

ALL SAINTS PARISH COUNCIL

Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement

MAIN STATEMENT OF INTENT

Aims and Objectives

All Saints Parish Council is an open and transparent (small authority) Council, which values the opinions of the community which it serves. It has in the past, and will continue to do so in the future, listen to the needs and concerns of that community, and will do everything within its power and financial constraints, to make All Saints Parish a better place to live, and work.

Defining the Community

All Saints Parish Council is keen to reach all groups and individuals who work, or live in the Parish. It has historical links with the local Church, All Saints Village School, the Village Hall Committee and the many varied voluntary organisations and community groups working for the good of the Parish, to ensure that as wide a cross section as possible of the community can have access to the Parish Council, its members, and the Clerk.

Provision of Information to the Community

All Saints Parish Council has many avenues through which it communicates with its community. These include:

- Contact details of all the Councillors and the Clerk are published on notice boards, website, in the 'Parish Newsletter' and in the Annual Report.
- A website containing all the information an individual might wish to know about the work of the Parish Council including meeting minutes, policy documents, financial statements, annual report and how to contact anyone associated with the Council. It also includes links to other organisations including the principal authority.
- The council submits articles to the monthly 'Parish Newsletter'. This is delivered free to every household in the parish and is also available to download free of charge from the Councils website.
- Publishing of agendas and other information, on notice boards throughout the Parish, for all Council and committee meetings.
- Publishing of minutes, on the Council web site, for all Council and committee meetings.
- The Parish Council's involvement in the Annual Parish Meeting.
- The annual External Audit offers the opportunity for questions to be asked about the latest Statement of Accounts via the publication scheme.
- A synopsis of the financial accounts is published monthly.
- The council has supported and been part of the production of a Village Design Statement and a Parish Plan.
- Council has organised, and collated responses for, a parish community survey.

Opportunities for Community Involvement

All Saints Parish Council will make every opportunity available to the electorate to ensure excellent community involvement. These will include the following method:

A dual-public forum session at every Council meeting, where the electorate can raise issues in relation to the business on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting. In addition, members of the Council and the Clerk always endeavour to attend the regular “Breakfast Fayre” held at the Village Hall on Saturdays to meet with Parishioners in a less formal setting than the Council meeting rooms.

Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council

This “Statement of Intent” has elsewhere listed the many opportunities that exist for the public to make formal representations to the Parish Council. Issues received in writing, providing they are received before the deadline for closure of the agenda, are included as a stated item on the next agenda.

It is a target that correspondence received from a member of the public is at least acknowledged, wherever possible, within five working days.

The Council has an adopted Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available on demand, and is also posted on the Council website, as part of our Transparency Code conformance.

Involvement in Partnerships

The Parish Council encourages and supports public meetings organised by the police, the health authority, East Devon District Council, Devon County Council, the Blackdown Hills AONB Association and other organisations where they feel information should be made available to the residents of the Parish. Members also attend meetings of adjoining parish councils wherever and whenever possible to maintain effective and mutually beneficial cross-parish relationships.

Role of Council members and the Clerk

As an open and transparent Parish Council, both members and the Clerk seek to offer a high-quality professional service to all whom they serve. Members and the Clerk are keen to maintain relevant Codes of Conduct in their business, and see the community as “customers” rather than an electorate. Both members and the Clerk attend relevant training courses as appropriate to ensure their knowledge and skillsets are up-to-date.

Specific Areas for Community Involvement

Where there is a specific issue, or a new project, that the Parish Council wish to consider, it is of value to the Parish Council to seek the views of the community who will be most affected. The residents of the Parish can have confidence that their “voice” will be heard, and that the Council will work with the community to reach a common goal.

This Statement of Intent was last adopted in 2019 and was re-adopted at the Ordinary meeting of Council held 2nd February 2021; minute reference 20/86.