



Barwick in Elmet and Scholes Parish Council

Communications Strategy July 2026

1. Objectives

Through this Strategy the Parish Council aims to:

- a. Increase awareness of the Parish Council
- b. Improve community engagement with the Parish Council.
- c. Improve transparency in council decisions
- d. Inform residents about facilities and services provided by the Council
- e. Inform residents about events and projects which affect them, but are beyond the Council's control (*e.g. road closures, major development projects*)

2. Target Audience

We wish to communicate with a wide range of individuals and groups, including:

- a. Residents (*younger, older, parents, children, new residents*)
- b. Local businesses (*shops, car repairs etc*)
- c. Services (*schools, doctors, library*)
- d. Community groups and organizations (*churches, scouts, sports groups, in-bloom groups, community care*)
- e. External stakeholders (*ward councillors, MP, Leeds City Council, Police*)
- f. Facilities users (*playgrounds, allotments, sports facilities, dog walkers*)
- g. Volunteers
- h. Grant recipients

Some communications will target all residents, others will target particular groups. Communication style and channels will reflect the needs of the target audience.

3. Key Messages and Information

Key messages and information the Parish Council wishes to communicate include:

- a. Statutory information which must be shared (*AGAR reports, financial information, agendas and minutes*)
- b. Information about the Parish Council, what it does and how it benefits the community

- i. Amenities provided by the Parish Council (*green spaces (Hall Tower Field and Hill, Scholes Lodge Field, Peace Flame Garden, Jack Heaps Field), playgrounds, allotments, sports facilities, Scholes pavilion*)
- ii. Liaison with other bodies (*Leeds City Council, Police and Communities Together*)
- iii. Representing the local community (*planning applications*)
- iv. Grant scheme
- c. Signposting to services provided by others (*West Yorkshire Police for crime reduction; Leeds City Council for potholes, parking concerns*)
- d. Information on key projects, initiatives, or decisions by the Parish Council which affect local residents,
- e. Information on key projects, initiatives, or decisions by others which affect local residents (*road closures, major developments*)

4. Channels

A wide range of communication channels are available to the Parish Council. We will select the most appropriate channel(s) for sharing our key messages, depending on the likely level of interest, the number of people affected and the target audience (see Appendix 1 for examples).

The Parish Council currently uses the following channels:

- a. Digital Presence:
 - i. Website: [Barwick in Elmet & Scholes Parish Council – Official website.](#) Largely reactive, the Council's main repository of information. Continuously maintained and updated by the Clerk.
 - ii. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BarwickInElmetAndScholesParishCouncil>. Potentially a key means of promoting key messages and linking to the website. However it is currently underused (only one active admin/poster and 84 active followers). Managed by Cllr P Walsh.
- b. Traditional Media:
 - i. Newsletter: Published four times per year, and hand delivered by volunteers to all residents. (Note: postal delivery has been tried in the past but stopped when a consultation with recipients showed the vast majority did not want to receive it.) Includes content on local organisations (e.g. church groups) as well as Parish Council news. Links to website. Managed by Cllr S Walsh.
 - ii. Noticeboards: used to provide information on Parish Council meetings and events. Updated by the Clerk.
- c. In-Person:
 - i. Events and Meetings: Parish meetings and Parish Council Meetings are open to the public, agendas are published in advance on the website and on

noticeboards. Ward Councillors are also invited by email. However attendance is poor.

- ii. One to one conversations generally initiated by members of the public

It would be possible to expand current activity, but this would require additional resource which is not currently available.

5. Frequency & Content Schedule

- a. The newsletter will be produced once every three months
- b. Notice of Parish Council meetings will be given in accordance with Standing Orders, i.e. at least three clear days' notice will be given and the agenda will be published on the website and on parish noticeboards.
- c. Other communication will depend on the nature of the item

6. Tone & Style

As a Council and as individual Councillors, we will ensure that our communication style is:

- a. Clear and concise, avoiding jargon and making content accessible
- b. Friendly and engaging
- c. Positive
- d. Professional

7. Measuring Success

Due to resource pressures, we will not undertake an in-depth evaluation of the Communications Strategy. However we will monitor activity where it is cost effective to do so, including:

- a. Google analytics to monitor traffic to the website and facebook page
- b. Number of people attending meetings and events
- c. Informal feedback from local residents

APPENDIX 1: Communication hierarchy

Category	Examples	Number of residents affected	Level of interest	Channels
1: Statutory information which must be shared	AGAR reports, financial information, agendas and minutes)	High	Low	Website, notice boards
2: Information about the Parish Council, what it does and how it benefits the community	Amenities, public representation, grant scheme etc – see para 3b above	High	Low	Website, newsletter
3. Signposting to services provided by others	Leeds City Council (highways etc), West Yorkshire Police (crime reduction etc)	High	Medium	Website, newsletter, word of mouth
4: Information about Parish Council projects	Playground refurbishment, allotments	Variable – e.g. playground refurbishment affects only parents and children	High	Website; PC facebook, partner facebook sites, newsletter, noticeboards
5: Major developments affecting large numbers of residents	Road closures, major developments	High	High	Website; PC facebook, newsletter, noticeboards; external social media; public meetings (arranged by PC or others)