**ANNUAL MEETINGS IN YOUR PARISH**

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR CELEBRATION & REFLECTION**

Every parish must hold two annual meetings every year before 31 May.

These can often seem a chore but they should be the base for;

* **Celebrating** our achievements
* **Planning** for the future
* **Challenging** the whole parish to think about the church growth agenda and its outreach locally
* **Planning and reflecting** on the parish’s mission & ministry to all of its communities.

We should not be saying “*Oh No not again”* but getting down to talking about mission, membership, ministry, maintenance and money, rather than mumbling about minutes and minutiae!

The two meetings are:

* Firstly the [Annual] Meeting of Parishioners at which Churchwardens are elected;
* Secondly the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), which covers all other elections, appointments and reports.

These meetings are usually held on the same day, at the same venue, immediately following on from each other. In practical terms they may appear to be just one meeting and are collectively known as the ‘Annual Meeting’.

This document aims to help you prepare for an Annual Meeting which fulfils the law, will not be boring and will be part of your own planning for growth.

**General Advice & Support**

For general advice please contact:

Gordon Fath - 0151 705 2180

gordon.fath@liverpool.anglican.org

or your Archdeacon.

0151 709 9722

St James’ House, 20 St James Road, Liverpool, L1 7BY

[www.liverpool.anglican.org](http://www.liverpool.anglican.org)

**GETTING THE LEGALITIES RIGHT**

**Notices You Will Need – before the Annual Meeting**

These must be on the correct forms (available on the Diocesan website)

[www.liverpool.anglican.org/annual-parish-meeting](http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/annual-parish-meeting)

* Notice of Electoral Roll revision / Notice of new Electoral Roll preparation
* Notice of Meeting of Parishioners
* Notice of Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The two meeting notices must be displayed for a period that includes the two Sundays immediately preceding the meeting in a location that is readily visible to all congregations (e.g. main door) but you may also mention it in the parish magazine, newsletter, etc.

**Notices You Will Need – after the Annual Meeting**

After the Annual Meeting you must display another notice that must stay up for at least two weeks:

* Election Result notice
(available on the Diocesan website, link provided above)

You may display a list of all the members of the PCC possibly with pictures (where pictures are to be displayed, ensure that you have the permission of each individual).

It is also suggested that a short newsy report be written too and displayed or put in your Bulletin, magazine, or on the notice board.

Additionally, you must also notify the Diocese of how many people were declared as members of your Electoral Roll at the time of the Annual Meeting.

**THE [ANNUAL] MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

The core purpose of this meeting is to elect the Churchwardens for the parish.

Those who are listed on the parish [ecclesiastical] Electoral Roll, along with all those who reside in the parish and are named on the local government roll of electors, may attend and take part in the Meeting of Parishioners.

This meeting could open with a prayer for the whole community of the Parish and it may be appropriate to discuss other items should this be deemed appropriate and relevant to your local area.

In some areas it could be a meeting at which issues facing the outreach of the church (youth work to graveyards!) might be raised or at which you could have a visiting speaker (a local police officer, Councillor or the Methodists reporting on their plans).

It is possible that in some places there may be an argument to hold this meeting on a different day to the APCM. However in many, if not all, places this meeting and the APCM run from one seamlessly into the other!

If local residents who are not also members of the [ecclesiastical] Electoral Roll do join you then you can invite them to stay for the APCM, but they would not be allowed to speak or to vote.

**ELECTORAL ROLL – PART OF OUR MISSION PLANNING**

**Legal Requirements**

Each PCC (Parochial Church Council) needs to appoint an Electoral Roll Officer. This person may or may not be a member of the PCC, and they maintain the parish’s Electoral Roll on behalf of the PCC.

There are legal requirements covering the time periods that Electoral Roll revision or renewal notices must be displayed. Use the *APCM Date calculator* tool provided on the Diocesan website (link provided above) to find the correct dates for your parish.

Each parish’s Electoral Roll is revised annually. However, every six years all parish Electoral Rolls are wiped and recreated from scratch; the next renewal will be 2025.

The Electoral Roll is only for lay members of your parish. Members of the clergy (licenced or retired) are not allowed to join the Electoral Roll.

**Electoral Rolls – part of the church growth agenda & mission planning**

Please do not see this process as just announcements, rather, consider analysing it.
So ask:

* Year on year, are the numbers the same, but the people different?
* Have the numbers changed because of redevelopment in the area, death,
debt/other problems, or people moving house?
* How does the composition of our Roll reflect the local community we serve?
* How many of our people live outside the parish boundary and what are the implications of this for us?
* How many participate in planned giving (like the Parish Giving Scheme)
or Gift Aid?

It can be useful for the Ministry Team, Standing Committee, or the PCC as a whole, to reflect on this before the Annual Meeting. An introduction to a discussion on the key issues could be prepared for the meeting and/or included within the PCC’s Annual Report.

**THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING (APCM)**

**Planning the Agenda & Legal Bits**

This meeting is for those listed on the Electoral Roll and only they may speak and vote.

Core agenda items:

* Opening Prayer/Worship, Apologies, Announcements & Welcome.
* The Minutes of the Last Meeting.
* An Annual Report on the work of the PCC & on general parish activities.
The PCC’s financial statements audited/independently examined for the preceding financial year (1st January to 31st December).
This would normally be presented by the Treasurer, but could include Gift Aid Officer’s comments etc.
* A statement declaring the number of people listed on the Electoral Roll.
* A [verbal] report on the fabric, goods and ornaments belonging to the parish.
* A [verbal] report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod, which may refer to any item of that Synod's agenda including the work of the Diocese and the National Church. (Please make this interesting and not turgid!)
* Elections to the Deanery Synod, when appropriate.
* Elections to the Parochial Church Council.
* A Thank You – remember to thank all those who have made a valuable contribution to the life and mission of the parish; noting those who have ended their term of office, moved away, are seriously ill, or have died.
* Closing Prayer/Worship

**APCM – It’s not Boring - the Mission Opportunities**

The main narrative written by the PCC each year (The Trustees’ Report), which forms part of the formal [charity] Annual Report, should responses to questions such as:

* Are we growing? (Refer to the section above about the Electoral Roll)
* What are we good at? Let us celebrate it. Let us thank people!
* What are we poor at? How can we improve? Who can we involve to change this?
* What is/are the area(s) of greatest concern to us?
* What are the major challenges we, as a parish, will face this calendar year?
* Looking back over the previous calendar year,
What has started?
What has stopped?
What has been the cause of greatest celebration or encouragement?

Responses to such questions should be highlighted in the meeting presentation as well as in the text of the Trustees’ Report.

**Treasurer’s Report - Money Stuff**

People’s eyes can glaze over so here are some pointers to make that interesting

* Don’t just talk numbers and amounts
* Use simple graphs, charts and pictures
* Show overall trends and summarise
* What was the impact on people’s lives?

**ELECTIONS TO THE PCC**

Parochial Church Councils have people who are members of the clergy and people who are members of the laity. The elections at a parish’s Annual Meeting only involve those positions to be filled by members of the laity. No clergy person (licenced or retired) can vote in an election of the laity.

**Numbers elected at the APCM**

The number of lay members that can be elected by the Annual Meeting is dependent on the total number of people listed on the Electoral Roll.

*Deanery Synod representatives:* formula set by Diocesan Synod

*Elected to PCC:* formula set by national Church Representation Rules

(For advice on exact numbers, contact Gordon Fath at St James’ House).

**Qualifications to stand for election**

Nominees must have been on the parish’s Electoral Roll for at least six months prior to the date of the election. For anyone aged 16 or 17 yrs on the date of the election, the six month requirement does not apply.

Nominees must be legally allowed to be a Charity Trustee and not named on any Safeguarding Barred list.

**Ex-officio PCC Members**

Some members of a PCC are members because they hold a specific office, as well as being on the parish’s Electoral Roll. Those who are elected to,

* The Office of Churchwarden
* A higher synod (Deanery, Diocesan, or General Synod)

are ex-officio members of your PCC. Licenced Lay Workers are also ex-officio.

Similarly, only the clergy specifically licenced to your parish are ex-officio (along those licenced to your Team Ministry, if part of a team). Retired clergy are not members of your PCC.

A common error is the belief that Readers are automatically members of their respective PCCs, they are not. Readers are not ex-officio on any PCC or committee.

**Appointed PCC Members**

The Annual Meeting may choose to appoint all or some of its Licenced Readers to be members of the PCC; Readers with PTO (Permission to Officiate) or Emeritus status are excluded and cannot be appointed.

Such appointments are only for one year and must be repeated at each Annual Meeting.

Licenced Readers who are not appointed can stand for election to the PCC along with any other member of the laity.

**Disqualifications**

Certain people are disqualified from serving as members of a PCC, Synod or as Churchwardens. These are because of issues of,

* bankruptcy,
* IVAs (Individual Voluntary Agreements),
* court orders for debt and criminal records,
* Safeguarding.

Details of the disqualifications are provided on the formal nomination forms.

Disqualifications apply to all PCC members (both clergy and lay), whether elected,
ex-officio or appointed.

Be particularly sensitive when you try to persuade people to stand for election and remember that some of these offences do not disqualify people from playing a wider role in the life of the parish.

If you have concerns about any potential or serving PCC members, specifically concerning Safeguarding, then contact the Safeguarding Team at St James’ House.

**SHARING ABOUT YOUR ANNUAL MEETINGS IN THE PARISH**

Besides producing your Annual Report do create a short snappy article or perhaps one A4 sheet folded summarising this report (electoral roll, financial information & plans for the future, etc.).

Talk about the Annual Report (with brevity and enthusiasm) at Sunday/weekday Services leading up to the Annual Meeting then share what happened at the following Sunday/weekday Services..

**MORE HELP**

Churchwardens – [www.liverpool.anglican.org/being-a-church-warden](http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/being-a-church-warden)

Treasurers – [www.liverpoo.anglican.org/being-a-treasurer](http://www.liverpoo.anglican.org/being-a-treasurer)

PCC Secretary – [www.liverpool.anglican.org/being-a-pcc-secretary](http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/being-a-pcc-secretary)

Annual Reports – [www.liverpool.anglican.org/annual-reports](http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/annual-reports)

Diocesan Resources Team