

What a Parish Council does!

Annual Throwley Parish Meeting 14th May 2024

Parish councils are the first tier of local government in England. We are an elected representative body of the local community and are democratically and financially accountable to the local community. We aim to give the local community a more powerful voice and are striving to improve quality of life in the parish.

As it is the authority closest to the people, parish councils are invariably the first place people will go with concerns or ideas. For this reason we are a vital part of any community. We will always respond to your concerns. If we cannot solve the problem ourselves, we will either contact or direct you to someone who can.

We are providing a list contacts which you can use to report an issue to the authority which has the duty, power and resources to address it. For example, if you see a fly tipping, the shortest and most effective way to address it is to report it to the authority shown on our list. If you report it to us, we shall report it to the same authority using the same website link. When we can become really helpful is when the responsible authority fails to respond in a reasonable time or its response is inadequate. Then, we shall intervene on your and community behalf.

We would strongly advise that the issues arising between neighbours are best resolved without us getting involved. If necessary, we can act as a go between but we do not have any arbitration powers or duties.

Parish councils make all kinds of decisions on issues that affect the local community, such as planning matters, crime prevention, helping local groups, managing open spaces, and campaigning for and in some areas delivering better services and facilities.

We have the legal right to be informed about planning applications - we are consulted on this but all decisions are ultimately made by Swale Planning.

Parish electors vote for Local Council members every four years and are entitled to go to the Annual Meeting and say what they think. Council meetings are also open to the public to observe (but not participate in) and there is usually an opportunity for informal discussion when the meeting is adjourned. Parish Councils are public bodies and subject to the Freedom of Information Act and GDPR laws.

Parish Councils are the least bureaucratic kind of local authority. We get no general government grant so we have every incentive to keep our expenditure low and get value for money. Throwley is an incredibly small parish and our precept was unchanged at £3,749 for the last three years. It was increased by 10% to £4,123 this year due to increased salary of the parish clerk and the maintenance costs of the Throwley Forstal village green. Our very limited budget very much constraints what we can practically do. For example, we would like to reduce the driving speed limit through the Throwley Forstal, but the cost of it is prohibitive.

Useful links

- Swale Borough Council: <https://swale.gov.uk/>
- Throwley Parish Council: email throwleyclerk@hotmail.co.uk
- Kent Police Rural Task Force: Darren Walshaw 07870 252185, email darren.walshaw@kent.police.uk or rural.task.force@kent.pnn.police.uk
- Fly Tipping: <https://swale.gov.uk/bins-littering-and-the-environment/littering/report-fly-tipping>
- Potholes: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/roads/potholes>
- Hare Coursing in progress, call 999 and quote Operation Galileo
- Waste Collection: <https://swale.gov.uk/bins-littering-and-the-environment/bins/collection-days>
- Swale Planning Portal: <https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration>
- Abandoned vehicles: <https://swale.gov.uk/bins-littering-and-the-environment/vehicles/abandoned-vehicles>