



Old Woughton Parish Council Communications Policy

Reviewed and adopted November 2025

Principles

Old Woughton Parish Council (hereafter referred to as "the Council") is committed to engaging openly and effectively with its parishioners. It recognises the importance of being responsive to community concerns, whether these are raised proactively by residents or sought through consultations, surveys, or project-based work. Transparency, accessibility, and dialogue are at the heart of the Council's communication approach.

Roles and Responsibilities

Each Parish Councillor has an ongoing responsibility to act as a conduit between parishioners and the Council. This includes informal feedback through day-to-day interactions and formal contributions at structured events such as the Annual Parish Meeting.

Where broader or more coordinated communication is necessary—such as during emergency situations, via quarterly newsletters, or through notification services—a dedicated Communications Team will be maintained. This team is responsible for ensuring consistency in the Council's messaging, adhering to established house style and systems. Membership of the Communications Team is reviewed annually.

Communication Channels and Activities

The Council is committed to maintaining a broad and inclusive range of communication methods to ensure all parishioners can access timely and relevant information. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Expert Advice**
The Council leverages its position within local government to invite qualified advisers to speak on relevant matters of interest. These contributions may take place at meetings or be published in newsletters.
- **Printed Leaflets**
Recognising that not all parishioners are comfortable with digital communication, the Council distributes printed materials to ensure equal access to key information. This has included leaflets on local initiatives and public health guidance.
- **Annual Parish Meeting**
Held each May, this meeting provides residents with a summary of the Council's activities and an opportunity to engage directly with all Councillors in an informal setting.

- **Bi-monthly Council Meetings**

Regular Council meetings are open to the public and include a 15-minute public session at the start for residents to raise issues without prior notice.

- **Newsletters**

The *Old Woughton News* is published up to four times per year. It provides updates on Council activities, meeting dates, local developments, and consultation opportunities.

- **Noticeboards**

Each of the four parish wards hosts a physical noticeboard displaying Council agendas, minutes, and other official materials. Use by non-Council groups is subject to the Noticeboards Policy (see Appendix A).

- **Notification System**

The Council maintains an opt-in email notification service for urgent updates. All data is handled in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy.

- **Resident Questionnaires**

Surveys are used periodically to assess satisfaction with Council communications and services. Summary findings are published in the newsletter.

- **Social Media**

While currently limited, the Council supports a Facebook presence via the *Friends of Old Woughton* page.

- **Website**

The Council maintains a regularly updated website providing access to agendas, minutes, reports, and notices, as well as information from other relevant public bodies.

Equalities and Health & Safety

All Council communications activities comply fully with current legislation, including accessibility, equalities, and health and safety requirements.

Budget Provision

Although most communication activities are undertaken voluntarily by Parish Councillors, the Council recognises the importance of investing in effective communication. Budget allocations are made annually to cover costs such as venue hire, printing, licensing, and equipment.

Appendix A: Noticeboards Policy

Council noticeboards are primarily reserved for official Parish Council notices. These boards are not publicly accessible, but residents may request a notice be posted, subject to the following conditions:

- Notices must relate specifically to Old Woughton Parish or adjoining areas.
- Content must not be political, religious, or commercial in nature.
- Notices must be no larger than A4 (210 mm x 297 mm).
- Each notice must be dated.
- Notices will be removed after 30 days unless otherwise agreed with a Parish Councillor.
- Approval is at the discretion of the local Parish Councillor and subject to space availability.

Review History

September 2012	New policy adopted
May 2016	No changes
September 2020	No changes
November 2025	Minor changes