

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

## Wreningham Parish Council

### Introduction

The Parish Council is the closest tier of local government to the community. Wreningham Parish Council (“the Council”) wishes to work closely with parishioners, community groups and businesses to encourage participation in decision making.

### Aims and Objectives

The aim is to create a more active and informed community.

### The Community

The Council seeks to engage with **all** sections of Wreningham’s community including the young, disenfranchised, disaffected and the elderly as well as the local business community, the clubs, organisations and societies active in the parish, its partners such as South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council, the neighbourhood policing team, the local school and the church. The Council is committed to engaging with anyone with an interest in the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wreningham.

### Information access for the Community

The Council provides access to its records, documents and information via:

- The Clerk - Hard copy of documents can be requested as available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Village Noticeboards (Top Row and Reading Room) – notices are placed there by the Council and at the permission of the Council.
- The Mardle – items are placed in the Wreningham Village Hall's newsletter.
- The Wreningham website ([www.wreningham.org](http://www.wreningham.org)) - Electronic copy is available on the council’s pages and includes: Administrative and Policy documentation; Agendas and minutes council meetings; Pages addressing areas of interest for the community.

### Public recording of Council meetings

The recording, filming and reporting of all public meetings is permitted.

Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded may not be filmed or recorded.

Members of the public and press are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access in a non-disruptive manner and only from areas designated for the public. No prior permission is required, however the Chairman

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should be informed at the beginning of the meeting if anyone present wishes to record proceedings. We will ensure that reasonable facilities are made available to the public and press to assist filming or recording of meetings.

The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording is allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive manner.

#### *What is disruptive behaviour?*

Essentially, this could be any action or activity which disrupts the conduct of meetings or impedes other members of the public being able to see, hear or film etc the proceedings. Examples can include:

- moving to areas outside the areas designated for the public without the consent of the Chairman,
- excessive noise in recording or setting up or re-siting equipment during the debate/discussion,
- intrusive lighting and use of flash photography; and
- asking for people to repeat statements for the purposes of recording.

The Chairman of the meeting, or any such Council representative as designated by the Chairman, has the capacity to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be filming or recording in a disruptive manner.

If individuals present do not wish to be filmed, we will ensure that space is provided where they cannot be filmed. In addition, we ask that the filming or recording of members of the public is kept to a minimum and focusses on those making representations to the meeting.

Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them so doing and by choosing to film, record or broadcast proceedings they accept that they are required to indemnify the Council, its members and officers in relation to any such claims or liabilities.

The Council will publish the guidance on the filming, recording and broadcasting of meetings on its website and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

### **Opportunities for Community Involvement**

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All Council meetings are open to the public and include a public session for parishioners to make representation to members. A number of projects have been started following the publication of the Parish Plan and a wide range of clubs operate within the parish. Details can usually be found on the website. Parishioners are invited and encouraged to join in. All councillors are available for informal discussion and their contact details are available from the clerk or the website.

### **Opportunities for Formal Representations to the Council**

Representations to the Council will normally be considered at the next Council meeting. If the request is for information only the clerk will respond accordingly. The Council has a Code of Practice for handling complaints, available from the clerk. The advance publication of agendas gives parishioners the opportunity to make representation to the council before agenda items are discussed. All formal representations received are responded to by letter or email.

### **Involvement in Partnerships**

The Council is committed to partnership working where it is clear that it will benefit the parish or to fulfil its statutory requirements. For example, the Council works in partnership with other tiers of government and is represented on the Wreningham Village Hall Management Committee, the Wreningham Fuel Trust and has an appointed Tree Warden. The Clerk has a close working relationship with District and County Councillors.

### **Role of Council Members and Officers**

Elected members are advocates for their community and their leadership role enables them to have a major input into the consultation and engagement process. Wreningham Parish Councillors are accessible, their contact details published on the website and in the parish magazine. They are available to talk to residents during the public session at the start of each Council meeting and at the Annual Parish Meeting. In a private capacity, councillors engage with many of Wreningham's clubs, societies and organisations, where they may promote the work of the Council and be available to parishioners.

### **Contact**

The Parish Clerk      see website for postal address  
clerk.wpc@gmail.com