

BARTON PC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY *update Oct 15; review Oct 16*

BARTON PARISH COUNCIL

Bev Edwards Chair

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Parish Clerk

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

1. Aims and Objectives

Barton Parish Council aims to:-

- Represent and promote the interests of Barton and all its people in all forums;
- Provide the best possible amenities and services by the efficient use of resources;
- Actively involve local people in decisions affecting activities in the area;
- Promote equality of opportunity and oppose discrimination;
- Be open and accountable in all it does;
- Support development which is environmentally, socially and economically sound and sustainable;
- Enhance quality of life by protecting and enhancing Barton's ecological and environmental assets.

In order to achieve these aims, the Council will:-

- work closely with residents, businesses and community groups;
- engage with as many people as possible who want to participate in decision making, monitoring services and planning for the future;
- ensure, that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public involvement and community engagement, we actively encourage the involvement of residents, to capture their views and learn their concerns and effectively use those views as an integral part of the decision-making process;
- ensure that residents have the opportunities to be heard at every stage, and the capacity to be effective citizens.

The outcomes the Council hopes to achieve are:-

- Improved communication with the local community;
- A better understanding within the community of the role of the Parish Council and of its Councillors;
- Local people feeling that they are involved in decision making;
- Improved satisfaction with local public services.

2. Defining the community:-

Barton Parish Council considers the community of Barton to consist of:

- All residents of the village;
- All users of the Parish Council's services;
- All those who work within the village;
- All those who own businesses within the village;
- All young people who live and/or attend school within the village;
- All local voluntary organisations, clubs and societies;
- Any group or organisation that represents some or any of the members of the above sections of the community;
- Additionally, the Council recognises that there are certain bodies that are crucial to the quality of life in Barton and aims to maintain excellent working relationships with these bodies, including the Police, South Cambs District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and the neighbouring City and parish councils.

3. Provision of information to the community and opportunities for community involvement:-

Information is provided by the Parish Council to the community in a number of ways, including:

- The Clerk can provide information on Council matters in Barton.
- The Council's website www.barton-cambs.org.uk provides comprehensive information both on the work of the Parish Council and on other services, the history of the village, local events, local groups and organisations.
- The public can contact the Council personally, by phone or by E-mail.
- The Parish Council provides an official notice board at Conkers which is used to display agendas for Council meetings and contact details for local councillors as well as other information of interest to the local community.
- Other notice boards are available in the village which can be used by local events organisers or groups.
- The Village Magazine contains Parish Jottings and is published monthly; it is delivered to all houses in the village and is also available on the website.
- The Annual Report is produced in June each year. It is available from the Clerk, on the website and from the local library.
- All meetings of the Parish Council and its committees are open to the public and a period is set aside at the beginning of each meeting for public questions.

- Public meetings are occasionally called to gauge public opinion about important issues affecting the village such as major planning applications.
- The Annual Parish Meeting held in April also allows for a wider cross-section of views.
- Questionnaires are sometimes used to ask local people's opinions about specific matters and these are distributed to local residents.

4. Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council:-

- Formal representations to the Council may be made at any time in writing or by Email to the Clerk or the Chairman.
- Petitions will be accepted during the period set aside at the beginning of each meeting for public questions.

5. Involvement in Partnerships

The Parish Council works in partnership with other organisations such as South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, the Police and Fire Service. It is involved in close cooperation with the Quarter to Six Quadrant of Barton, Coton, Grantchester and Madingley parishes.

It also has **representatives** on the following local organisations:

- Barton Energy Group
- Barton Recreation Improvement Group BRIG (Pavilion);
- Barton Parish Institute (Village Hall);
- Neighbourhood Watch

It subscribes to **membership** of:

- Cambridgeshire ACRE
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils;
- Council for the Preservation of Rural England
- Society of Local Council Clerks

It also **liaises with**:

- Arbory Trust
- Baptist Church
- Barton School
- Bowls Club
- Bridge Club
- Burwash Manor
- Cambridge Past Present Future
- Christian Fellowship
- Community Car Scheme
- Countryside Restoration Trust
- Cub/Scout Group

- Drama Group
- Friendship Club
- Gardeners
- Guides/Rangers
- Lunch Club
- Playgroup
- St Peter's Church
- Snooker Club
- Tennis Club
- Village Day Committee

6. Role of Council Members and Clerk:-

Council Members (Councillors) are the elected decision makers of the Parish Council.

Their contact details are available from the monthly magazine, on the Parish Council Notice board and on its website. Members of the public are welcome to contact Councillors to raise any issues.

The Council's Clerk is employed part-time to carry out the day-to-day functions of the Council and make sure that its services are provided for the local community. The Parish Clerk is both the Proper Officer and the Responsible Financial Officer for the Council, which means he has overall responsibility for the provision of Parish Council services.