

## **Why is it important that everyone votes in local elections?**

Did you know that your local councillors are consulted on nearly everything that happens in your area? They take an active part in influencing what services are and are not provided - and that affects you and your family!

Parish and Town Councils are responsible for many things like: bus shelters, litter bins, local halls and community centres, parks, public clocks and footpaths to name but a few. They are also consulted on planning applications, highway improvements, street signs, grant funding and projects that affect where you live and what facilities your community has or receives.

Local councils are delivering more services for residents than ever before and with District/Unitary/County Council reviewing their services, Parish and Town Councils will be in a position to do even more in the future.

Everything we come into contact with on a daily basis affects how we feel and what we do - so how much effort do you actually make to get your opinions known? Voting in local parish and town council elections takes so little time, but will have a daily impact on you for the next four years, because councillors remain in office for a four year term and their decisions affect the future for your whole community. If you leave voting to others your opinions and wishes will not be heard and simply by voting for a candidate you feel will reflect your view sends a clear message of your opinion to the decision makers.

It is said 'people get the local council they deserve'. Do you know who in your community is standing for election and what they hope to achieve? The names of your councillors should be on your parish notice boards, in local post offices or displayed around your community. If you cannot find this information locally your District/Unitary Council may be able to advise you.

Councillors live side by side with you in your community; they are the most local level of government, being easily contacted and directly answerable to the community every time they walk out of their front doors. They raise money primarily through your council tax to administer their decisions and you need to be sure that you have voted for the right people to look after your community.

If you do not vote, others will and their views may change your life.

**Have a voice - vote in the local elections on 7 May 2015**