

Peter Taylor
Councillor



Peter is a Watford Borough Councillor for Oxhey Ward. He was elected in 2012 and lives in Oxhey with his wife and two children.

Tell us a bit about your current work

I work with two colleagues to represent the residents of Oxhey. As a former economics teacher I have ended up on the Audit Committee and Budget Panel. I also chair the council's Outsourced Service Scrutiny Panel. Many of the services the council provides are delivered by private companies; for example our leisure centres, waste collection and parks service. This committee looks into the services and makes sure that they are as good as possible.

What is most rewarding about your job; what makes it all worthwhile?

Getting things done. When you chat with residents that will often tell you about a local problem: a pavement that needs widening, a street light that is broken or that they have a social landlord that is treating them badly. It is satisfying when you are able to help them and things are fixed.

Are there any political or social issues you feel passionately about?

When I was at university in Edinburgh I helped at a homeless project run by the Sisters of Mercy. The sisters were always very keen for students to chat to people who were homeless or struggling to get by. You learned so much from these conversations and I was often struck by how easily people's situations can change. It is depressing that so many people in the UK are homeless today.

How does your faith link with what you do?

I think it is important that the faith you have has an impact on the life you lead. I am well aware that I don't always get things right but hope that my faith does influence the kind of husband, dad, employee and citizen that I am. This means that you recognise the dignity of every person and tell the truth, even when it is not convenient.

What is the biggest misconception that people often have about your work?

Some people think that being a councillor is a full-time job. Others assume that it is something that only people who are retired do. I think it is important that people at all stages of life are involved in local politics, that way there are a range of people with different experiences and perspectives.

What words of wisdom/advice would you give to students?

Discern your purpose in life. You may be called to do several things. Few people have a Damascus experience where God announces a plan for our life but we may feel nudged in a particular direction. Your faith might prompt us to respond to our circumstances in a particular way. Be ready to be nudged throughout your life.