

Item 5 – To review recent communications activities including social media statistics

This report provides an overview of recent communications activities, including performance metrics across social media platforms and coverage in print media. It aims to inform the Communications Committee of current engagement trends, highlight successes, and identify areas for strategic improvement.

Facebook

Last 30 days:

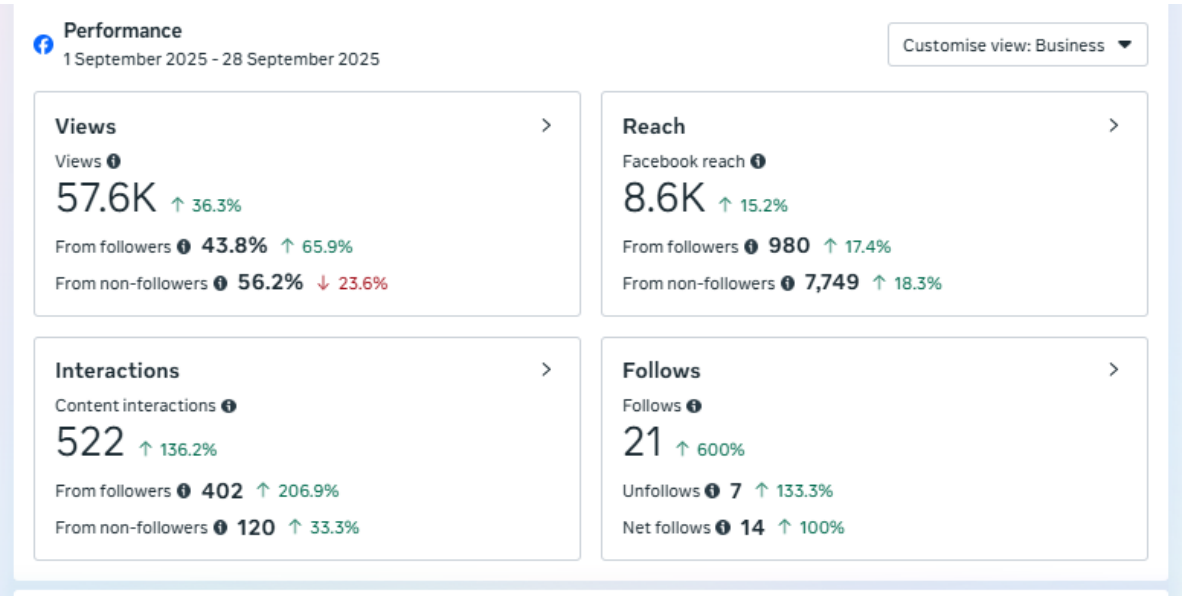
Views up 36.3%

Reach up 15.2%

Interactions up 136.2%

Follows up 600%

This period saw a surge in engagement, particularly in interactions and new followers, indicating strong resonance with recent content.



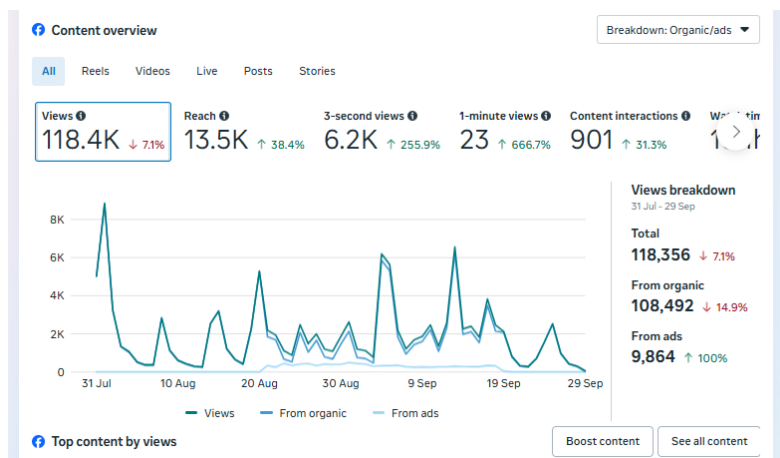
August & September

Views down 7.1%

Reach up 38.4%

Content interactions up 31.3%

Despite a slight dip in views, reach and engagement continued to grow, suggesting improved content targeting and relevance.



Paid for Post Statistics:

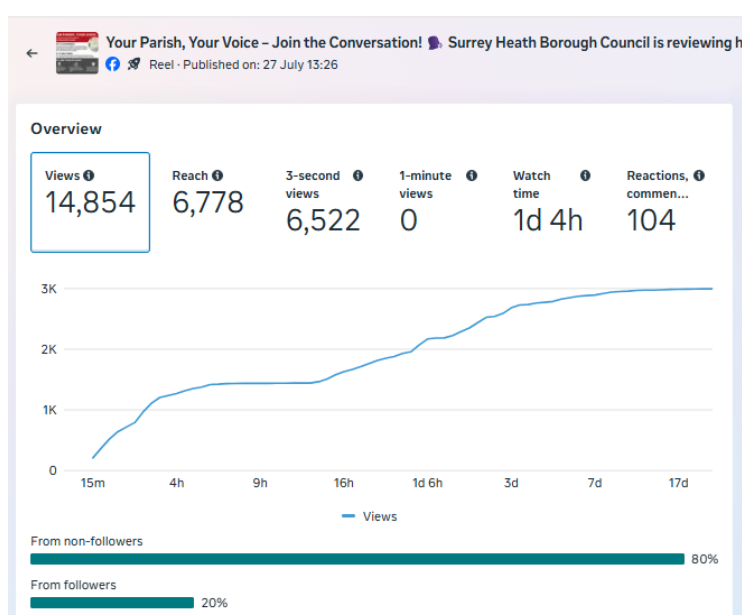
This paid post outperformed the average WPC post (3,468 views), achieving **335% more views**, demonstrating the value of strategic investment in paid content.

Views: 14,854

Reach: 6778

Link Clicks: 353

Average top views for WPC is 3468 and this post received about 335% more views than the average.



Instagram Performance:

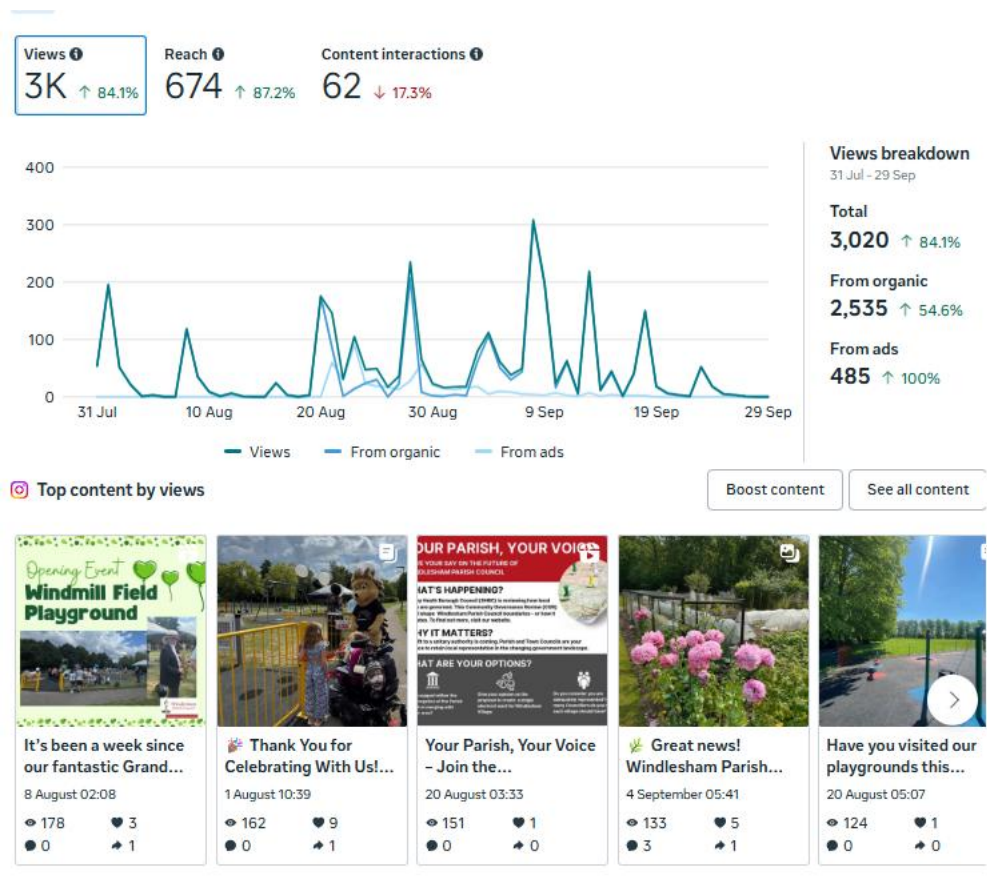
August and September

Instagram visibility has grown significantly, though interaction rates dipped slightly. This may reflect changes in content type or audience behaviour, and warrants further review to optimize engagement.

Views up 84.1%

Reach up 87.2%

Content interactions down 17.3%



NextDoor.co.uk

A verified **Nextdoor.co.uk** page has been successfully created and promoted via social media and our website. This platform enhances our ability to connect with residents at a hyper-local level and supports community-based messaging.



0

faves

0

posts

Windlesham Parish Council

Community organization

Working for the benefit of the three villages of Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham, Surrey.

 https://www.windleshampc.gov.uk/Home_20051...

Edit

Share

Overview Posts Recommendations

Contacts

https://www.windleshampc.gov.uk/Home_20051.aspx



Call

01276 471675



Coverage in print publications:

We maintained a strong presence in local publications during September, including:

- **Round & About Magazine**
- **Windlesham Magazine**
- **Village Life Magazine**

This consistent offline visibility complements our digital efforts and reinforces community engagement across multiple channels.

Round & About Magazine - September

ABOUT US

The monthly magazine delivered to homes by The Royal Mail across Surrey, Bucks, Bucks, Hants, Oxon & Wilts

THIS EDITION IS DELIVERED TO ALL 20,407 HOMES IN GU15, GU18 & GU19

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SPOTLIGHT ON SEPTEMBER
YOUR COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Learning is a lifelong journey, even if your school days are a distant memory. Once again, September beckons, and we're celebrating education in all its forms. As you can read this month, John Suchet understands the edifying power of music. "I often talk to André Rieu, the Johann Strauss of our times. He says if everyone put down their gun & picked up a violin, the world would be a better place. And I agree!"

WITH KAREN NEVILLE

John, who plays the trombone, feels that music should be at the heart of the curriculum so all pupils can learn an instrument.

Fleet & Farnborough Family History Group will be entertained with The Story of English Handwriting with Jan Smith, a retired archivist on Thursday, 11th September at the United Reformed Church at 7.30pm while on Thursday, 8th October 6 Stories from a Hampshire Town in WW2 with Tony Cross, a retired curator of the Curtis Museum in Alton. Visitors are welcome. Please contact Carol on hgc.carol@gmail.com for further details.

Would you be interested in a flexible volunteering opportunity? Do you have a couple of hours or days a week to help take residents to their medical or social appointments? Be part of the amazing team at Camberley Care. They offer safe & reliable transport for older people and those who need support with regular get-togethers for volunteers who can claim mileage expenses. To find out more, please visit camberleycare.org or call 07718 688711.

Windlesham Parish Council are opening Bagshot Chapel as part of Heritage open Days. The 20th century Chapel of Rest on September 13th & 20th. The site includes the grave of Emily Jane Popejoy, a servant girl whose tragic story captivated Victorian society. For more on HOD please visit heritageopensdays.org.uk

Continued on page 10.

Tell us about your group's activities by 1st September. Email: kneville@roundabout.co.uk
Visit roundabout.co.uk or scan to watch our exclusive celebrity interviews

All information correct at time of going to press - check with event organisers before travelling.

R&A | 5

Windlesham Magazine – September

Windmill Field Playground Opens with a Teddy Bears' Picnic Celebration

The Parish Council is delighted to report that the grand opening of the newly refurbished Windmill Field Playground was a wonderful success!

Held on Friday 1st August in glorious sunshine, the event embraced a charming *Teddy Bears' Picnic* theme that captured the imagination of young visitors and their families. It was heartwarming to see so many children, teddy bears in tow, enjoying the fantastic new play equipment and exploring every corner of the improved space.

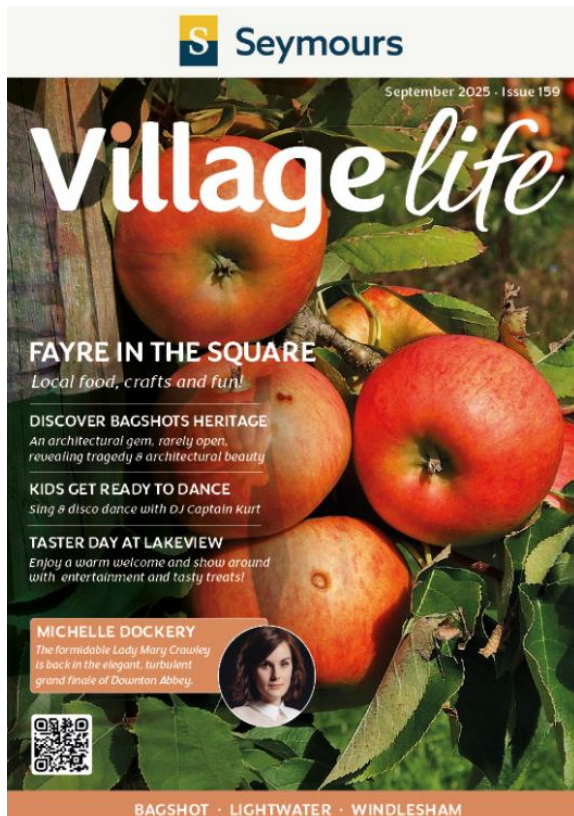
We were thrilled to welcome our special guest, local superstar Isla, who officially cut the ribbon to mark the opening.

Parish Councillors were joined by County Councillor Richard Tear, and we were honoured to be serenaded by the ever-popular Bob "The Sax" Webb, who set the perfect tone for a relaxed and joyful afternoon. Another highlight was the appearance of Grace the Hedgehog, Harper Asprey's beloved mascot, who mingled happily with children and even had a go on the playground herself!



With colourful face painting and a visit from the ice cream van, the afternoon was filled with smiles and sweet treats. Thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the opening such a memorable occasion!

Village Life Magazine – September



Local News And Events

Windmill Field Playground Opens with a Teddy Bears' Picnic Celebration



The newly refurbished Windmill Field Playground in Windlesham officially opened on Friday 1st August with a joyful Teddy Bears' Picnic. Families enjoyed sunshine, ice cream, face painting, and of course the exciting new play equipment.

Local superstar Isla cut the ribbon to officially open the playground, joined by Parish, Borough and County Councillors. Live music from the ever-popular Bob "The Sax" set a lively tone, while children were thrilled to meet Grace the Hedgehog, Harper Asprey's mascot, who even tried out the playframe herself!



The Parish Council would like to extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who came along to support the celebration and to all who helped make the opening such a memorable occasion.

We hope the new playground will bring joy to families for many years to come.

Date: Saturday, 14th September

Time: 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Bagshot Chapel, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5DE

This is a free event, and no pre-booking is required.

Bagshot Chapel, an early 20th-century chapel of rest is nestled within a peaceful, closed cemetery, the chapel offers a glimpse into the past and an opportunity to reflect on the stories it holds. The cemetery is also the final resting place of Emily Jane Popejoy, a servant girl whose tragic death became a significant event in Victorian society.

We invite everyone to come and explore the chapel and its surroundings. Whether you are a history enthusiast, a local resident, or simply curious about the past.



Overall takeaways:

- Facebook is showing particularly strong growth in engagement and new follows.
- Paid posts deliver a substantial return compared to organic averages.
- Instagram has significantly boosted visibility, though interaction rates dipped slightly.
- Establishing the Nextdoor page strengthens hyper-local communication.
- Consistent presence in local magazines supports offline community engagement.

Item 6 - Consideration of Direct Mailshots for Inclusive Community Engagement and Proposal for Guidelines and Spending Authority

This paper aims to evaluate the potential use of direct mailshots as a complementary communication method to ensure Council messages reach all residents, including those who may be digitally excluded or disengaged. While digital channels such as websites, email newsletters, and social media offer cost-effective and wide-reaching benefits, they do not always effectively engage every demographic, particularly older residents and those without reliable internet access. To promote inclusivity and equity in Council communications, this report outlines the rationale for using direct mailshots, presents indicative cost estimates, and proposes actions for Councillors to consider regarding their implementation.

Actions for Members

Councillors are invited to:

- Discuss and agree on criteria for when a direct mailshot is warranted.
 - Consider granting delegated authority to spend up to an agreed per mailshot, provided that expenditure remains within the approved communications budget.
-

Background

While digital channels (website, email newsletters, and social media) are cost-effective and far-reaching, they do not always reach every member of the community. Certain demographics - such as older residents, those without reliable internet access may not regularly engage with online communications.

To ensure that Council communications are inclusive and equitable, it is proposed that direct mailshots be considered as an additional communication tool for specific situations. This approach would help ensure key messages reach all residents.

Direct mailshots can serve a vital role in:

- Ensuring all demographics receive essential information.
 - Reaching residents who are digitally excluded or disengaged.
 - Reinforcing key messages during times of change, consultation, or emergency
-

Cost and Resource Implications

Quotes have been sought to provide an indicative cost for a direct mailshot to 8,500 households. These estimates include printing, packing, and postage, and demonstrate the likely budget required for similar exercises.

	Printing - based on 8500	Mailing & Packing	Cost 2nd Class	Combined Packing and Postage	Total
Quote A	£465	£885	£4,749.37		£6,099
Quote B	£595	£732	£7,498.70		£8,826
Quote C	£575			£7,223.51	£7,799

Item 7 - Discuss and approve provision for further communications related to the Community Governance Review (CGR), should the process proceed to a second phase of consultation.

The consultation phase of the Community Governance Review (CGR) has now ended. Although the outcome has not yet been announced, it will be essential to keep residents informed of the results, any proposed changes, their implications, and the subsequent stages of the process, including a potential second phase of the consultation.

Action: Members are invited to discuss and agree on the content and timing of an update following publication of the CGR results, and to consider any additional or alternative communication methods as appropriate.

Item 8 – To Review the Communications Strategy

The Communications Strategy 2023–2025 has been updated to incorporate recent developments, including the addition of new social media channels and alignment with the Communications Officer’s strategic approach.

Key Updates:

- **Expansion of Social Media Channels:** The Council’s online presence has grown to include Instagram and Nextdoor, broadening opportunities for community engagement and information sharing.
 - **Newsletter:** A regular Parish Newsletter has now been established as a key communication tool, supporting both digital and printed outreach.
 - **Alignment with the Communications Officer Strategy:** The updated strategy reflects the Communications Officer’s plan for cohesive and consistent messaging across all platforms.
-

Action Required:

Members are asked to review and approve the amended Communications Strategy 2023–2025.

Communications Strategy

2023-2025

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1 Our Communications Strategy

Communication is a vital part of running an organisation. Research shows that bodies who regularly communicate have a better reputation and satisfaction with service users than ones that don't. Communication allows the Council to both give out and receive information from a range of stakeholders that it regularly interacts with. Especially within the context of a local council, speaking to the public and hearing back their views is fundamental to its function and purpose as a democratic body. Such communication should operate to professional standards and be consistent in its production, quality, relevance and frequency.

This Communications Strategy contains information on how to achieve the above standards and outlines answers to the key questions of how we should communicate, when we should communicate and to whom we should communicate. It gives direction on the production of online, print, traditional news media, internal and any other communication activity.

This strategy also forms the function of a communications audit. Such audits establish a baseline and understanding of the current way communication is done, what resources are available, who does what, what branding is used, and the current reputation of the Council. Audits can include survey results, media content analysis and a SWOT analysis that looks at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

2 Communications Strategy in Context

This strategy outlines the Council's approach to communication with internal and external stakeholders, which is a crucial part of achieving the Council's objectives of transparency and accountability. Communication should be frequent, clear and disseminate relevant information to the right people, with the aim of informing residents and improving the reputation and image of the Council. It is designed to work within the relevant statutory requirements relating to local government publicity.

2.1 Vision

Our vision is that the people of Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham have a clear understanding of Windlesham Parish Council's priorities, operations and challenges and that they recognise the Council as a reputable and forward-looking council. It should be seen as an employer of choice and help to promote the villages of Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham as excellent places to live and visit.

2.2 Commitments

We will achieve this vision by communicating with the public we serve, the people we employ and the local authorities, groups and businesses we work with. This will be done by regular two-way communication with relevant stakeholders so that we both send and receive information through the appropriate channels of communication we use.

Stakeholders include:

- Residents and service users
- Local community groups
- Employees
- Partner bodies/organisations/authorities locally and nationally
- Business community
- Opinion formers and key influencers
- External funders

Channels of Communication include:

- Website
- Facebook Page
- Instagram
- Next Door
- External Communications – local magazines
- Quarterly newsletter
- Exhibitions
- Consultations and surveys
- Parish notice boards

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- Public speaking at meetings

3 Communication Principles

All Council communication should be consistent and uphold high standards of writing, production and dissemination. This reflects the culture at the Council and the aims and ambitions it has. Communication should encourage and enable a two-way flow of information, which involves listening to stakeholder's views and informing them of ours.

All communication will comply with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (2011) published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Paragraph 4 states that communication should be:

- Lawful
- Cost-effective
- Objective
- Even-handed
- Appropriate
- Have regard to equality and diversity
- Issues be dealt with care during periods of heightened sensitivity

Further to this, the Chartered Institute of Public Relations issues guidance in *PR and Communication in Local Government and Public Service* that recommends the following additional communication standards:

- **Accurate information.** All efforts should be made to ensure accuracy at the time of production. Updates and corrections should be made where errors have occurred.
- **Delivers key messages.** Information should relate to key policy and principles of the Council. It should primarily relate to council matters.
- **Accessible to all.** Channels should be mixed to cover diverse groups and their needs.
- **Plain language used.** Information should be clear and straight forward. Key points should be emphasised.
- **Appropriate timing.** Communication should happen in good time to allow others to react. It should be regular and be an ongoing process.
- **Appropriate quality of design and production.** Ideally to a professional standard
- **Appropriate branding used.** Make it clear who the information is coming from.
- **Review and evaluate.** Monitor all channels to see what is or is not successful. Seek to improve output, engagement and learn from poor practices to communicate better.
- **Feedback.** Include survey questions in questionnaires to gauge opinion on communication and reputation. Inform respondents what will be done with the feedback.

4 Who We Communicate With

A stakeholder is a person, group or organisation that has an interest in the success of the Council or can be affected by the organisation's actions, objectives and policies. Windlesham Parish Council works with many employees, individuals, partner organisations and groups to achieve its vision for the local area. Stakeholders include:

4.1 Internal Stakeholders

- Windlesham Parish Council Staff
 - Office staff
 - Greenspace Management & Contractors
- Windlesham Parish Council Councillors

4.2 External Stakeholders

- Residents who live in the parish of Windlesham
- People or organisations that use the Council's services
 - Non-resident users of the cemetery, playgrounds, rubbish bins etc
- Visitors to Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham
- Emergency services
 - Surrey Police
 - Surrey Fire and Rescue
 - Frimley Health Trust
- Schools in Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham
 - Bagshot Infant School
 - Hall Grove School, Bagshot
 - Connaught Junior School, Bagshot
 - Lightwater Village Infant and Junior School
 - ~~Hammond School Lightwater~~
 - Windlesham Village Infant School
 - Woodcote House School, Windlesham
- User groups in the local community halls
- Local and voluntary groups in the Villages
 - The Scouts
 - Windlesham Society
 - Bagshot Society
 - Lightwater Society
 - Lightwater Connected
 - St John the Baptist's Church,
 - All Saints Church
 - St Annes Church, and many others

- The Council's partner organisations
- County, Borough and other local parish councils
 - Surrey County Council and councillors
 - Surrey Heath Borough Council and councillors
 - Chobham Parish Council
 - West End Parish Council
 - Bisley Parish Council
- Constituency Member of Parliament
- Business suppliers and the business community in Windlesham parish area
- Regional and national media
- External funders that have given funds
- Opinion formers and important influencers
- External scrutineers

5 How We Communicate

A diverse range of channels will be used to communicate. Channels are defined as being the medium by which information is sent and received. Stakeholders have varying needs, and different stakeholders may require different channels.

Channels can be in the form of digital, social media, print and face to face.

5.1 Digital and Telecommunications

- Website
 - Windlesham Parish Council's website: www.Windleshampc.gov.uk
 - This is an easily accessible platform that covers most of the Council's documents, operations, important dates/times and contact information
 - It is for the giving of information and one-way communication
 - It is updated as required
- E-mail
 - Members of staff and the Parish Councillors are accessible via e-mail to discuss an issue or find information about a policy or service
 - This is a two-way channel allowing for direct interaction with the public
 - E-mails are viewed daily
- Telephone
 - Parish Councillors are accessible via either landline or mobile phones to raise an issue or request information
 - Members of staff are accessible via landline
 - This is a two-way channel allowing for direct conversation with the public
 - The Office landline is available within working hours. Out of hours enquiries should be left on the voicemail. Parish Councillor numbers can be contacted at appropriate hours during the week

5.2 Social Media

• Facebook

- Windlesham Parish Council's Facebook page: [Windlesham Parish Council - Bagshot, Lightwater & Windlesham | Facebook](#)
- This is an easily accessible platform that communicates council information, office closures and opening times, council and local group events, meeting dates and times etc
- This is a two-way channel allowing for members of the public to post their opinions, like or share the posts. They can also direct message
- Facebook is viewed daily, and posts are made as frequently as necessary.

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• Instagram

- Windlesham Parish Council's Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/windleshamparishcouncil/>
- Instagram provides a visually engaging and easily accessible platform to share council updates, community projects, office opening hours, and information about local events across Bagshot, Lightwater, and Windlesham.
- It is an ideal space for promoting local pride and engagement, using images and short videos to highlight the parish's people, places, and initiatives.
- Instagram also serves as a two-way communication channel, allowing residents to like, comment on, and share posts, as well as send direct messages to the Council.
- The account is monitored regularly, with posts published as needed to reflect current news, meetings, and community activities.

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- Nextdoor page: Windlesham Parish Council – Bagshot, Lightwater & Windlesham
- A local, community-focused platform for sharing council news, office hours, events, and meeting details.
- Reaches residents directly within the parish, encouraging engagement and awareness.
- Allows two-way communication, with residents able to comment and message the Council.
- Monitored regularly, with updates posted as needed.
- Used to highlight positive local stories and promote community connection.

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- YouTube Channel: The Parish Council will explore setting up a YouTube channel to share recordings of council meetings. This platform would provide an accessible and transparent way for residents to view discussions and decisions at their convenience. YouTube is a widely used, free, and easy to access tool that would allow the Council to reach a broader audience and share them through other communication channels.

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5.3 Printed Publications

- Quarterly Newsletter – No resource for this at present suggest we make better use of local magazines such as the Roundabout and Windlesham local magazine.
 - The newsletter is printed and delivered to all homes every three months and contains relevant information from the Council. This includes, local group information, promotion of sponsorships, policies of the Council, local events, meeting calendar, councillor and office contact details and advertisements from local businesses

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- Printed and distributed around Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter and Christmas, where appropriate.
- Distributed to key locations across the three villages – including cafes and libraries.
- Contains event information, parish updates and community news.
- This is a one-way channel that provides information to all residents, whether they are online or not. It has the broadest scope of all channels
- Newsletters are published quarterly, but the collection of information is happening continuously.

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- Partner Authority Newsletters
 - Where requests are made for information from Windlesham Parish Council
- Parish Notice Boards
 - These are located at various locations in Bagshot, Lightwater and Windlesham and contain relevant information, such as public notice of meetings, local events and office hours
 - This is a one-way communication channel
 - It can be updated as necessary.

5.4 Face to Face

- Exhibitions
 - Often linked with consultations below, an exhibition allows the Council to present ideas to interested members of the public and partners who attend the event. Often images, documents, plans and members of the Council are available to provide information
 - This is a two-way channel that allows for direct communication and responses given in person
 - Exhibitions are ad hoc and infrequent
- Public Speaking at Meetings
 - Near the beginning of meetings, members of the public, the police and elected members of local authorities can raise matters to the Council
 - This is a two-way channel that allows for direct communication and responses given in person
 - Full Windlesham Parish Council meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the month, with committee meetings quarterly

5.5 Surveys and Consultations

- Surveys
 - Surveys are taken to get a snapshot of public or user group opinion on a range of issues, such as their experiences, concerns, likes and dislikes, Council reputation etc. This data then forms the basis of policy creation and action plans to ensure the proper running and functioning of the Council. It is also an important, large-scale listening exercise.
 - This is a one-way channel that allows those surveyed to give information to the Council.
 - They are held infrequently and help formulate documents such as the Parish Council Action Plan and Communications Strategy

- Consultations
 - Often held in conjunction with an exhibition, consultations allow for the public and partners to give their opinions, views and ideas to the Council on a specific issue under consideration. They can also help to support a grant funding proposal.
 - This is a one-way channel that allows those consulted to give information to the Council.
 - They are held infrequently to help formulate policy or provide evidence of community support for a grant funding application.

6 What We Communicate

One of the communication principles on pages 5 & 6 of this document is the requirement of relevant information. Relevancy is determined by the needs of specific stakeholders. Information they may need to receive from us could include:

6.1 The Public and Local Groups

- Parish Council office opening hours and closures
- Staff changes and job opportunities
- How the Parish Council works
- Parish Council documents, such as completion of an audit
- Meeting times and dates
- Local events, and groups
- Who to contact about which service
- How to give feedback, such as raising an issue or complaint
- Contact information of the Parish Council, elected members and partner organisations
- What their roles and powers are
- Newly enacted Parish Council decisions
- Policy proposals
- Information on accessing and using Parish Council services and any changes to them
- Costs of using services where applicable
- How to access and apply for grants from the Parish Council

6.2 Partner Councils and Organisations

- Newly enacted Parish Council decisions
- Changes to services
- Contact information for the Parish Council office and councillors
- Planning application views and opinions
- Legally required notifications, such as Building Control Plan following a project
- Police reports and crime statistics
- School information

6.3 The Decision to Communicate

Day to day Information arising from within Windlesham Parish Council, such as office hours changes/closures, staff changes, meetings advertisements/cancellations, policy announcements, newsletter previews etc can be approved and uploaded at the discretion of the Clerk.

However, where an outside body asks to use our communications channels to distribute their own information or advertise an event to residents, this will need prior approval by email, from the relevant committee or Full Council. Outside bodies include user groups, local groups, other councils or businesses. There is no immediate right for such information to be published and so prior permission is required. Any outside information should adhere to standards on clarity, usefulness and legality etc and should not disparage Windlesham Parish Council.

In principle, approval for one channel will mean approval for all channels. However, a newsletter article must meet formatting requirements and so something approved for ~~Facebook-social media~~ and the website may not necessarily be approved for the newsletter if those requirements aren't met.

6.4 Accessibility

~~From the 23rd of September 2020, all .gov.uk websites should provide reasonable adjustments and adhere to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2.1. This involves making the website accessible for people with a range of disabilities, such as with visual and auditory impairments. All future content uploaded should:~~

- ~~• Have a clear and readable font and text colour~~
- ~~• If an image, have descriptions for screen readers to read out~~
- ~~• Use Word documents primarily, but include the option for a PDF if possible~~
- ~~• Have statements directing users to contact the Council for versions they need~~

Website Accessibility and WCAG 2.2 Compliance

Parish councils must ensure their websites meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 Level AA, as required by the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018.

To comply, the Parish Council should regularly check the website for accessibility issues, publish an up to date accessibility statement, and ensure all content text, images, and documents is created in an accessible format.

Meeting WCAG 2.2 AA standards demonstrates the council's commitment to inclusion and ensures all residents can access information and services.

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7 Who Communicates?

Everyone communicates at the Parish Council in some form and so an understanding and application of the communication principles is necessary to improve the flow of information and the overall reputation of the Council. The key people communicating are:

The Communications and ~~Engagement-Project~~ Officer – Council to consider appointment of communication officer for a few hours per week – please note that there is no budget for this and would need to be taken into account when setting the 2024-2025 budget.

The Comms Officer ~~will~~ identifies opportunities to communicate relevant information to the public and will support other council staff and councillors in their planned communication activities to ensure consistent quality of information, publication and branding.

They have responsibility for the website, ~~Facebook pages~~ social media pages and newsletter, and will help others on the parish notice boards, regional and national media, exhibitions, surveys and consultations.

Office Staff

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, along with the Assistant Clerk, Cemeteries Coordinator and ~~Buildings and Asset Coordinator~~ Operations Coordinator will have regular interactions with the public, such as through e-mail, face to face, parish notice boards, the public speaking section at meetings, consultations and surveys. They will also communicate with partner councils, organisations and local groups and businesses. They have a responsibility to uphold the communication principles and standards and work with the Communications ~~and Project Officer~~ Officer on delivery where required.

Other Staff and Councillors

Other representatives of the Council, when communicating with members of the public and other local groups through e-mail, phone calls or face to face, should uphold the communications principles and communicate in a clear, informative manner. They should help in so far as possible to resolve an issue or forward them on to the appropriate member of staff.

8 Evaluation

Evaluation of the communications strategy is a vital component in receiving feedback and driving improvement. This involves the monitoring and assessment of the overall strategy and individual channels of communication. They should comply with the Council's key priorities and communication principles, as well as achieving key strategic outcomes such as giving clear information or changing reader behaviour.

8.1 Channel Assessment

~~Some digital~~Digital and social media channels provide regular visitor and engagement analytics. These can be useful to see if a specific channel is being viewed and performing its intended function. Channels showing areas of concern should be reassessed or removed from the communications strategy. This data should be monitored by the Communications and ~~Engagement~~Project Officer and brought to the attention of the Clerk and Parish Council if problems emerge.

Appendix 1: Communications Action Plan

This action plan outlines changes going forward that will improve communication further at Windlesham Parish Council. It identifies an area of focus and gives appropriate actions to achieve that outcome.

Action	Comment
Update the website	Continue to update the website as necessary Establish frequent communication between the Clerk and Communications and Project Officer to upload <u>Engagement Officer to upload</u> the latest documents as they are created
Ensure website is WCAG compliant	All important council documents should be in an accessible format.
Consider Newsletter publication and how to resource and fund.	Review hours required to design and produce. Write a project plan to assess resources and funding required.
Identify All Homes in Windlesham Parish	Work to ensure every home in Windlesham parish receives a copy of the newsletter once in production.
Facebook Social Media Content Review	Consider launching social media campaigns – or joining national campaigns – to help inform and change reader behaviour. <u>Continue to review content and use analytics to assess successful campaigns.</u>
Blog	<u>Consider creating a blog to provide clear, accessible explanations of policies, projects, and decisions, offering greater transparency and insight than other channels allow, with regular posts shared via the website, social media, and newsletters</u> Consider the creation of a blog to allow staff and councillors to explain policy and decisions in more detail than other channels allow for
Explore using other channels	Consider making better use of the Council Twitter account. Assess its feasibility and the impact, looking at how other councils use it.
Publicise Local Groups	Establish contact and <u>Continue to</u> work with local groups to help advertise their events to a broader audience using our channels

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Monitor Costs of Communication	Always monitor and evaluate the costs of communicating and ensure efficient use of resources
<u>Produce a quarterly newsletter – digital and print</u>	<u>Continue to produce a quarterly newsletter where appropriate and distribute print copies locally.</u>
<u>Youtube Channel</u>	<u>Consider the creation of a Youtube channel to upload council meetings to</u>

Appendix 2: Media Contact Form

Please fill in the clear boxes. Grey boxes are for the Parish Council Office

Name	
Company or Organisation	
Telephone Number	
E-mail Address	
Nature of Enquiry	
Deadline for Response	
Enquiry Received On: Date Time	
Message Taken By	
Response as follows	
Approved by	
Responded on: Date Time	

Appendix 3: Communications Framework

The communications framework outlines how new information and content should be created at Windlesham Parish Council and what should be considered when making it.

Who are we talking to?

Consider who the relevant stakeholders are and what their specific requirements might be. Which channel will capture most of that audience and what information do they already know?

What are we saying?

Information should be written in plain English. Fonts should be clear and the layout of information logical and clear to follow. Ideally, it should contain an image to capture attention, especially on social media. It should also include key pieces of information such as date, time, location, contact information, cost etc.

Why are we saying it?

Part of planning is to consider why this information is being communicated. Is it designed just to inform the reader, to change their behaviour or to get feedback from them? Each option can require different considerations and be written differently.

What are the objectives of the message? It could be to 'help advertise and increase visitor numbers to event X' or 'get public opinion and feedback on policy Y'. Messages should be targeted to these aims and not contain unnecessary or irrelevant information.

Consider how it fits in with other activities at the Council as it could form part of a wider campaign.

What resources are available?

Consider what resources are available to deliver the message. Will it require money be spent and how much? How long will it take to create and then for how long should it be promoted? Which members of staff could help? What skills are needed?

Make sure to evaluate communications and read the feedback at all points. What risks are involved? How will we know if it's been successful? What did we learn and how do we improve this next time?

Item 9 – To consider contributions to Village Life magazine

Background

The Parish Council communicates through a range of methods, including its newsletter, website, and social media. However, not all residents are online or engage with digital channels. It is therefore important to consider additional routes to ensure inclusivity.

Village Life magazine is a free publication delivered monthly to approximately 6,600 households across the three villages. In addition, 100 printed copies are placed in popular community locations such as cafés and other gathering spots, further extending its visibility. Its distribution largely mirrors the areas in which our parish newsletter is delivered. For any roads not covered, spare copies are available, meaning residents across the parish can still access content.

Sunningdale Parish Council has been using Village Life magazine for a number of years with positive results, demonstrating that this form of communication can be an effective way of reaching local communities and promoting parish activities.

Options and Costs

Advertising space is available at the following rates:

- **Full page:** £110
- **Half page:** £59

There is no obligation to commit to a set frequency. The Council could place adverts or features as little or as often as required, providing flexibility for budget and communications planning.

Action

Councillors are asked to consider contributing to Village Life magazine, and if so, to agree on the format, frequency, and trial approach within budget.

Item 10 – To consider creating a Parish Council YouTube Channel

At the Full Council meeting held on 30th September, it was indicated that Parish Council meetings should be made available online to improve transparency and public accessibility. The Council discussed which platform would be most suitable for this purpose.

Concerns were raised that Facebook may not retain uploaded videos indefinitely, as videos could be deleted or archived after some time. In contrast, YouTube was seen as offering a more reliable long-term solution, since videos remain available unless the uploader removes them.

Action: Members are asked to consider the creation of an official Parish Council YouTube channel for publishing meeting recordings once the Meeting Owl video recording system is established.

Item 11 – Proposed Christmas Communications

In previous years, the Parish Council has held a range of enjoyable Christmas activities, including a Christmas drawing competition and other festive engagement opportunities for residents. These initiatives have been well received by the community and have helped to spread seasonal cheer across the villages.

It is recognised that the Communications Officer may have limited capacity over the coming months. However, if time allows, the following Christmas communications activities are proposed for this year:

1. Christmas Newsletter

- A Parish Christmas Newsletter will be created and distributed to residents at the end of November.
- The newsletter will include festive messages, news updates, and information about upcoming events across all villages.

2. Christmas Village Trail

Members are asked to consider introducing a Christmas Trail in each village:

- The trail would feature a series of letter clues placed in noticeboards, shop windows, and at WPC-managed sites (e.g., playgrounds). When collected, the letters would spell out a festive phrase. A map and trail form would be available either from the Parish Council office or for download via the WPC website.
- Members of the public would be invited to complete a trail form with the phrase they have collected and either post it to the Parish Council or submit it electronically.
- A winner would be selected at random for each village and a prize awarded to each winner - each village would allocate £10 for a prize.
- The trail would run from the Light Switch on at the end of November, until Monday 15th December where the winners would be announced and prizes given.

Action: Members are asked to consider whether they would like to run the Christmas Trail in all 3 villages with a maximum budget of £30 for prizes.