

What is a Parish Council?

There are two sorts of parishes, and their boundaries aren't necessarily the same:

- the Ecclesiastical Parish, centred on the Anglican church with a parochial church council.
- the Civil Parish, part of local government administration, an independent local democratic unit for villages, smaller towns and suburbs.

What is a Parish Council?

- The first elected tier of local government; a small local authority; the corporation of its village or town,
- Its councillors are elected every 4 years

What does a Parish Council do?

- Each Parish Council can provide differing services, these can include looking after playing fields, village greens, children's play areas; having a hand in maintaining or guarding public rights of way, bus shelters, public seats, small-scale street lighting, litter bins, war memorials etc;
- works to improve the quality of community life by spending money on things which, in its opinion, are in the interests of the parish and its inhabitants.
- has the legal right to be consulted on planning applications and to express their views to the local planning authority, which must take them into account.
- expresses an opinion on consultations on various issues and draft policies by other authorities such as KCC, MBC, Health Authority, various government departments.
- is responsible for control and management of the income and expenditure of local taxpayers' money, and for setting the annual budget.
- works to ensure the views of the community are put to the relevant authority.
- works to ensure the special interests of the community are protected or promoted.
- works to keep in touch with the local community and to keep them informed of what the council is doing on their behalf.

How does it do it?

- by providing things either itself or in partnership with other organisations and the district/county council;
- by raising money through the council tax ("precept") and one-off grants.
- by having a range of statutory powers to spend public money.
- by managing council business through regular meetings which are officially and properly conducted and minuted through standing orders and codes of conduct.

