

South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan
Communication and Engagement Strategy
Up to 2036



South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan up to 2036
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This Communication and Engagement Strategy was produced by South Woodham Ferrers Town Council through the office of the Town Clerk, Mrs. Karen Hawkes.

It was overseen by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Vice-Chaired by Cllr. Murrough O'Brien.

Written and produced by Deborah Edwards (Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator).

This document is also available on our website, plan2021.southwoodhamferrersstc.gov.uk.
Hard copies can be viewed by contacting SWFTC or Chelmsford City Council.

With thanks to the community of South Woodham Ferrers, the Rural Communities Council of Essex, and Chelmsford City Council.

The Steering Group consisted of: Councillor O'Brien (Vice-Chairman and Elmwood Ward Representative), Allen, Bentham (Woodham Radars FC), S Betteridge, D Birch (SWF Health and Social Care Group), Carlton, Dempsey, Fellows, Councillor Golding (NPSG Finance and Town Council Liaison Officer and Woodville Ward Representative), Hammond, Hook, Councillor John (Collingwood Ward Representative), Khan, Lane, Miller, Moss, Newby (William de Ferrers School), Playfair-Moss (South Woodham Evangelical Church), Price (Secretary and Publicity Officer), Councillor Shearring (Chetwood Ward Representative), Thompson (South Woodham United) and Twine.

With thanks to: Sarah Sapsford (RCCE) and Jenny Robinson (Chelmsford City Council).

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2011 introduced a statutory instrument in England, Neighbourhood Planning. It enables local community's new powers to produce a development plan, setting priorities for the development and use of land in a parish or local area. As outlined in paragraph 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework; "A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development."
- 1.2. The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan project was initiated at a Town Council meeting on the 23rd September 2014. Once the plan is adopted, it will become part of Chelmsford City Council's Local Plan, a planning strategy for Chelmsford's future.
- 1.3. A framework is required to help guide the process of community and stakeholder engagement needed to produce an informed and relevant community-led Neighbourhood Development Plan for South Woodham Ferrers. It sets out a range of communication types in order to gather information from the community in and around South Woodham Ferrers. Effective engagement with the local community, businesses, and service providers in South Woodham Ferrers is a crucial aspect in supporting the neighbourhood Plan through referendum.
- 1.4. This strategy aims to explain the steps required by the Town Council and Steering Group (including its sub-groups) in order to develop, promote and support the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.5. We will strive to communicate with a wide variety of stakeholders including; residents, businesses, services and all levels of government, using cost effective and varying appropriate communication types.
- 1.6. It is important to understand that communication works best when it is clear, concise and when the most appropriate form of media is used. It is also imperative to always keep in mind that communication is required both ways; it is not enough to talk, we must also listen. Therefore the community shall at all stages be offered various ways to communicate with the Town Council and Steering Group (including its sub-groups).
- 1.7. The Action Plan within this document aims to guide each communication and engagement with the community and stakeholders. It sets out in greater detail than the strategy, a proposed programme of community engagement activity and various actions needed to deliver that programme. The Action Plan is likely to evolve as the project develops over time.
- 1.8. More information is available via the website; plan2021.southwoodhamferrerstc.gov.uk.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. Confidence in the Neighbourhood Plan process and support for the outcomes at referendum will be more certain by going through this process in a demonstrably transparent way.

Therefore the objectives of this Communication and Engagement Strategy are to;

- Ensure that the community are kept informed and updated of the Neighbourhood Plan process using the most appropriate forms of communication available.
- Display a willingness to encourage opinions and suggestions from all individuals and organisations within the community even where these present potentially conflicting, challenging or critical views of the Plan or the process.

Ensure that all stakeholders are communicated and consulted with appropriately, meaning that;

- involvement into the development and approval of the Neighbourhood Plan has been included,
- status of the Neighbourhood Plan is understood at every stage,
- and that approval, where needed, is gained from key stakeholders.

Ensure that Chelmsford City Council accept the Neighbourhood Plan by providing (amongst other documents);

- A Consultation Statement
- and A Statement of Community Involvement

3. Target Audiences

- 3.1. Our aim is to reach everyone with an interest in the future of the designated area. This will include; residents, businesses, land owners, those who commute into South Woodham Ferrers (work, shopping, socialising etc.), those who deliver services to the local communities and people who have influence over the future of the area.
- 3.2. Communications with communities will be both based on where they live and based on common interests. It is imperative that all our communications have as much impact as possible.

To avoid contradiction, the following will be the main messages:

- the Neighbourhood Plan reflects community opinion,
- the Neighbourhood Plan is a framework for the development of our area,
- we want to hear your opinion and your suggestions and all shall be considered equally,
- and we need the participation and backing of the community as a whole.

Our messages will be:

- concise,
- not conflicting,
- and relevant.

Stakeholder	Built Environment	Community Facilities	Transport and Access	Natural Environment	Infrastructure	Open Spaces and Leisure	Business and Retail
Uniformed Youth		x					
Allotment Association		x		x		x	
Anglian Water				x	x		
Asda/Walmart							x
Bar'n Bus		x					
Bereavement Support Group		x					
Bowls Club						x	
British Gas					x		
BT (BT Group Plc)					x		
Bumble Bee Conservation Trust				x			
C Manor Staff		x					
C Manor User		x					
Care Homes		x					

Chelmsford City Council	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Chetwood Children's Centre		x	x			x	
Clinic		x					
Club Woodham						x	
Colin and Lesley Powell							x
Dentists		x					
Developer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
East of England Ambulance Headquarters		x	x		x		
Eastern Ind. Est.	x		x		x		x
Environment Agency	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Essex & Suffolk Water Ltd				x	x		
Essex Biodiversity Project - 2012				x			
Essex County Council	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Essex County Fire & Rescue		x	x		x		
Essex Police Headquarters		x	x		x		
Essex Rivers Hub			x	x		x	
Essex Wildlife				x		x	
Faiths		x					
Farmers			x	x			x
First Group			x				
First Responders		x	x		x		
Food Bank		x					
Frankland Fields				x		x	
Funeral Directors		x					
GPs		x					
Greater Anglia			x				
Health Social		x					
Highways Agency			x				

Key worker groups and target groups for Affordable housing	x						
Land Agents/Owners	x			x			
Library		x					
Lisa Kelly		x					
Local / other investors	x						
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)	x						
Local Estate Agents	x						
Marsh Farm Animal Adventure Park				x			
Marsh Farm Country Park Ranger				x		x	
Mr Dol Bear							x
National Grid					x		
Neighbouring Parishes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Network Rail			x				
Other Therapy		x					
Patient Groups		x					
Pharmacists		x					
Pre-School/Nursery leader (not in school)		x	x				
RSPB				x			
Sainsbury							x
Saltcoates Ind. Est.							x
School heads	x	x	x	x		x	
Self Builders	x						
Sky					x		
South Woodham Ferrers Town Council	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sports Clubs		x				x	
SWF Business Connections							x

SWF Leisure Centre						x	
SWF Residents	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
U3A		x					
UK Power Networks Ltd					x		
Village Hall		x				x	
Virgin Media					x		
W.I.		x					
Walking clubs		x	x	x			
Waterway users			x				
Weight Management		x					
Woodham Fenn Volunteers				x			

3.3. The Stakeholders may change from time to time (e.g. additional stakeholders or removal of those no longer operating).

4. Methods of communication

4.1. We shall use a variety of effective and credible methods to reach the target audiences. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Direct notifications** – emails or letters will be sent to relevant groups, statutory bodies and those who have requested that they are contacted on our consultation database.
- **Website** – progress on our plan documents will be publicised and uploaded once completed. There will also be a facility for website visitors to comment on the plan.
- **Printed Media Outlets such as South Woodham Focus** – regular updates on the progress of the plan shall appear in the South Woodham Focus. This local magazine is distributed to all homes within South Woodham Ferrers and to most if not all businesses.
- **Town Council meetings** – each Town Council Meeting shall receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan's progress and necessary feedback and approval shall be sought from elected local members.
- **Consultation events and presentations** – displaying information and proposals in a public exhibition at places such as the library, local fayres and events etc. can be useful in engaging with those who may not get involved in more formal methods. These can be used as outreach to certain demographics.
- **Leaflets, posters and flyers** – these can be distributed in order to promote consultation events and summarise information. Public notice boards can be used.
- **Social Media** – where appropriate, consultation events will be advertised on social media.
- **Workshops** – some elements of the Neighbourhood Plan may benefit from holding interactive workshops which can make use of plans, models and other visual aids. Workshops can be useful to gain in depth insight into the views held by the public.
- **Newspaper** – where appropriate, updates and/or notices on the progress of the plan shall appear in local newspapers.
- **Surveys and questionnaires** – surveys and questionnaires may be used in order to seek views on key issues, options, proposals and documents.
- **Feedback and meetings** – Sector Champions and representatives will be available to receive feedback. This shall then be recorded by the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator.

4.2. Although there are many forms of communication open to us, the method used should reflect both the message being communicated and the target audience. For example, a message calling for views of young people on the sports facilities in the Town, would probably be best be communicated through social media and not at Town Council meetings.

5. Table of Ongoing Actions

Aim	Objective	How we will engage	Organised by	Contact Details
Updates on Neighbourhood Plan				
Keep local community updated on the Neighbourhood Plan's progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the community in as many different ways as possible to ensure inclusivity to all demographics. Ensure the status of the Neighbourhood Plan is understood at every stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Social Media Direct Notifications Relevant printed media outlets such as the South Woodham Focus. 	NPSG Publicity Officer and Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator	All correspondence to go through the office of the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator. Contact details can be found under 4.2 of this report.
Comments received at all times				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Receiving emails Receiving telephone calls Receiving letters Receiving verbal comments. <p><i>(Comments received shall be reviewed by the Steering Group)</i></p>	NPSG Publicity Officer and Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator	All correspondence to go through the office of the Neighbourhood Plan Co-ordinator. Contact details can be found under 4.2 of this report.

6. Table of One-off Actions

Date	Aim	Objective	How we will engage	Organised by	Contact Details
Community Open Day					
12.11.16 10am-2pm	Discover what makes the character of South Woodham Ferrers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the community's likes and dislikes of the town. Find out what changes people would like to see from the town. Discover more about the general interests of the town and therefore what facilities should be expanded upon or created. 	Stand to be held with leaflets to be handed out.	South Woodham Ferrers Library	01245 329531
Christmas Fayre					
19.11.16 4pm-7pm	Discover what makes the character of South Woodham Ferrers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the community's likes and dislikes of the town. Find out what changes people would like to see from the town. Discover more about the general interests of the town and therefore what facilities should be expanded upon or created. 	Stand to be held with leaflets to be handed out.	Town Council	01245 321817
Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch					
01.12.16 12:30pm-3pm	Discover what makes the character of South Woodham Ferrers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the community's likes and dislikes of the town. Find out what changes people would like to see from the town. Discover more about the general interests of the town and therefore what facilities should be expanded upon or created. 	Stand to be held with leaflets to be handed out.	Town Council	01245 321817

Children's Christmas Party					
10.12.16 4.30pm - 6.30pm	Discover what makes the character of South Woodham Ferrers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the community's likes and dislikes of the town. Find out what changes people would like to see from the town. Discover more about the general interests of the town and therefore what facilities should be expanded upon or created. 	Stand to be held with leaflets to be handed out.	Town Council	01245 321817
Woodville Student Council					
16.03.17 10.00am - 12.00pm	Have this young age group involved to ensure not only that their involvement and input is recorded but also to try and make the Neighbourhood Plan a talking point at home with older siblings, parents/guardians, family and friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the children's likes and dislikes of the town. Find out what changes children would like to see from the town. Discover more about the general interests of the town and therefore what facilities should be expanded upon or created. 	Three activities are planned for the children; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poster Design House Design Competition Questionnaire 	Neighbourhood Plan Co-Ordinator	01245 429445
Annual Town Meeting					
04.04.17 07.00pm - 10.00pm	Discover what makes the character of South Woodham Ferrers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the community's likes and dislikes of the town. Find out what changes people would like to see from the town. Discover more about the general interests of the town and therefore what facilities should be expanded upon or created. 	Stand to be held with leaflets to be handed out.	Town Council	01245 321817

7. Evaluation and Amendment

- 7.1. All communication and engagement plans should go through the Steering Group for approval, due to likely cost implications and proofing.
- 7.2. The Communication and Engagement Strategy review shall be an agenda item at every Steering Group meeting for the duration of the Neighbourhood Plan process. It is important to review the Communication and Engagement Strategy regularly. Consideration of the responses shall act as evidence as to ways to improve the communication strategy for the future.

8. Our Commitments

- 6.1. South Woodham Ferrers Town Council as the lead organisation in the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan project, through the wider Steering Group have agreed to adopt a set of key commitments on community and stakeholder engagement revolving around transparency and inclusivity, but subject to proportionality. These are presented as an agreed set of actions within sections 5. and 6. of this document.

- 6.2. In return we will ask only that anyone seeking to participate by providing information, opinions or analysis of proposals at any stage of the project is prepared to do so in writing to ensure that all comments can be properly noted as a true record of their views. Once we reach the stages in the process where statutory guidance has to be followed we will be required to publish comments made about the Plan.

