

**EASTWICK AND
GILSTON PARISH
COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
POLICY 2015**

**ADOPTED ON
TO BE REVIEWED**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY 2015

Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council intends to have meaningful engagement and collaboration with the community as part of its working practice.

VISION STATEMENT

“EASTWICK AND GILSTON IS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, A VIBRANT PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.”

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

| Our Key Objective | What we are going to do to achieve our objectives. |
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| To Strengthen Partnerships | <p>Work proactively to strengthen and improve working relationships with our partners; statutory bodies, organisations, local business and voluntary groups.</p> <p>Through proactive networking and Parish Council representatives, encourage partners to approach the Parish Council with clear, well thought out constructive ideas which will benefit all sections of the community and on which there can be joint working.</p> |
| To promote communication at all levels | <p>Publicise the work of the Parish Council through its website, newsletters and press releases.</p> <p>Give the public the opportunity to ask questions at all of its public meetings.</p> <p>Encourage public feedback, both positive and ideas for development, by visiting the Parish Council Offices, on the website and during public participation at Council meetings. By including community through questionnaires, by staff and councillors canvassing opinion and by any method which is relevant to the subject being considered.</p> |
| To Manage the Council’s resources wisely | <p>Have good financial control through legal procedures and quality auditing to ensure that resources are spent on the needs of the community.</p> <p>Focus resources on what matters to our community.</p> <p>Attain maximum benefit from management of the Council’s assets.</p> |
| To promote a Sustainable community | <p>Acknowledge the diversity of what heritage means to Eastwick and Gilston and seek to maintain this through active engagement in the ongoing review of the Design Statement.</p> <p>Encourage ways in which our community can</p> |

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| | <p>improve our environment and promote building resilience for the future, this includes being proactive in emergency planning and flood awareness.</p> <p>Work to encourage balancing the current needs of people, the economy and the environment without compromising the future. Be sensitive to our environment and contribute to a high quality of life.</p> <p>Promote safety and inclusion, opportunities and good services for all.</p> <p>Work wherever possible with the business community to sustain economic vibrancy.</p> |
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DEFINING THE COMMUNITY

Eastwick and Gilston’s community is all of those people living and working within the Parish boundary, including local groups and organisations and partner organisations.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE COMMUNITY

Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council will make available to the community, information relating to who we are and what we do, what we spend and how we spend it, what our priorities are and how we are doing, how we make decisions, our policies and procedures, lists and registers and the services we offer. The information that can be provided is detailed in the model publications scheme originally adopted by the Parish Council on which is published on the Parish Council website and is available in hard copy by contacting the Parish Clerk, 9 Church Cottages, Gilston CM20 2RH; telephone 01279 411646.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

All Parish Council meetings given an opportunity for questions to be asked during the first fifteen minutes. Use of digital media to record meetings is not allowed. Separate arrangements are in place to protect those who may not wish to be recorded. The Parish council works in partnership with community organisations, the business sector and voluntary organisations to enable wider community involvements. The Council recognises that there are residents who may have specific needs or less chance than other to get involved such as the elderly, young people, those who are based rurally without transport etc, and will seek to use different ways in which to promote social inclusion. This could include having a presence at local events, ensuring regular information on what we are doing is provided through the website, on our noticeboards and press articles and through Council press releases. We aim to use clear and jargon free opportunities to engage. Feedback from community engagement will be included in Parish Council Minutes, on the website, through Annual Reports and newsletters.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

There are opportunities for individuals/groups and partner organisations to ask questions at the beginning of every public meeting of the Council. The Parish Council Clerk can be contacted by telephone every weekday after 5.00pm and contacted via the website: www.eastwickandgilston.org.uk.

INVOLVEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS

Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council will work proactively wherever possible to strengthen and improve working relationships with our partners; statutory bodies/organisations, local business and voluntary groups.

ROLE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Eastwick and Gilston Parish Council members and officers will engage with the community through partnership working, especially with statutory bodies/organisations, local business and voluntary groups. Parish Councillors will also sit as observers on local organisations on invitation.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Parish council intends to seek the views of local residents on the services that they provide, but also on wider issues which affect people living locally. Consultation may be directly through the Parish Council, its Councillors and those authorised to work on behalf of the Council. Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council have 'Statements of Community Involvement' which are available on their individual websites. Consultations initiated by other statutory bodies will be separate to the Parish Council and information gathered through them will be issued through the relevant authority.