



Haywards Heath Town Council

Statement of Community Engagement and Consultation

2012

Introduction

We are committed to promoting and encouraging a prosperous and harmonious community. Our mission statement clearly reflects this:

“A thriving community, which will be an attractive, vibrant, sustainable and prosperous town, where people will choose to live, work, and visit.”

Our Forward Plan outlines the broad principles for addressing issues facing individual Wards and the Town as a whole between 2012 and 2014. The Plan outlines how we will work and engage with partners to address these issues and how the Council will act as a voice for the Town’s residents and organisations/groups. We acknowledge that in order to act in the best interests of the Town and local residents we must consult, inform and engage with local people to understand the views of the local community. ***“Involving the Community”*** is at the heart of our aim to engage and consult with residents and stakeholder organisations.

What is a Statement of Community Engagement and who is it for?

Community engagement involves working together with local people to improve overall quality of life. It also means involving local people in decision-making to give them more of a say over the services that are available to them.

This document is a 'Code of Conduct'. It sets out the way in which we will inform and consult with the community and in turn outlines what residents and those with an interest in the Town can expect from us.

This document is intended for anyone with an interest in the Town, so that they may understand how we aim to engage with residents, groups, businesses, communities and surrounding Town and Parish Councils to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to contribute towards the decisions that will affect them.

Why is community engagement important to the Town Council?

It is essential that we receive your views and aspirations for the future of Haywards Heath; all feedback that we receive will help us to make informed decisions.

We recognise that in order to realise any future positive vision for Haywards Heath, we must work with the community so that the knowledge held by individuals / organisations, groups or business, can be drawn together and shared for the benefit of Haywards Heath, now and in the future.

How will we consult the Community, and when?

We will engage with the community and consult the public in a timely and inclusive manner, using realistic timescales wherever it is possible. In some instances, we will need to consult with the community to ensure that decisions taken acknowledge the views of those who may be affected. Other decisions that we take will not need to incorporate a formal consultation. In these instances, members of the public are still welcome to input thoughts and views on areas that they feel are affecting the Town.

Whether or not a formal consultation is undertaken, it is essential that we ensure that as far as possible the community is aware and understands what the Council is involved in, and why certain decisions are made.

With this in mind we commit to the following:

Informing people – ensuring that the community knows about and, more importantly, understands what is happening;

Consulting people – ensuring that people are able to input their views and have their say;

Involving people – ensuring that ideas are developed together.

Informing

We recognise the need to ensure that all information and updates for the community are accessible. We will use a variety of means by which to inform the community of its work and distribute such information as widely as possible.

We commit to providing relevant and up to date information in a timely fashion and via the most cost-effective means.

Such means of informing the community may include any or all of the following:

- Local media, including press releases, articles in local newspapers and our Newsletter;
- Written communication, including posters, flyers, leaflets and letters;
- Documents available in public places including the Town Hall and library;
- Electronic means – information will be on our website and promoted via Social Media
- Exhibitions / presence at community events;
- Formal community update meetings.

Consulting

It may be necessary to formally consult members of the local community on issues that affect them either today or potentially in the future. It is clear that members of the public may not necessarily wish to be consulted in the same way, via the same means or on the same issues. However, we aim to provide ample opportunity for the community to input. We will utilise a variety of means by which to gather feedback and views, whilst at the same time making effective use of council tax payers' money.

We commit to providing opportunities, via a variety of accessible means, for members of the public to input into formal consultations on specific topics or issues that may affect the community today and / or potentially in the future.

All formal consultations will be outlined in a Consultation Plan/Schedule (appendix 1) that clearly sets out the process, timescale and means by which we will gather input from local stakeholders. The means which we may use during a consultation process may include any or all of the following:

- Electronic means – providing information online and via our website and also utilising online survey / feedback facilities;
- Consultation documents, feedback forms and information will be sent to interested parties. A contact list will be held by us for those who would like to receive information on all of the Town Council's Consultations. 'Accessible venues will be made available for viewing and responding to consultation documents'
- Ward Councillors – your Ward Councilors are there to listen to your views and promote the views of residents / voluntary organisations / groups on key issues relating to Haywards Heath.
- Consultation events and workshops;
- Interactive / staffed information stands at accessible locations, at different times of the day and at different types of events;
- Liaison directly with resident groups and committees, local interest groups and other stakeholders;
- Town and Ward meetings;
- Telephone surveys.

How will my feedback help make decisions?

Any feedback / input that we receive has an important role in informing the decisions taken. We review all feedback, a process which includes the identification of key themes and particular areas of support or concern. A final decision is only reached once consideration has been given to the outcome of relevant consultation with the community *alongside* other relevant information including:

- Government guidance;
- Factual information;
- Views of other stakeholders and interested parties;
- Views of professionals in a particularly relevant field.

We will ensure that the results of all community involvement and consultations are used effectively to help inform the decisions that are made.

What if I have a concern that I want to raise outside of a consultation?

If there is a particular issue that you would like to raise with us, please get in touch. There is no need to wait for a consultation to share your views.

You can email your thoughts, comments, questions and suggestions to the Town Clerk on Town.clerk@haywardsheath.gov.uk.

Or submit a message using the “Contact Form” facility on our website: www.haywardsheath.gov.uk.

We also have a presence Social Media sites which we use to update the community. You can send the us a message on Facebook ‘Haywards Heath Town Council’ or Tweet us at #HHTCNews.

Contact a Ward Councillor

Ward Councillors are your elected representatives and may be aware themselves of many of the issues that are relevant to your neighbourhood. Your Councillors will be able to raise issues on your behalf with Council Officers, or may be able to tell you about local meetings where you could have an opportunity to put your views across yourself.

Ward Councillors can be contacted via our website: www.haywardsheath.gov.uk or you can telephone us at the Town Hall on 01444 455694. All Town Councillor Contact Details are provided in Appendix 3 of this document.



Appendix 1: Haywards Heath Town Council Template Consultation Plan

This Consultation Plan outlines the procedure and timeframe that will form the consultation process for the Haywards Heath **X Consultation**. The Plan outlines the detail of this consultation process and should be read in conjunction with the overarching Town Council document, 'Town Council Statement of Community Engagement and Consultation - 2012'. For further information, please contact the Town Clerk on 01444 455694 or email town.clerk@haywardsheath.gov.uk.

Consultation Name: _____ **Start Date:** _____ **End Date:** _____

Medium	Method	Timeframe	Where	Frequency
Consultation Documents	Consultation documents will be publicly available for viewing throughout the consultation process.	This will be confirmed once a formal Consultation is agreed	Variety of accessible venues throughout the Town, including but not exclusively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Town Hall; the library. 	This will be confirmed once a formal Consultation is agreed
	Surveys and questionnaires will be available for members of the public to share and input their views on the X Consultation .		These will be available in a variety of locations, in order for the public to have the opportunity to input their views.	
Local Media	Press Releases The Town Council will produce a minimum of X press releases in order to update the community on progress with the X .		All press releases will be sent to local newspapers and Town Council and third party newsletters. However, it will be up to the discretion of the respective editors as to whether or not the article is included. All press releases will be included on the Town Council website.	
	Local Radio		Where applicable.	
	Town Council Newsletter The Town Council will include information on X consultation in its 4 Newsletters (minimum		Haywards Heath Town Council Newsletter – distributed in the Leader newspaper to approximately	

Local Media continued	number) per year.		<p>X homes and available at the Town Hall, local library, other community venues and outlets across the Town.</p> <p>The X edition will be dedicated to X Consultation.</p>	
Written Communication	Posters will be displayed on the five community notice boards throughout the town.		On the five community notice boards throughout the town and in addition in the Town Library and other community venues on their notice boards.	
	Leaflets / flyers containing key information will be available. All leaflets will clearly outline how the public can input their views.		In the Town Hall itself, town library and other community venues such as community centres. A schedule of events will be prepared and advertised prior to locating the literature.	
	Letters including information on how to get involved will be sent to those groups that are seldom heard from in consultations.		Various specific groups and organisations that can help identify hard to reach groups and organisations.	
Electronic Means	Town Council Website The most up to date and relevant information will be included on the Town Council website.		www.haywardsheath.gov.uk	
	Social Media The Town Council will utilise its Facebook page		Facebook: Haywards Heath Town Council	

	and Twitter Account to share information with the community and encourage involvement in the various stages of consultation.		Twitter: @HHTCNews	
	Telephone Surveys		Various	
Consultation Events	<p>Exhibitions and presence at community events Consultation will take place in a variety of settings throughout the town. Councillors and Officers will be on hand at different times to answer questions and note input from the public.</p>		Variety of locations, including but not exclusively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Orchards Shopping Centre; • Sainsbury’s Supermarket foyer; • Haywards Heath Railway Station; • Spring Festival (April); • Town Day (September). 	
	<p>Public Meetings The Town Council will hold X public meetings.</p>		In a variety of community settings and at different times of the day, including some evening meetings in order to include all individuals. At least one meeting will take place at the Town Hall.	
	<p>Focus Groups The Town Council will facilitate X focus groups during the consultation period. These groups will be formed as a reflection of the Town Council’s cluster discussion groups (see 1.–3. below) in respect of the X Consultation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment, Amenity Land, Open Space, and Health; 2. Business and Retail, Highways and Transport; 3. Schools, Leisure, Recreation and Community Buildings. <p>In addition, visits will be made to special interest</p>		In a variety of community settings and at different times of the day in order to accommodate as wide a group as is possible.	

Consultation Events continued	groups and established residents associations.			
	<p>Ward Surgeries and door knocking where appropriate</p> <p>The Ward Councillors will host at least one surgery in each of their wards where residents will be able to speak in person with their Councillors, ask questions and voice any potential concerns.</p> <p>In addition, it may be necessary for Councillors to undertake a door knocking process to gather wider views from their constituents.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ashenground 2. Bentswood 3. Franklands 4. Heath 5. Lucastes and Bolnore 	At least one surgery per Ward during the consultation period.
	<p>Neighbourhood Panel Meetings</p> <p>All five wards in Haywards Heath have Neighbourhood Panel meetings which are facilitated by the Neighbourhood Policing Team. Ward Councillors attend these meetings on a regular basis. However, as part of the consultation process, a Councillor and / or Officer will attend panel meetings in each ward in order to promote the X Consultation and associated consultation. Consultation documents will be made available at the meetings.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ashenground Neighbourhood Panel; 2. Bentswood Neighbourhood Panel; 3. Franklands Neighbourhood Panel; 4. Heath Neighbourhood Panel; 5. Lucastes and Bolnore Neighbourhood Panel. 	Targeted attendance – at least one meeting per ward.
	<p>Town Meeting</p>		The Town meeting is an annual event and could be used (as appropriate) when the timescale for the consultation falls in line with the date of the meeting.	
Public Referendum	Only when applicable to the nature of the consultation.			

Appendix 2: Haywards Heath Town Council - Corporate Priorities 2011-2014

To achieve the Council's Mission Statement, the following priorities have been developed through consultation with Council Members, stakeholders and individuals:

1. Through democratic representation, promote the views of residents and voluntary organisations/groups on key issues relating to Haywards Heath.
2. To comment upon and lead on development proposals for Haywards Heath, whilst ensuring that it is sustainable and that the appropriate infrastructure is secured to meet the needs of an ever growing Town.
3. To continue well managed finances and suitable levels of staffing to provide value for money services for the residents of Haywards Heath.
4. Promote the wellbeing of the community by assisting, enabling and encouraging local residents and organisations/groups to provide services, whilst pursuing opportunities to provide new services on behalf of our principal authorities.
5. To work with the business community to promote Haywards Heath and encourage businesses to locate to the Town, to encourage sustainable economic growth and create job opportunities, whilst supporting those already established in the Town.
6. To protect and enhance the Town's open spaces and cultural facilities available to the residents of the Town.

Haywards Heath Town Council's full Forward Plan 2011–2014 can be downloaded from our website:
<http://www.haywardsheath.gov.uk/index.php/strategic>

Appendix 3: Haywards Heath Town Council Councillor Contact Details.

Ashenground Ward

Cllr Richard S Bates Richard@haywardsheath.gov.uk	West Corner, Lowfield Road, HH, RH16 4DW	01444 452092
Cllr Warren Hill Warren.Hill@haywardsheath.gov.uk	C/O The Town Hall, 40 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1BA	
Cllr Christine McLean Christine.McLean@haywardsheath.gov.uk	Lyndon, Gower Road, HH, RH16 4PN	01444 454093

Bentswood Ward

Cllr David Dorking David.Dorking@haywardsheath.gov.uk	8 St Pauls Close, HH, RH16 3DB	01444 450067
Cllr Julie Hayden Julie.Hayden@haywardsheath.gov.uk	141 Hoblands, HH, RH16 3SB	01444 458666
Cllr Stephen Hillier Stephen.Hillier@haywardsheath.gov.uk	38 Bentswood Crescent, HH, RH16 3QR	07830 200722

Franklands Ward

Cllr Rod Clarke Rod.Clarke@haywardsheath.gov.uk	101 Beech Hill, HH, RH16 3TS	01444 413529
Cllr Jacqui Hollister Jacqui.Hollister@haywardsheath.gov.uk	13 Laburnum Way, HH, RH16 3SD	01444 453589
Cllr Michael Pulfer Michael.Pulfer@haywardsheath.gov.uk	6 Burma Close, HH, RH16 3JE	01444 453062

Heath Ward

Cllr Jonathan Ash-Edwards Jonathan.ash-Edwards@haywardsheath.gov.uk	45 Turners Mill Road, HH, RH16 1NW	01444 413902
Cllr Sandy Ellis Sandy.Ellis@haywardsheath.gov.uk	60a Queens Road, HH, RH16 1EE	01444 473154
Cllr Natalie March Natalie@haywardsheath.gov.uk	24 Summerhill Close, HH, RH16 1QZ	07985 528788

Lucastes & Bolnore Ward

Cllr Chris Ash-Edwards Chris.Ash-Edwards@haywardsheath.gov.uk	45 Turners Mill Road, HH, RH16 1NW	01444 413902
Cllr Mims Davies Mims.Davies@haywardsheath.gov.uk	The Shippen, Great Haywards, Amberley Close, HH, RH16 4AU	01444 411219
Cllr Tim Farmer Tim.Farmer@haywardsheath.gov.uk	7 Heyworth Ride, HH, RH16 4TN	07515 565988
Cllr John Sabin John.Sabin@haywardsheath.gov.uk	6 Myra Mews, HH, RH16 3SW	01444 451046

Appendix 4: Glossary of terms

Community Engagement	involves working together with local people to improve overall quality of life. It also means involving local people in decision-making to give them more of a say over the services that are available to them.
Forward Plan	sets out how your organisation is going to meet its objectives using its resources - collections, people, land, buildings and finance - to best advantage.
Stakeholders	a person, group, organisation, member or system who affects or can be affected by an the Town Council's actions.