



# NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Statement of Intent as to Community Engagement



### Aims and Objectives

Newton Parish Council is committed to high standards of engagement with its community. Our council is part of a tier of local government which belongs to, is part of and is directly accountable to its local community. Councillors play an important role as they are elected to make decisions on matters affecting Newton. We aim to make a measurable difference to the quality of life of the community we serve and to be responsive to the needs of our community. This statement sets out how we ensure the community is kept informed about and can contribute to the activities and decision-making of this council to the benefit of Newton.

### What is Our Community?

We believe our community is everyone within the boundaries of our parish including all ages, any organisations, groups and individuals within it. We also recognise that residents pay for the activities of Newton Parish Council and that visitors to our community form an important part of the vibrancy of community life. We understand that there are certain bodies that are crucial to local quality of life and we will strive to achieve excellent working relationships with these bodies including Newton organisations, the Police, neighbouring councils and other tiers of local government.

### Provision of Information to the Community

This council ensures that its main documents which reflect its decisions are published and readily available for the public to view. These documents include the agendas, minutes and annual reports of the council which are:

- Published on the council's website [www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk)
- Posted on the notice boards in Church Road and the Village Hall
- Available to view by request and prior arrangement with the Clerk, or in the 30 minutes before council meetings

The council also summarises its activities and reports them to the **East Anglian Daily Times** and the **Suffolk Free Press** and you can find our reports in the **Village Newsletter** and the **Box River News**. Newton Parish Council also produces its quarterly newsletter **Around the Green**, which is distributed to all households in the parish, which contains the Annual Report, financial accounts and budgets, notice of the outcome of the Annual Return, the precept, the council's meeting calendar, contact details and other news relating to Newton Parish Council activities..

You can view the councils Freedom of Information Publication Scheme on the council's website [www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk) and on the notice board in Church Road

### Opportunities for involvement and representations to the Council

The agenda for full council meetings contain an invitation to the public and press to attend and gives you an indication of the business to be transacted so that you can decide whether you want to attend or make your views known by some other means prior to the meeting. Meetings are the forum for business and decision-making and it is important that this business can be conducted with ample time for due consideration of issues before councillors. However, at council meetings there is also an opportunity for the public to make representations in person prior to decisions being made. We welcome representations but inevitably have to apply a time limit and if you are concerned that there might be insufficient time to make your points known, you might wish to make representations in writing prior to the meeting. We give representatives from the Police and other tiers of local government an opportunity to make reports to full council meetings. This provides the



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public and councillors with more information and an opportunity to ask questions on matters of interest to them.

The council will also call an annual meeting of the parish of Newton on a day falling between 1 March and 1 June inclusive. This is your meeting and you will have an opportunity to hear from many community organisations and to ask them questions. It is also possible to raise matters of concern to the community.

### **Involvement in Partnerships**

The council has representation on the Newton Green Trust and the Village Hall Management Committee and attends many meetings of bodies which make decisions affecting the local community. Information obtained from these meetings is reported to full council meetings.

### **Role of councillors**

Councillors are the decision-makers of the council. The contact details for all councillors are available from the clerk and are also published on the council's website [www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk) the notice boards in Church Road and the Village Hall and in the council's newsletter ***Around the Green***. Councillors also hold the Clerk to account. Councillors welcome contact with members of the public, endeavour to be available immediately prior to council meeting for anybody who wishes to speak with them and they will listen to the representations you make to them at council meetings whether you attend in person, ask another person to raise matters for you or provide your comments in writing.

The contact details for the Clerk to the council are published on the council's website [www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk) the notice boards in Church Road and the Village Hall and in the council's newsletter ***Around the Green***. The Clerk is the Proper Officer of the council and is the appropriate contact in most cases for raising matters with or requesting information from the council.

Please feel free to contact to contact the Clerk for more information on anything in this Statement.

### **Specific Areas for Community Involvement**

In some circumstances, we also provide additional information sheets and/or provide additional public meetings in the event that exceptional issues arise which are of particular interest to the community. We envisage that these might include plans for significant planning development, exceptional spending plans and any emergency situations that arise. We will also hold public meetings in our ongoing communication with residents on the Parish Plan requirements and the dedicated meetings for young people to give their views on village life.

#### **Contact details for the council are:**

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| Address   | Cragston, Sudbury Road, Newton, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0QH                    |
| Telephone | 01787 375085   |
| Email     | <a href="mailto:dave.crimmin@btinternet.com">dave.crimmin@btinternet.com</a> |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk">www.newton.suffolk.gov.uk</a>     |

**Adopted at the Newton Parish Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009 (Minute 09/ )**