

Shotley Parish Council

Community Engagement Policy 2023

Our community has a central role to play in influencing and shaping what happens in Shotley. In our corporate plan, we recognise that our role as a local authority is continuously evolving, and we're committed to helping people to do more for themselves, for each other and for their community.

Community engagement is a planned two-way process by which specific, identified groups of the community are given the opportunity to provide input that enhances decision making processes on issues that may impact their well-being or interests.

The Parish Council aims to reflect the needs of its residents and the local community, and the services it provides should work towards achieving this aim.

In order to facilitate this two-way Community Engagement, the Parish Council will:

- Provide parishioners with relevant information about any matters relevant to them and their area, including services, policies, considerations and decisions that might affect or interest them
- Provide parishioners with opportunities to have their say through consultations, surveys and debate
- Provide parishioners with opportunities get involved and take part in activities and projects
- Ensure views are listened to and used to develop, enhance and improve delivery where possible and practical

The Shotley Parish Council will aim to be as open and transparent as possible, providing the local community with as much information through as many different routes as possible. Our Engagement with our Community will be carried out in the following ways:

- a) Regular articles on the "InTouch" Magazine distributed throughout the parish.
- b) Online via our website shotley.onesuffolk.net which is regularly updated with information relating to the parish. All agendas, minutes, financial information and Parish Council news are also available via the website.
- c) Social Media via use of the Parish Council's own Facebook page or/and a local group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/shorters/> (membership needed).
- d) Meetings of the Parish Council and its Committees, which are open to members of the public and allow for public participation at specific times.
- e) Distribution of leaflets/letters as and when necessary and when full parish engagement is required.
- f) One to one contact with Councillors, who are an important source of two-way communication between the Council and residents.
- g) Notice Boards- the Parish Council has two notice boards, one on The Street at the start of Kingsland adjacent to the Post office, and another on Bristol Hill, which may be used not just for Council news but also for community information. The board is regularly updated and the community is encouraged to pass information to the Parish Council for inclusion.
- h) Parish Surgeries carried out by the Clerk and Councillors at popular social gatherings, such as Social Club meetings, Soup'A'Lunch, etc... on a regular basis in order to be more inclusive and provide opportunities to residents who may not be so technologically minded.
- i) Traditional contact may also be made by letter, E-mail and telephone via the Parish Clerk:
Mrs Dina Bedwell, 22 Great Harlings, Shotley Gate, Ipswich, IP9 1NY ; E-Mail : Parish.Clerk@shotleyparishcouncil.org; Tel. 01473 788248

When Community Engagement is strong, the following things happen:

- Residents understand and trust the work of the Council
- Residents play a part in the decision making

- The relationship between the Council and residents is mutual, instead of residents being passive recipients
- Community members and groups are involved in work to support their area
- Higher numbers of people get interested in the change we need to make and are willing to help us shape that change
- Innovation and change take place through community action

Policy reviewed and approved by Council: March 2023 To be reviewed: March 2024