

# Annual Parish Meeting

Every parish is required to hold two annual meetings – an **Annual Parish Meeting** and an **Annual Parish Council meeting**. The annual meetings often take place on the same evening. There can be, and often is, confusion between the two.

**The Parish Meeting** is a meeting where people of the parish may speak about parish matters. The Local Government Act 1972 states that *‘for every parish there shall be an Annual Parish Meeting for the purpose of discussing parish affairs’*.

**The Parish Council Meeting** is a meeting of the parish councillors. It is like a usual parish council meeting except it includes the annual election of the Chairperson. Members of the public may only speak in the public forum or at the discretion of the Parish Chairperson.

## What is an Annual Parish Meeting?

All Town and Parish Councils throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting, which must take place between 1 March and the 1 June (inclusive). Meetings should not commence before 6pm.

Although the event is NOT a formal Parish Council meeting it is facilitated by the Parish Council for the benefit of the community. Parish councillors rank the same as other members of the public electorate. Procedures will be followed as if it were a regular council meeting, with the difference that any decisions or votes to be made on an agenda item are decided by a majority of those present and voting. Each eligible resident has one vote.

As the Annual Parish Meeting is not a parish council meeting it is not governed by the same rules as a parish council meeting and any resolutions passed do not bind the Parish Council.

## What is the purpose of the Annual Parish Meeting?

The purpose of the meeting is to give the Parish Council, and other local organisations an opportunity to let local residents know what they have been doing over the past year and inform residents about future plans. The meeting is also an opportunity for electors to have a say on anything they consider important to the people of the Parish. Speakers may also be invited to talk on subjects of interest to the Parish.

## What else happens at the meeting?

The meeting can also be an opportunity for local community groups, clubs, societies and other voluntary and statutory organisations to provide an exhibition and/or have representatives from the group address those present at the meeting about the work they do and what they are involved in. Councils may also include reports from County and District Councillors.

## Who can attend the meeting?

The Annual Parish Meeting is for all electors of the Parish. It is not a meeting of the Parish Council. Anyone is welcome to attend the meeting however, only registered electors of the parish may speak and vote during the meeting.

## **Will I be able to ask questions and make suggestions?**

Comments, suggestions and questions for people and organisations on any issues relating to the village will be welcomed as this is the whole purpose of the meeting.

Any registered elector may ask questions, which will usually be answered by the Chair, the Clerk or the Council, or a designated Councillor. Anyone not on the electoral register does not have the right to vote or speak.

## **Who will chair the meeting?**

The Chairman of the Parish Council will chair the meeting. If the Chair is not able to attend, the meeting will elect a chairperson from the electors present.

Electors wishing to speak must raise their hand and address all remarks to the Chairperson, within a 2 minute timeframe.

## **Will Parish Councillors be at the meeting?**

All Parish Councillors will be invited to attend and will speak if need be. However, the purpose of the meeting is to enable the electors to find out what is happening in their parish and to have their say. Councillors will also have an opportunity to raise questions and make comments as electors if they wish.

## **Will minutes of the meeting be taken?**

A written record of the Annual Parish Meeting will be taken and reviewed at the next Annual Parish Meeting. These are not Council minutes so cannot be approved at the next Parish Council meeting, although draft minutes may be produced to help the Parish Council progress any matters that have arisen.

## **How long will the meeting last?**

The length of the meeting is dependent on the number of electors present, the number of questions asked and the discussion that is raised. Generally, the meeting will not last longer than half an hour.

## **Where can I get copies of papers for the meeting?**

The agendas, reports and minutes for all meetings are available for download from our website

[www.balneparishcouncil.org](http://www.balneparishcouncil.org)