

Community Engagement Strategy

What is this document about?

Communication is a two way process. This document sets out the parish council's policy on how we are going to communicate with our community, what we aim to achieve and how we will achieve it. We are committed to working with the local community in order to provide a high level of services and amenities within the village. To do this, we recognise the need to ensure that all members of the community are involved, whether they are residents, voluntary and community organisations or local businesses. We will do this by encouraging everyone to participate fully in the decision making process, listening to what they have to say, acting on this feedback, and keeping people informed about local issues and the parish council's activities.

Who do we need to engage with?

- All residents of Bishop's Itchington parish (including outlying farms and dwellings)
- Local community groups and organisations
- Local residents' action groups
- Voluntary groups
- Young people
- Senior residents
- Local primary school
- Local businesses
- Local landowners
- Local authorities (district council and county council)
- Local police

We recognise the need to actively engage with all of the above individuals and groups.

What are our aims and how will we achieve them?

To communicate information clearly and concisely in a range of different formats by means of

- Regular news reports in the monthly village magazine
- Regular news reports in the village columns of the local newspaper
- The parish council website
- The parish council notice board
- Use of our own official logo as a form of simple identification and recognition
- Use of plain standard English
- Regular councillors' surgeries

- Regular attendance by councillors at community events
- Provision of a parish council office with public access
- Provision of an information point for local services and council activities

To increase local democracy and citizenship by means of

- Encouraging residents to attend parish council meetings and make their views known via the public forum
- Actively seeking the views of harder to reach groups such as young people and the elderly.
- Running public consultations and encouraging people to take part
- Going into school to help the children learn about the role of the parish council
- Holding public meetings on significant local issues
- Publicising the Southam Community Forum and encouraging people to attend
- Publicising the role of local councillors and encouraging people to stand in local elections

To listen and react to local people's views and understand their needs by means of

- Recording and reviewing comments made during the public forum at parish council meetings
- Analysing the results of public surveys and consultations and acting on them accordingly
- Making ourselves available and approachable to the local community
- Taking note of letters and comments received from the public

To raise the profile of the parish council and its reputation by means of

- Appointing parish councillor representatives to local groups and organisations
- Holding regular parish councillor surgeries
- Encouraging parish councillors to attend local events and community meetings
- The publication of all minutes and agendas on the parish council website and provision of hard copies where required
- The publication of an annual report
- Hosting and organising the annual parish meeting
- Reacting positively to feedback from local residents
- Ensuring that all councillors adhere to the code of conduct
- Achieving Local Council Awards "Foundation Level" status as a minimum requirement

To support our councillors and staff in their role of community leadership by means of

- Regular attendance at training courses
- Provision of all necessary equipment
- Provision of induction pack for all new members
- Regular updates on new legislation and other relevant matters