

# Community Engagement Policy – May 2026

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BUCKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Ruth Johnson  
CLERK, BUCKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## **Introduction**

Bucklesham Parish Council is committed to community engagement at all levels and supports and encourages community members to share their aspirations for the village with the Council.

Bucklesham Parish Council recognises that the services it provides must reflect the needs of its parishioners and the locality. The Parish Council strongly believes that its residents should be involved in decisions affecting them and their neighbourhood and in shaping the future of their parish.

## **Methods of Communication**

Communicating with members of the parish will be achieved in many ways to ensure all sections of the community are reached. New opportunities will be identified and considered when they arise to keep the Parish Council up to date with new technologies. These methods include, but are not limited to:

**Parish Council meetings:** every Parish Council meeting has a public forum where any member of the public can ask questions about items on the agenda or raise issues for future consideration.

**Annual Parish meeting:** The Parish Annual Meeting brings the community together and allows residents to question and review how the elected members help shape the community. The main objective of the Annual Parish Meeting is to provide and encourage two-way communication between the community and Councillors.

**Public meetings:** From time to time the Council may decide that an item warrants being dealt with through a specially convened Public Meeting. The Parish Council Chair is expected to chair any Public Meeting but under exceptional circumstances the Chair can appoint a deputy to this role.

**Publication Scheme:** Bucklesham Parish Council is committed to transparency in its decision making and to this end, a publication scheme has been adopted which allows public access to policies, financial records and other documents. The Council has registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and Parish Council documents are freely available on the website.

**Notice boards:** Parish Council information will be posted on the noticeboard outside the Village Hall.

**Website:** The Parish Council will continue to pay for, and maintain, a village website. Information about the Parish Council, its business and policies, together with local news, events and general information will be published and regularly updated.

**Bucklesham Bugle Newsletter:** Bucklesham Parish Council publishes a quarterly newsletter which is delivered to every household in the parish free of charge. It can also be received via email upon request.

**Bucklesham Bugle Bulletin email alerts:** Any news that cannot wait for the next edition of the Bugle Newsletter is sent via email to all villagers who have signed up for the scheme.

**Specific consultation:** The Council will decide if a particular issue that has an effect on the village warrants a specific consultation event. Examples of specific consultations include planning issues, the future of the Playing Field, the future management of the Village Hall and the ownership of the Green Crescent allotments.

**Social media:** Bucklesham Parish Council does not have a Social Media account but regularly adds Bugle Bulletin email alerts content to Bucklesham Friends Facebook page which is administered by a resident.

**Timely publication of minutes:**

The Clerk aims to publish the minutes within two days of the meeting. These will stay in draft form until formally agreed and accepted by the Council at the next meeting. This enables residents to keep fully informed of all discussions and decisions in a timely manner.

**Bucklesham Parish Council's short, medium and long term community engagement aims:**

**Short term:**

- Continued use and updating of all current forms of communication,
- Regular reviews of feedback, and
- Prompt response to any communications received from the public.

**Medium Term:**

- Looking for hard to reach groups and a means of communicating with them i.e., those without computer access, or young people

**Long Term:**

- This policy should be reviewed bi-annually as part of the timetable of policy reviews
- The Council must keep up to date with evolving methods of communication.

## Involvement in partnerships

Bucklesham Parish Council has representation on a number of bodies including Bucklesham Village Hall Committee, Bucklesham Community Council, and the Archer Cartwright Bucklesham Charity. They also have representatives on the Felixstowe Peninsular Community Partnership and the Cross Parish Group of neighbouring Councils. Councillors may also attend meetings of bodies which make decisions affecting the local community. Information obtained from these meetings (other than sensitive private information) is reported to full council meetings.

## Role of Councillors

Councillors are the decision-makers of the Council. The contact details for all Councillors are available from the Clerk and are also published on the Council's website. Councillors welcome contact with members of the public, endeavour to be available immediately prior to Council meetings for anybody who wishes to speak with them, and will listen to the representations made to them at council meetings whether residents attend in person, ask another person to raise matters on their behalf, or provide their comments in writing.

## Role of the Clerk

The contact details for the Clerk to the Council are published on the Council's website, the notice boards and in the Bucklesham Bugle Newsletter. The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and is the appropriate contact in most cases for raising matters with or requesting information from the Council. The Clerk works part time, but will do their best to respond to requests for information within three working days.

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Adopted by the Parish Council at a meeting on: *13<sup>th</sup> May 2026*

Signed:

*Ruth Johnson*

Ruth Johnson  
Clerk

*Clive Lenton*

Clive Lenton  
Chair

## Version Control

Date	Details	Next Review
13 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	First Publication	May 2027