to many older people are excluded from enjoying things most of us take for granted. The reasons for this include ageism, poverty, a disregard of our needs and the value of the contribution we make to family, community and the economy.

The Older People's Council exists to ensure that the needs and contribution of older people are never ignored. OPC members attend Council meetings and forums, scrutinise policy and committee papers, keep up to date on a wide range of issues, and take these up with councillors, local MPs and government ministers and departments when necessary.

Since the start of the OPC our work has included:

Campaigns against the neglect of vulnerable older people in care.

Taking part in research on older people, palliative care, human rights and well being.

OPC submission to the Dilnot Commission on the funding of care and support.

Letters to Councillors MPs on a variety of issues covering housing, health services, social care.

Production of a regular local community radio programme for older people (97.2 VHF)

Calling for & getting Brighton & Hove Council to become an Age Friendly City

Putting forward ideas to the Housing strategy review for more housing suitable for older people.

Campaigning for the retention of public toilets, community safety and dignity in old age.

Holding regular public meetings on a range of topics including health, social care & housing

Creating and maintaining a web site for older people

Producing an Annual Report of activities copies available on our web site as above.

We believe we have contributed to making Brighton & Hove a better place for older people. Policy and decision makers are now more open to speaking directly to older people about their needs and valuing the contribution they make to the city.

Your OPC needs you

The OPC election in July is your opportunity to make a difference. The Older People's Council has established itself as a powerful voice speaking up for older people. Members have presented a positive image of older people and the contribution they make, and have promoted the well-being and quality of life of all older people in the city.

The OPC needs people from all walks of life and backgrounds to stand in the election. Women and candidates from minority groups are especially welcome. A key requirement for candidates is the enthusiasm to get involved, but to stand for election you must be: a resident of Brighton & Hove; aged 60 years or over; and on the Brighton & Hove electoral register.

Candidates will not have to mount a sophisticated electoral campaign. Each candidate will be expected to write a brief statement saying who they are and what they want to achieve if elected to the OPC. The election is by postal ballot, and everyone on the OPC register will receive a copy of the statements from the candidates in their zone.

If you are interested in standing in the OPC election please ask from 21 May onwards for Guidance Notes for Prospective Candidates and a Candidate's Election Pack by telephoning 01273 295101 leaving your name and address, or email the OPC at olderpeoplescouncil@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Each vote cast in the election strengthens the OPC and its potential to make a difference.

The OPC needs your vote.