



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Introduction

Each Parish Councillor has a duty to represent, without bias, the interests of the whole community.

They should always try and do their best and be available to help parishioners with regard to matters relating to the Parish of Bugbrooke.

Parish Councillors may be contacted via the Clerk or using their Parish Council email addresses available on the website.

If it is felt by the resident that the matter is important, then a letter or email to the Parish Clerk will ensure that it is dealt with in a timely and professional manner (also see the Correspondence section below).

It is the Parish Council's intention to meet the timescales detailed below but there could be occasions when this is not possible. When this happens the Parish Council will review their procedures and where necessary make changes to the policy or procedures.

Aims

- To establish clear, easy to use channels of communication between the Parish Council and Residents, and vice versa.
- To provide information on important matters in a timely manner to facilitate and encourage informed comment from interested individuals and groups.

Parish Council Meetings

The Parish Council normally meets on the second Monday of every month.

The Parish Council will normally meet in the Community Centre, Camp Close, Bugbrooke at 7.30pm.

Public participation is encouraged and the access information for the meetings is published on the Agenda, and is available on the website www.bugbrookeparishcouncil.gov.uk and the noticeboards.

Members of the public may address the Parish Council during the 'Public Participation' section of the meeting which is included on every agenda.

Website

The website is the main tool used by the Parish Council to communicate current information. The Parish Clerk will post the Agenda on the Bugbrooke Parish Council Website (www.bugbrookeparishcouncil.gov.uk) at least three clear days before the meeting.

The approved minutes will be uploaded to the website as soon as possible following the meeting at which they are approved.

In order to comply with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities, the Clerk will arrange for the annual publication of the following documents no later than 1 July each year:

- all items of expenditure above £100
- end of year accounts
- annual governance statement
- internal audit report
- list of councillor or member responsibilities
- Minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings.

The Parish Clerk is the Webmaster for the Parish Council website.

The Parish Clerk will ensure that the Parish Council email address is publicised.

Notice Boards

The following items will be displayed on the Parish Council noticeboards at seven locations around the village – namely, John's Road; Kislingbury Road; Levitts Road; Meadway; Camp Hill; West End and High Street:

- Parish Council meeting dates for the year
- Contact details for the Clerk
- The Parish Council's meeting agenda - which will be posted at least 3 working days in advance of each meeting to at least 3 noticeboards one of which will be the High Street. The agenda is also always displayed at the entrance to the Parish Council Office and the website.

The information displayed on the Parish Notice Boards will be kept up-to-date where possible.

The Clerk's contact details and meeting dates are available at the Community Centre. The Parish Council office opening hours will be posted at the community centre.

Correspondence

All correspondence relating to the Parish should be addressed to the Parish Clerk in the first instance either via email at parishclerk@bugbrookeparishcouncil.gov.uk or via post to The Parish Office, Camp Close, Bugbrooke NN7 3RW. This will ensure that the matter is passed to the relevant person or organisation as soon as practically possible. However, all Parish Councillors have their own Council email addresses which have the format -firstnamelastname.bpc@gmail.com.

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with emails received and passing on anything relevant to Councillors or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Parish Council will usually come from the Clerk, and/or otherwise will always be copied to the Clerk. All new emails requiring personal data to be passed on will be followed up with a data consent request

before action is taken with that correspondence. Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with villagers in relation to their own personal views, with a copy to the Clerk if appropriate.

It is important to note that any emails sent to or from Parish Council email addresses will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act requirements. To ensure Councillors personal privacy, they are advised that all communications relating to Parish Council matters should be sent to or from their individual parish council email address only.

These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

It is imperative that personal information is never forwarded on to other people or groups outside the Parish Council, (this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers) unless the specific permission of the original sender is first obtained.

All correspondence to the Parish Clerk will be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt if possible. If email is used, then an acknowledgment will be sent via email.

Councillors will be notified as needed of correspondence, but the addressee will not be named on minutes of meetings unless requested.

Anonymous correspondence in any form will not receive a response.

Email should be thought of in the same way as a letter. A subject line, the sender's name and the content should be in the main body of the email, not as an attachment. Attachments will not be opened unless the Clerk has prior knowledge of the subject. The Parish Council regrets that, for reasons of computer security and virus protection, anonymous emails and those with no subject in the title will not be opened or actioned.

A parishioner may raise any issue directly with the Parish Clerk or any Councillor. If a satisfactory answer cannot be given immediately, the issue may be placed on the agenda for the attention of the full Parish Council.

The Clerk will acknowledge all Freedom of Information requests within seven working days of receipt and will reply fully within 20 working days of receipt of the request. If this is not possible, a further holding letter/email will be sent with an expected completion date.

Social Media

The use of social media does not replace existing forms of communication but is used to enhance communication with a wider range of the population. A full social media policy has been adopted. Bugbrooke Parish Council has no obligation to respond to comments on social media.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is convened by the Chair of the Parish Council and is generally held in April each year to provide parishioners with a summary of the activities of the Parish Council over the previous year and the opportunity to debate local issues and celebrate local events and activities.

Related policies and procedures

- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Document Retention Policy and Procedure
- Freedom of Information Introduction and Publication Scheme
- Social Media Policy

Copies of all the policies adopted by the Parish Council are available on the Bugbrooke Parish Council website.

Approved and adopted by Bugbrooke Parish Council.

Signed

Chair

Date 11th May 2026