

Customer Service Standards

1. Purpose

Honeybourne Parish Council is committed to providing a high standard of service to all residents, businesses, and members of the public who contact the Council. This policy sets out the standards of service that anyone contacting the Council can expect.

2. Our Commitment to You

We will:

- Treat everyone with courtesy, fairness and respect
- Respond to all enquiries promptly and professionally
- Provide clear, accurate and helpful information
- Respect the confidentiality of personal information in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Act impartially and without discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Keep you informed of the progress of your enquiry where a response will take longer than expected
- Acknowledge our mistakes and seek to put them right

3. How to Contact Us

The Parish Clerk is the Council's main point of contact for all enquiries. Contact details are published on the Council's website at www.honeybourne-pc.gov.uk.

The Council can be contacted by email, by post, by phone or by attending a council meeting. The dates and times of all public meetings are published on the Council's website and noticeboards.

In the absence of the Parish Clerk, details of alternative contact arrangements and expected response times will be provided in the out-of-office message.

4. Response Times

We aim to meet the following response standards:

Type of Contact	Our Standard
Email enquiry	Acknowledge within 3 working days; full response within 10 working days
Written correspondence	Acknowledge within 5 working days; full response within 15 working days
Complex enquiries requiring research or council decision	Acknowledge promptly; advise of likely timescale; update if delayed
Clerk absence	An out-of-office message will be active with details of when enquiries will be picked up

5. Matters Requiring a Council Decision

Some matters raised by members of the public require a decision by the full Council or a committee. In these cases, the Clerk will acknowledge the enquiry and advise the person of the next scheduled meeting at which the matter may be considered. Meetings are held in public and members of the public are welcome to attend.

6. Complaints

If you are not satisfied with the service you have received, you may make a complaint under the Council's Complaints Policy, which is published on the Council's website. We will investigate all complaints fairly and aim to learn from them to improve our service.

7. What We Ask of You

In return, we ask that everyone who contacts the Council does so respectfully and constructively. The Council operates in accordance with the Civility and Respect Pledge. Correspondence that is abusive, threatening or offensive may not receive a response.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

9. Councillors and Contact with the Public

Honeybourne Parish Council expects all councillors to treat members of the public with courtesy and respect at all times, both in their official capacity and in their day-to-day lives in the community.

Councillors are elected to represent their community and members of the public are welcome to speak to their councillor. However, the Council is a corporate body and individual councillors are not able to make decisions or commitments on its behalf, as decisions can only be made collectively at properly convened council meetings. Where a resident raises a matter with their councillor, the councillor may be able to provide information or guidance on straightforward queries. However, where a matter requires a decision by the Council or further discussion, the councillor will refer it to the Clerk to be brought to a future council meeting for consideration. Views expressed by an individual councillor represent their personal opinion and do not constitute the official position of the Council unless formally agreed by resolution. If you wish to obtain the Council's official position on any matter, this can be found in the published minutes on the Council's website or by contacting the Parish Clerk.

All councillors are bound by the Council's Code of Conduct, which sets out the standards of behaviour expected of them in their role. Concerns about the conduct of a councillor may be raised as a complaint under the Code of Conduct. The Parish Clerk can advise on the appropriate process.