

YOUR PARISH COUNCIL NEEDS YOU!

Parish Council Elections - 6th May 2021

A number of the current Parish Councillors have served for some time and are expected to stand down in May. Therefore, we want to encourage as many people as possible to consider standing for election.

A Parish Council is the local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish. It is the level of government closest to the community and is often the first place that people go with concerns or ideas. It's a vital part of what makes our community.

If you have been vaguely wondering how you can do your bit, wonder no more!

The best way to find out what it's like to be a Parish Councillor is to talk to someone who's doing it now. Come along to our next Meeting on 2nd December or speak to one of the current councillors (James Craddock, Harriet Salt, Georgie Lawson, Tara House, Paul Cunningham) and find out more about the job. Meanwhile, here's a brief summary:

What is a Parish Council?

A Parish Council is the local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish. It is the level of government closest to the community, with Wiltshire Council above it in the hierarchy. As the authority closest to the people the parish council is often the first place that people go with concerns or ideas. For this reason, it is a vital part of any community.

Why become a Parish Councillor?

By becoming a Parish Councillor, you become someone your community will look to for help, guidance and support: a community leader who can influence decisions for the benefit of the people you serve. Seeing your community change for the better as a result of decisions you have helped make is something that can give you a sense of achievement and pride.

What decisions do Parish Councils make?

Parish Councils make decisions on issues that affect the local community, including such things as crime prevention, managing open spaces and campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities. On their own, Parish Councils have limited powers to make decisions, but they do have the power to influence those other organisations that do make the final decisions (such as the county council, health authorities, police, etc.). The Parish Council also has the power to raise money through taxation: the precept. The precept is the parish council's share of the council tax which is paid for by residents as part of council tax.

How much time does it take up?

Netherhampton Parish Council usually meets four times a year. Meetings usually last an hour or so. In addition to attending meetings Parish Councillors share tasks such as:

- Reviewing local planning applications.
- Responding to the queries and concerns of residents
- Keeping the website and notice board up to date, and communicating with residents
- Monitoring highway and footpath safety
- Overseeing maintenance of the village and parish environment e.g. playground, grass verges, etc.
- Reporting and escalating issues such as fly tipping, hazardous parking, etc.
- Maintaining an up to date Emergency Plan

How long does a Parish Councillor serve for?

Parish Councillors sit on the council for four years. If they want to stay in the post they can stand for re-election.

Am I eligible to be a Parish Councillor?

To stand for election on a Parish Council, you must:

- be a UK or Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of any Member state of the European Union and be at least 18 years old.
- and
- be an elector of the parish, or;
 - for the whole of the previous 12 months have occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish, or;
 - during the previous 12 months have worked in the parish (as your principal or only place of work), or;
 - for the whole of the previous 12 months lived in the parish or within three miles of the parish boundary.

(You don't have to be connected to a political party)

There is further detailed guidance on the [Elections 2021](#) page of the website www.netherhamptonparishcouncil.com.