

Press release

Date: *[insert date]*

Making your mark in local elections

[Your Parish or Town Name] Council is calling on local people to find out how they can have their voices heard at the forthcoming Local Elections.

On *[Day, Date, Time, and Place]* the Council will be holding a series of open days, meetings and presentations to explain what a council is, who the councillors are, what is involved in being a councillor and why everyone should vote on Election Day.

[Your Council] Parish Clerk, *[Parish Clerk's name]*, said: "Some people may think their opinions don't count, or that local action won't make any difference, but that's not true and these meetings aim to set the record straight. The reality is that if you vote - you decide what gets done. It's an important way of having your say on the issues you care about and in choosing who will take decisions on your behalf. From the right to make representations on planning applications, to the state of footpaths and street lighting, parish and town councils have a wide range of ever increasing responsibilities and duties. They make decisions which affect your every day life".

"Soon you will be asked to vote for someone to represent your views and surveys tell us that although many people want a say in how their area is run, they don't know who their councillors are. My message is simple – come along, get involved and find out more. It doesn't matter if you don't want to become a local councillor yourself, although you might know someone who does, by just voting and getting involved you will be able to ensure a better local service."

Parish and Town Councils are exactly the same, there is no practical or legal distinction between them, as a town council is a parish council that made a decision to elect a mayor and call itself a town. These councils whether large or small are there to represent the wishes of their communities and to provide or support many local services.

[Clerk's name] continues: "Not using your right to vote is like inviting someone else to tell you how your life and community should be run. Look out for more details of the open evenings and find out more about your local council and help them to understand and represent your community needs."

Media Contact: *[Insert Clerk or media representative name, tel. etc.]*

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