



**TO THE RESIDENTS OF HACKLETON & HARDINGSTONE**  
**A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PARISH CLERK**



On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 the United Kingdom will be holding a General Election; this also means the District, Borough and Parish Council elections will take place. Parish Council elections will only take place if more than 11 local people stand as candidates for each Parish.

This is the time when you can stand as a Parish Councillor to make a difference to your community. Residents often ask me what this entails and what sort of a commitment being a Councillor requires. I have written some information below to help those residents and to try and encourage local people to stand for what is the first tier of local government.

**What is a Parish Council?**

A Parish Council is a democratically elected body established by legislation. It is the first tier of local government and has a range of statutory powers which may be excised if voted on. With the introduction of the Localism Act, 2011 it has more flexibility to make a difference to its community. Parish Councils have a statutory power to precept (tax) the local electors in their areas to finance activities following decisions made within the council.

In 2015/16 Hackleton Parish Council will spend approximately £48,000 and Hardingstone Parish Council will spend approximately £51,805. A budget has been produced by both councils; these budgets show how tax payers' money will be spent for the forthcoming fiscal year.

A Parish Council does not have statutory responsibility for services such as waste collection, street parking, traffic regulation, environmental health, planning, licensing, housing and education. This is the responsibility of the local authority i.e. Northampton Borough Council for Hardingstone and South Northants Council for Hackleton.

**What is the role of a Parish Councillor?**

A Parish Councillor is the holder of a public office, not a volunteer. A councillor has no authority to make decisions about council business on his own.

The main job of a Parish Councillor is to participate in the collective decision making processes of his council.

A Councillor's normal term of office is four years and anyone over the age of 18 who is a citizen of the UK, lives in the Parish, works in the Parish or works/lives within three miles of the Parish may put themselves forward to be a candidate in the election.

**What commitment is required of a Parish Councillor?**

A Parish Councillor is required to attend each Parish Council meeting and participate in debate and decision making. The meetings in Hardingstone and Hackleton Parishes are held monthly and should last for no more than 2 hours.

Parish Councils have various committees and working groups and it is up to the individual Councillor if they would like to participate in these activities.

**It is really important that each Parish Council has a range of different Councillors; Councils work well with a mix of ages and demographic profiles.**

**If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor and making decisions for your local community please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.**

*Mrs Tina Charteress*  
*Parish Clerk*

Hackleton Parish Council  
01604 871222  
hackletonpc@btinternet.com

Hardingstone Parish Council  
07732380439  
clerk@hardingstone-pc.org.uk