

Casterton Parish Council

Powers and Duties of the Parish Council

Introduction

Parish Councils have a wide range of powers and duties, and a comprehensive list of these, with some of the statutory provisions on which they are based, can be found on the Cumbria Association of Local Council website:

www.calc.org.uk/about-local-councils/powers-and-duties-of-local-councils.

This is the definitive source for any resident wanting an unequivocal answer to a query.

HOWEVER Casterton Parish Council has produced this brief summary for residents as a simple guide to what we do.

The activities of The Council can be divided into 2 categories:

1. Duties

These are legal obligations which the law requires the Council to undertake:

- appoint chairman, officers, Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), internal auditor
- hold at least 4 meetings per year and an annual parish meeting
- comply with employment law and obligations under
 - FOI Act, Data Protection Act
 - GDPR Act
 - Equality Act, Localism Act
- publish Agendas, Minutes, Finances, and other information
- seek to provide allotments if there is a demand from residents
- adopt a churchyard if requested by the Parochial Church Counsel
- seek to protect biodiversity in carrying out their function
- consider the impact of their decisions on reducing crime and disorder

All of these duties are fulfilled in Casterton, but there is no formal process for the latter two.

2. Powers

These are not mandatory but are all contained in legislation and permit actions to be taken at the council's discretion. Many of these are not pertinent in our small rural parish - for example the power to establish markets and to provide a market place and market buildings.

But Councils have a wide range of powers, including A General Power of Competence under which an eligible council can do anything subject to statutory prohibitions, restrictions and limitations.

Specific powers which Casterton Parish Council uses, or has in the past exercised, include:

- to provide and maintain bus shelters
- to provide public clocks
- to repair and maintain public footpaths and bridleways
- to light roads and public places
- provision of litter bins
- to provide roadside seats and shelters
- to plant trees etc. and maintain roadside verges
- to provide information relating to matters affecting local government
- to contribute to encouragement of Tourism
- right to be notified of planning applications, and to comment on them
- to maintain, repair, protect and adapt war memorials
- to have their own websites

Others not in this list cover the award of grants and the conduct of meetings, which are both defined in the Council's Standing Orders, and others will occur from time to time. Support for the creation of a Village Plan, and support to prevent the closure of The Pheasant Inn are recent examples.

Any questions regarding the Duties and Powers of Casterton Parish Council could be addressed in the first instance to the Parish Clerk, or to Cumbria Association of Local Councils.

October 1st 2025

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