

HILDERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of creating a statement of community engagement is to ensure that communication with the community is at the centre of the Council's work. This will involve making information widely accessible to all members of the community and ensuring that there are a range of ways people can share their views with councillors, to enable Councillors to represent the local community.

a. The Council aims to:

- work more closely with residents, local businesses, village groups and local community groups;
- encourage as many people as possible, who are willing to, participate in decision-making, monitoring services and planning for the future;
- enable all residents and the local community to share their concerns and views, to ensure that they are part of the decision making process.
- ensure that residents and the local community have the opportunities to be heard at every stage.

b. Objectives.

The Council aims to continue building an effective working relationship with all areas of the community based upon trust, openness and working through local challenges. The outcomes of the strategy will include:

- Improved communication through the establishment of new channels of communication.
- More local people having a greater understanding of the role of Councillors and making comments or seeking advice.
- A larger number of local people will feel that they are involved in decision-making and more people will become involved in volunteering.
- Improved satisfaction with local public services.

2. The Community

Hildersham is a small quiet rural Parish situated 8 miles from Cambridge, just off the A1307. The parish is served by South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. There are 92 residential properties in the village and 175 residents on the register of electors. The village has a church, a public house and a village hall. The community consists of:

- Residents of the Village,
- Governors of Great Abington Primary School
- Groups that use the Village Hall for meetings
- Local businesses in the community
- Interest groups – clubs and societies e.g. Brownies, Cubs, etc.
- Church Groups
- Farming Community

- Groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, faith, clubs and other groups
- Councillors and public service officers/representatives

3. Role of Council Members and Officer

The Parish Council is non-political and has 5 Councillors and a Clerk whose contact details are listed on the village noticeboard, website and in the monthly village booklet called 'The Abingtons and Hildersham News'. Members of Council communicate with the public via public meetings and through their other roles and responsibilities within the community. Hildersham Parish Councillors have a large number of different roles within the local and wider community including managing the local allotments, Treasurer of the Village Hall Charitable Trust; Recreation Ground management, school governor, representing South Cambridgeshire Parish Councils on Cambridgeshire County Council Liaison Committee, chairman of the Cambridgeshire County Council Advisory Group on Archives and Local Studies, Churchwardens and members of the Parochial Church Council. These roles create opportunities to discuss the work of the Council with residents and to listen comments, to ensure the Council continues to reflect the views of residents in the decisions it makes.

4. Sharing Information with the Community and Opportunities for Community Involvement

1. The Parish Clerk works from home and her telephone number, address and email address are listed on the noticeboard, website and in the monthly editions of 'The Abingtons and Hildersham News'
2. The telephone numbers and email addresses of all the Councillors are published on notice boards, the village website and in 'The Abingtons and Hildersham News'
3. The Council realises that members of the community will engage with the Council to different degrees, with some regularly attending Council meetings, while others might send occasional letters or emails to express their views on a local service or to seek advice.
4. The village website address, which includes a section for the Parish Council, is listed on the noticeboard and in 'The Abingtons and Hildersham News' publication. The website contains information about the Parish Council and helpful links to District and County Council services people may use. The website details the work of the Parish Council, including meeting minutes, the Annual Report and how to contact others associated with the Council, including our District and County Councillors.
5. The Council submits a report to 'The Abingtons and Hildersham News' every two months to report on the last Parish Council meeting. This publication is delivered to every household in the parish.
6. The Council previously submitted an article about Parish Council news to the quarterly village publication 'Hello Hildersham' until this ceased publication in early 2011. Two members of the Parish Council were on the committee that produced this publication and the Parish Council contribute to the cost of

printing it. 'Hello Hildersham' was a free publication that was distributed to every household in Hildersham.

7. Information is published on the Parish Council notice board opposite the village hall, and meeting dates are also displayed on the general open noticeboard at Forge Green. Relevant information is sometimes displayed in the village hall.
8. There are two 10 minute public forums at the beginning and end of every council meeting. The Council wishes to enable the public to comment upon items to be discussed before the event and also give them the opportunity to comment about items discussed at the meeting.
9. The Annual Report was delivered to every household/business with the June edition of 'The Abingtons and Hildersham News' at the end of May. The Annual report was also included on the web-site, the notice board and a copy was given to Linton library.
10. The Council has undertaken consultation by questionnaire and holds public meetings as appropriate, for specific issues that are advertised locally.
11. The views of the community are sought at all times and people are encouraged to participate in local affairs. To give villagers the opportunity to share views and information with Councillors, at least one Councillor has started attending the monthly 'Village Tea' held in the village hall. This informal social event includes many of the village elderly as well as families with children, and is an ideal way to engage with villagers. The Council is always considering practical ways of engaging with individuals and community groups.
12. As Hildersham is a small parish with some very active Councillors, we are able to communicate directly with many households using email when necessary. This is useful when there is a flood alert.
13. Parish Council meetings are regularly attended by our District and County Councillors who keep the Councillors updated and support the work of the Council.
14. The Council is in regular email contact with the local community officers who update us with information we can then feed through to the local community.

5. Involvement with Partnerships.

The Council is a member of the Parish Paths Partnership, one Councillor is a governor at Great Abington Primary School, two Councillors are members of the Parochial Parish Council, one Councillor is the treasurer of the Hildersham Village Hall Charitable Trust and represents South Cambridgeshire Parish Councils on Cambridgeshire County Council Liaison Committee

This Statement of Intent for Community Engagement was adopted at the Parish Council meeting held on 10th July 2012.

Signed
Mrs P Harper – Parish Clerk