



# Northants CALC

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MEMBER SERVICES AND BENEFITS (2021)

[www.northantscalc.com](http://www.northantscalc.com)

## INTRODUCTION

The Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils (Northants CALC) was created in 1947 and belongs to the parish and town councils in Northamptonshire. This booklet intends to inform you about our work, the services we provide and the benefits that membership of the Association brings.

The Association supports parish and town councils to provide positive outcomes for the people of Northamptonshire in partnership with North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, and other public and third sector organisations.

Northants CALC provides member councils with advice, training, information, advocacy and member services. We do this by understanding the needs of member councils and developing resources locally and nationally to meet those needs. Unlike other organisations, we work exclusively with parish and town councils in Northamptonshire and, after seventy years in operation, membership rates are in excess of 98%.

Member councils turn to Northants CALC for support, advice and representation whether it is in developing a community project or finding a way through a local difficulty. Northants CALC provides a friendly, professional and supportive service at all times.

Membership of Northants CALC is like membership of the AA or RAC; a council may not need us every day, but when it does need us we are there to help get the council back on the road quickly.

## OUR MEMBERS

Our members are the parish and town councils and parish meetings in the county of Northamptonshire. There is a county association in each English county, with each one independent from but affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) based in London.

Our members range from the smallest parish meetings with less than one hundred electors to the biggest town councils with more than ninety thousand electors.

The diversity of the sector is its greatest strength because parish and town councils are the level of local government closest to the people they serve.

## THE ORGANISATION

Northants CALC is a not-for-profit membership organisation for parish and town councils in Northamptonshire. It is a company limited by guarantee and through the Articles of Association is owned by its member councils who exercise control through the Annual General Meeting. Northants CALC is run by and for its member councils.

Northants CALC has a board of eight directors who are appointed at the Annual General Meeting to run the organisation in the best interests of the first tier of local government. Every director is a councillor or clerk from a council in membership of the Association.

Funding is obtained through annual membership subscriptions, grant funding, and through our own earned income streams, notably the Training & Development Service (TDS) and the Internal Audit Service (IAS).

## DECISION MAKING

The sovereign body of the Association is the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM appoints the board of directors who are responsible for the governance of the Association. The AGM also appoints a President and up to three Vice Presidents. The board appoints a CEO who is responsible for the management of the Association.

The board holds six business meetings per year, three topic focus sessions and a board away day. The CEO is accountable to the board and the board is accountable to the membership via the AGM. The Association is “owned” by member councils and operates in their interests.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Northants CALC will empower Local Councils in Northamptonshire to be at the heart of community leadership and development, providing them with information and services and enabling them to promote the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of their community.

Northants CALC will be the voice of the first tier of local government in Northamptonshire and will understand and represent locally, regionally, and nationally the views of the 220 parish and town councils and 51 parish meetings in the county.

## MEET THE TEAM

### **Danny Moody, Chief Executive**

Joined in 2007, 37 hours per week

Danny reports to the board of directors and is responsible for ensuring the smooth and effective management of the organisation. Danny is a parish councillor in Helmdon, and he holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration and is a Principal Member of the Society of Local Council Clerks. Danny likes nothing better than being able to help a member council in need and he approaches any situation with calm objectivity.



### **Lesley Sambrook Smith, Deputy Chief Executive**

Joined in 2017, 32 hours per week

Before joining Northants CALC, Lesley was Clerk to Syresham Parish Council, a job she took on when her young family meant that she needed the flexibility of part time work. Lesley holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration and lead on the New Councils Project which achieved universal parishing in Northamptonshire.



### **Marie Reilly, Training Manager**

Joined in 2019, 37 hours per week

Marie is the newest recruit, coming to Northants CALC from Milton Keynes Council. Marie is also Vice Chairman of Roade Parish Council.

Marie is a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and leads the Association's Learning & Development Programme. Marie gained the Certificate in Local Council Administration in 2020.



# SERVICES & BENEFITS

## Advice and Support

Being a member of Northants CALC is like having an extra person on your council team. Knowledgeable and experienced, there isn't much that we haven't seen before. And on the rare occasions that we cannot help we'll know someone that can.

We offer face to face, telephone and e-mail support to all member councils through:

- The Member Enquiry Service (MES) for straightforward, generic queries
- Free at the point of use advisory service for complex or council-specific enquiries
- "Quick Response" Legal Service, delivered through our partners, Wellers Hedley Solicitors
- Human Resources advice, from recruitment through personnel management to handling the end of the employment relationship
- Financial advice, including audit, governance and accountability
- Funding advice, including how to access external grant funding and administration of borrowing approval applications
- Access to the Legal Team at the National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

## Training & Development Service (TDS)

Membership allows access to events, briefings and seminars at member rates (doubled for non-members or those from outside Northamptonshire):

- Basic training courses for clerks and councillors
- Advanced training for those wanting to push their skills or develop specialist knowledge
- Formal qualifications, including the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)
- Bespoke in-house training sessions so that the whole council learns together
- One-off briefings and seminars on topics of particular interest

## Information

Member councils rely on Northants CALC to keep them abreast of all the issues, legislation and developments affecting the sector so that they don't have to spend their own valuable time and resources doing so. The information service includes:

- A weekly e-mail bulletin on topical issues
- Timely e-mail alerts on significant developments

- The bi-monthly *eUpdate*, containing timely and relevant features and articles
- The Association's web site, with a county-wide directory of councils and council services
- Access to NALC bulletins, Legal Topic Notes and Legal Briefings

## **Voice & Representation**

We work to maintain relationships with local government and community organisations in the county as well as building links at regional, national and even international level. We do this through:

- Regular meetings with unitary council officers and elected members
- Representing parish and town councils on boards and panels whose work impacts on our member councils (e.g. Superfast Northamptonshire Board)
- Electing directors as representatives to various outside bodies
- Responding to local, regional and national consultations that affect member councils
- Gathering member councils' views through Parish Area Forums, seminars and conferences
- Consulting the Northants CALC Councillor Panel, giving a direct voice to parish and town councillors and ensuring that the diverse nature of member councils is represented
- Understanding and responding to the issues that affect larger councils through the Northamptonshire Larger Councils Partnership (NLCP), a grouping of the twenty five largest parish and town councils in the county
- Representing parish and town councils in Northamptonshire at the Federation of East Midlands Associations of Local Councils (FEMALC)
- Lobbying the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for policy and legislative changes to benefit member councils

## **Internal Audit Service (IAS)**

All councils must appoint an internal auditor who is independent and competent. Since 2000 Northants CALC has managed a panel of auditors on behalf of member councils that:

- Provides independent auditors, most of whom are practitioners in the county
- Offers affordable rates for internal audit (doubled for non-member councils)
- Ensures auditors are competent through quarterly briefing meetings
- Supports councils to improve governance and accountability standards and avoid expensive fines and penalties

## OUR FUNDING & RESOURCES

The Association has income from three main sources:

- Membership subscriptions – 53%
- External grants and miscellaneous income – 20%
- Earned income (training, IAS etc.) – 25%

The three largest elements of expenditure are:

- Staff costs – 55%
- Projects – 15%
- NALC Affiliation Fee – 15%

The Association has three members of staff representing 2.9 Full Time Equivalents. The Association does not have a permanent office but has bases throughout the county for meetings and training. The staff work from home and are connected remotely through Microsoft Teams.

Subscription fees are average when compared to other County Associations whilst services are ranked at the highest end. Northants CALC consistently “bats above its weight” at national level. The smallest member councils currently pay in the order of £120 per annum, whereas the largest councils pay up to £4,750 (figures exclude NALC element).

Prior to 2008 the Association existed as a very small organisation reliant on other organisations for its survival. The organisation has grown markedly over the past ten years and has become independent, autonomous, and fit for purpose.

## SUMMARY

This leaflet sets out some of the key benefits of membership. Northants CALC belongs to its member councils who shape its services and activities. Parish and town councils are stronger together, and by collectively supporting Northants CALC, they are assured of quality services, value for money and a strong voice.

## CONTACTS

Danny Moody	Chief Executive <a href="mailto:dmoody@northantscalc.com">dmoody@northantscalc.com</a>
Lesley Sambrook Smith	Deputy Chief Executive <a href="mailto:lsambrooksmith@northantscalc.com">lsambrooksmith@northantscalc.com</a>
Marie Reilly	Training Manager <a href="mailto:mreilly@northantscalc.com">mreilly@northantscalc.com</a>
General	<a href="mailto:info@northantscalc.com">info@northantscalc.com</a>
Member Enquiry Service	<a href="mailto:mes@northantscalc.com">mes@northantscalc.com</a>

Mailing Address:  
Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils  
PO Box 7936  
Brackley  
NN13 9BY

Telephone: 01327 831482

Northants CALC is open five days a week and we are here ready to take your call. Being a small team, you may occasionally need to leave a message, but you can be sure that we will respond at the earliest opportunity.



[www.northantscalc.com](http://www.northantscalc.com)

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