



Ditchling Parish Council Communications Strategy

1 Introduction

This communications strategy outlines how Ditchling Parish Council (the Council) will communicate with the community, stakeholders and partners. It supports openness, transparency and engagement, ensuring all residents feel informed, involved and valued in local decision-making.

2 Aims and Objectives

The strategy aims to:

- Promote awareness of Council roles, responsibilities and decisions
- Encourage community involvement and care of the environment
- Provide timely and accurate information
- Improve two-way communication with residents
- Build trust and transparency

3 Key Messages

Our communication will focus on:

- What the Council does and how it impacts residents
- How residents can engage with or influence decisions
- Community events and local initiatives
- Updates on services, projects and consultations

4 Target Audiences

- Residents of the Parish (all ages)
- Local businesses
- Community groups and charities
- Local schools and churches
- District and County Councillors, MP and local authority members as required
- Media outlets (local press/radio)
- Visitors and potential new residents

5 Communication Methods

Method	Frequency	Purpose
Parish Council website	Ongoing	News, agendas, minutes, policies
Social media (e.g., Facebook)	Weekly/as needed	Real-time updates, engagement
Noticeboards	As needed	Meetings, local info
Annual Parish Meeting	Annually	Resident Q&A, updates
Email/contact form	Ongoing	Direct communication
Surveys/consultations	As needed	Resident input on decisions

6 Tone and Style

- Clear and concise: Avoid jargon, keep messages accessible
- Inclusive and respectful: Representing the diverse views of residents
- Professional but friendly: Approachable tone to encourage engagement
- Consistent branding: Use council logo, formatting, and contact details consistently

7 Roles and Responsibilities

- Clerk to the Council: Oversees all formal communication, manages website and social media (or delegates), deals with day to day enquiries, considers whether matters need to be brought to the Council
- Chair of the Council: Official spokesperson for the Council
- Councillors: May engage with the public but should follow the Code of Conduct and the Social Media and Press Policy and direct official enquiries to the Clerk
- Working groups/committees: May issue updates under the Council's oversight

8 Dealing with the media

- All press enquiries should go through the Clerk or Chair
- A consistent message must be given on behalf of the Council
- Councillors may only speak on behalf of the Council with prior agreement and should follow the Social Media and Press Policy

9 Crisis and Emergency Communication

In the event of an emergency affecting the Parish:

- Use website and social media for real-time updates
- Coordinate with local authorities and emergency services
- Use noticeboards and physical signage if digital means are inaccessible

10 Monitoring and evaluation

- Website and social media analytics, if available, reviewed annually
- Resident feedback through surveys or direct communication
- Annual review of strategy to update tools, methods and responsibilities

11 Review and approval

This strategy is to be reviewed annually or as needed in response to changes in communication channels, community feedback or Council needs.

Adopted by Ditchling Parish Council on 28th October 2025