

Wickford Town Council

Community Engagement Policy

1. Introduction

Wickford Town Council is committed to encouraging residents to become actively involved in decisions that affect them and the community, to enable the Council to deliver better services and to create a more active and informed community. The Council recognises that the services it provides must reflect the needs of its residents and the locality.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Community Engagement Strategy is to:

- Set out how the Council ensures the community is kept informed and can contribute to its activities and decision making
- To improve the way in which the Council engages and consults its residents and partners on important issues
- Being inclusive and engaging with all its residents and partners
- Ensuring views are listened to and used to develop, enhance and improve services, the environment and the quality of life for residents
- Improve long-term social, economic and environmental well-being of residents
- Aid future development of the town in accordance with community priorities and needs

The objectives of the Community Engagement Strategy are to:

- Use a variety of methods to make information available
- Actively facilitate and encourage community engagement
- Proactively engage with all sections of the community
- Ensure decisions meet the need of the community by involving members of the community in the decision-making process
- Work in partnership with other organisations and authorities to improve and deliver better services
- Enhance the well-being of the community

3. Provisions of Information

Information will be made available to all sections of the community in a range of ways/formats which includes:

Town Council office

Open Monday to Friday 9am to 1pm (4pm on Tuesdays) and by appointment outside of these hours

Meet Your Town Councillor

Monthly events held either in the Town Council office or in the High Street, 10am to 12 noon. An opportunity for residents to meet local Town Councillors to discuss issues in and around Wickford

Council website

The Town Council's website www.wickfordtowncouncil.gov.uk provides local information and is regularly updated. All Agendas and Minutes of Council and Committee meetings are uploaded as required under the Local Government Act 1972

Social Media

The Council's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages are used to inform and update residents of all Council activities and local issues

Noticeboards

The Council has 5 noticeboards around the town providing details of events, Councillor contact details, dates of meetings, Agendas, community information

Wickford Town Council

Wickford Town News

The Council contributes to the bi-monthly magazine delivered to households in Wickford.

4. Opportunities for Community Involvement

The Town Council makes every opportunity available to residents to allow community involvement which includes the following:

- Attendance at meetings of the Council and its Committees which are open to the public and each meeting includes an opportunity for residents to engage with Councillors
- Contact form available on the Council's [website](#)
- An Annual Town Meeting is arranged every year between 1 March and 1 June to allow residents the opportunity to address Councillors and discuss any issues they may have regarding Council activities
- Access to Town Councillors at the monthly Meet Your Town Councillor events. This is an important two-way communication between the Council and residents
- Access to the Town Council office – Council staff are available for all Wickford residents to help and assist with issues or concerns
- Formal representation – residents are permitted to provide formal representation to the Council as an agenda item should a written request be received and approved by the Town Clerk and Chair of the Council

5. Consultation

Consultations and surveys on important issues will be carried out. The Council will ensure that residents most affected will be given the opportunity to voice an opinion. Local consultations will be made available on the Council's website and social media platforms. Where possible other sources of communication will be used.

6. Partnership Working

The Council has representatives on many partnerships and committees. They support consultation, engagement and public meetings with all groups and local authorities. Working together in decision making, policy drafting and action plans where appropriate will provide a voice and make a difference.

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