



Churt Parish Council

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Frequently asked questions:

What is the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting?

There can be, and often is, confusion between the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting. All Parishes throughout England are required by law to hold an Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, which must take place between 1 March and the 1 June (inclusive). Meetings should not commence before 6pm. In legal terms, the Parish Meeting is distinctly separate from the Parish Council. The Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting is a legacy from the Middle Ages, when local Parish Councils did not exist and all local decision making was carried out by meetings of the whole community, taking place in any available large building.

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

The purpose of the meeting is to give electors an opportunity to have a say on anything they consider valuable to the people of the Parish. In addition to this the Parish Council, and other local organisations often use this meeting as an opportunity to let local residents know what they have been doing over the past year and any plans they have for the forthcoming year.

What else happens at the meeting?

The meeting can also be an opportunity for local 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. Electors may also wish to hold a Parish Poll on a matter of community interest.

Who can attend the meeting?

The Annual Assembly of the 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. All members of the parish are therefore welcome to attend to learn more about what is going on in the Parish but also to provide their own perspective on life in the community and how or what could be done to improve it for them and all members of the community.

Will I be able to ask questions and make suggestions?

Any registered elector may ask a question at the Annual Assembly, they may also make suggestions and comments on anything pertinent to the residents of the Parish. This will be welcomed and is the whole purpose of the meeting.

Who will chair the meeting?

If present the Chair (or in their absence the Vice-Chair) of the Parish Council will chair the meeting otherwise, the electors present will elect a chair for the evening amongst themselves. The Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting is usually convened by the Chair of the Council however, the meeting can also be convened by any two Parish Councillors, or any six local electors of the Parish.

Will Parish Councillors be at the meeting?

Parish Councillors will be invited to attend and they will also have an opportunity to raise questions and make comments if they wish. However, as this is an assembly of the electors of the Parish, Parish Councillors are present as residents and are of equal standing to all other electors within the meeting.