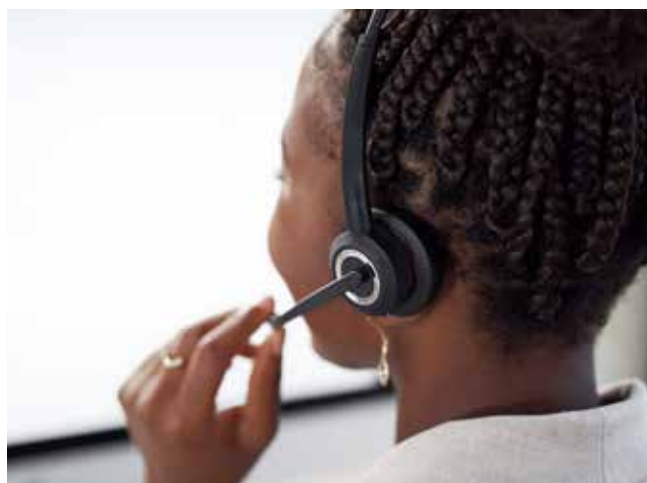




Broxtowe
Borough
COUNCIL

Communications and Engagement Strategy

2026 -2028



“Broxtowe...a greener, safer, healthier Borough,
where everyone prospers.”

Introduction

In Broxtowe, communicating and engaging with residents, businesses, community groups, employees and other stakeholders remains at the key to the Council's work.

Since our last Communications and Engagement Strategy, communications activity has enabled us to inform, engage and collaborate with our community about major transformation projects like the £21m Stapleford Towns Fund and the £16.5m Kimberley Means Business project. It has helped us to change how people recycle and the action we all take against climate change. It has supported increased visitors to our annual events programme and heritage assets like the D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum, giving residents opportunities to connect with others and improve their wellbeing. It has facilitated improvements to how well informed our employees feel about Council initiatives and the changes impacting them and it has helped us highlight the work that goes on in our community and voluntary groups each day.

This strategic refresh is focused on open, accessible, inclusive and meaningful engagement with the communities we serve. It recognises that during times of change and innovation, clear communication matters more than ever.

It also recognises that promoting the delivery of our investment in the local area through housing

building, regeneration, environmental sustainability, health and leisure will remain just as important through any transition.

Our communications objectives remain the same, but this strategy refreshes our delivery methods towards stronger resident insight, more authentic storytelling, more hyperlocal and tailored content and preparedness for transformation.

Now, at a time of significant change for local government, ensuring that communications is not just information sharing, but a tool to help us strengthen relationships and ensure residents feel informed, listened to and involved, has never been more important.

By improving how we engage with residents, partners, businesses, employees, and stakeholders, we can make better decisions together and ensure that all voices have the opportunity to be heard.



Councillor Greg Marshall,
*Deputy Leader
and Portfolio
Holder for
Resources and
Personnel Policy*

Scope

Communications is central to the Council, helping to keep people informed about the services that matter to them, supporting business transformation, behaviour change and place branding and improving our reputation.

Approach

A strategic and proactive approach will ensure that internal and external communications is embedded into every programme, project and change from the beginning, helping to deliver outcomes which are aligned to the Corporate Plan and demonstrating impact.

In the current climate of major local government transformation, collaboration with partner organisations will be an essential component of our work, as will supporting change management through our employee engagement activity.

To ensure that ongoing delivery of our existing strategic priorities remains a priority, the work

programme will reflect both Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) activities and business as usual activities. Strategy actions have been developed to be easily transferrable into any new organisation.

When required and when resources allow, we will consider commissioning professional expertise to support communications activities for core projects.

All communications will operate within legal boundaries, the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Government Publicity (2011), The Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018 and using a mixture of digital and non-digital channels as appropriate.

The strategy has been developed following consultation with key stakeholders including community groups, employees, Elected Members and residents.



It's GREAT values are:

- **G**oing the extra mile - a strong, caring focus on the needs of all communities
- **R**eady for change - innovation and readiness for change
- **E**mployees - valuing employees and enabling the active involvement of everyone
- **A**lways improving - continuous improvement and delivering value for money
- **T**ransparent - integrity and professional competence

Alignment to the Corporate Plan, Vision and Values

The Communications and Engagement Strategy supports the Council's vision and Corporate Plan by telling the story of what we do, why we do it and how we need to adapt to the challenges we face.

We will focus our efforts on communicating how the Council is delivering on those objectives and on projects which fall under them.

The Council's vision is:

"Broxtowe...a greener, safer, healthier Borough, where everyone prospers."

Its priorities are:

- **Housing - A good quality home for everyone.**
Supported projects: Housing Delivery Plan, Housing Improvement Plan.
- **Business Growth - Invest in our towns and our people.**
Supported projects: Town Centre Investment projects, Local Plan.
- **Environment – Protect the environment for the future.**
Supported Projects: Climate Change, Simpler Recycling, Pride in Parks.
- **Health - Support people to live well.**
Supported Projects: Bramcote Leisure Centre refurbishment, Broxtowe Youth Mayor and engagement, Cultural Services projects and events.
- **Community Safety - Healthy and supported communities.**
Supported Projects: No Place For Hate and community cohesion initiatives.

Services in the Council's Resources Portfolio will also be supported including: Budget Consultation, Elections, Corporate Services and Emergency Plans.

Stakeholders

- Residents and service users
- Employees
- Elected Members
- MPs
- Partner bodies and organisations
- Business community

- Potential investors
- The media
- Local groups and forums
- Civic Dignitaries
- Influencers

Channels



Context

A number of facts and figures have helped shape the strategy.

News and Technology

The world is changing and the facts and figures below have helped shape the Council's communications approach. Digital first is the default but traditional methods such as print and face to face engagement will continue to play an important part for those who aren't online.

98% of UK adults use the internet at home and **95%** use a smartphone.

89% of internet users use social media.

97% for 16-24 year olds and 68% for people aged 75 and over.

82% of 16-24 year olds use social media for video.

19% of people read print newspapers for news, 70% read their news online, 68% watch it on demand TV and 63% watch it on broadcast TV.

56%

of social media users have seen misleading or fake news.

54% of adults use AI.

In 2025/26:

879,735 online transactions were made on the website and there were 12,732 online and automated telephone payments.



The Communications Team issued **143 press releases**, responded to **94 press enquiries**, issued **75 internal newsletters**, **188 external newsletters** and created **30 videos**.

14,658 responses to consultations were received and over 3,000 people took part in engagement events. The Council now regularly engages with over 350 groups on its stakeholder map.

Communications channels

The Council has:



13,084
Facebook followers



7,911
X followers



429
YouTube subscribers



2,298
LinkedIn followers



31,862
subscribers to the email me services and a 68% engagement rate.

The weekly employee briefing has an 88% engagement rate.

Feedback

The most preferred way to contact the Council was by email, followed by web and by phone.



Budget Consultation 2025

60% residents very satisfied or satisfied with the way in which the Council delivers services – the national average is 51%.

72% residents very satisfied or satisfied with their local area as a place to live – this is equal to the national average.

70% residents feel the Council listens to them.



Local Government Reorganisation

Whilst the LGR programme is currently paused, any reorganisation which does proceed will require effective communication and engagement to ensure a successful transition. Preparedness will help build understanding, confidence and trust among employees, residents, Elected Members, partners and other stakeholders.



In the most recent Employee Survey:

93% were aware of the values.

81% were aware of the Council's vision and long-term values.

72% felt informed.

88% understood how the Council's vision and values relate to the work they do.

Sources

Local Government Association's Local Government customer satisfaction survey 2025
OfCom News Consumption in the UK 2025
OfCom Adult media use and attitudes 2026

Achievements 2023-2026



Digital

Continuous growth of the Council's digital channels, providing a quick and easy way to communicate and engage with residents:



Facebook – from 7,084 to 13,084 ↑ 84%



LinkedIn – 805 to 2,298 ↑ 185%



YouTube – 195 to 429 ↑ 120%



Email Me – 26,343 to 31,863 ↑ 21%

- Embedded video as part of the Council's business as usual channels, with posted videos regularly reaching over 10,000 views per video.
- Reached over 1 million people each year with our social media posts.
- Continued to increase annual online transactions to 879,735 in 2025/26.
- Introduced a new social media framework to guide decision making around social media messages which may be hateful or abusive.

Employee Engagement

- Increased the number of face-to-face engagement opportunities and online roadshow events with Senior Management including an ongoing programme of GMT Question Time sessions and LGR Roadshows.
- Increased the percentage of employees who feel informed by 10%, from 62% to 72%.
- Delivered communications activity which has helped increase the percentage of employees who feel change is managed effectively by 21%, from 46% to 67%.
- 93% of employees are now aware of the values (↑3%), 81% are aware of the Council's vision and long term goals (↑ 5%) and 88%

understand how the Council's vision and values relate to the work they do (↑7%).

- Designed and delivered 12 training sessions and resources for employees and Elected Members to strengthen their communications skills as part of their roles.

Awards

Communications and engagement work undertaken in partnership with an external communications agency for the Stapleford Towns Fund project won Gold for 'Best Not For Profit' campaign in the CIPR Midlands Awards.

³ Granicus 2019 Public Sector Engagement Report

Direct Engagement

- Increased the number of direct engagement opportunities with residents and stakeholders, including face to face events on the Corporate Plan (63 attendees) and LGR (100 attendees), which also included a direct mail out to all households which was responded to by 12,507 residents.
- Completed a stakeholder mapping exercise and established a more dynamic approach to stakeholder engagement to adapt communications messages and channels to individual and hard to reach groups. There are now 350 community, voluntary and partner organisations on the map.
- Adopted a new co-production model for the Disability Forum to enhance trust and create more person-centred outcomes.
- Increased the number of responses Council consultations such as the budget consultation receive from around 600 to over 1,200. The LGA recommends a minimum sample size of 500 – 1,000 respondents to effectively represent overall views and allow for demographic analysis.
- Introduced a Mayor's voluntary award scheme to celebrate the contributions of local people in the community.

Emergencies and events of national significance

- Support emergency response for incidents including Storm Babet.
- Delivered timely and appropriate communications and civic activities as part of Operation London Bridge.

Campaigns

- Developed and delivered a campaign to launch the Council's Corporate Plan 2024-28.
- Helped bring the Council's portfolio of investment projects to life, through multi-channel communications and engagement activity. This has included Stapleford Towns Fund, Kimberley Means Business, UKSPF funding, Climate Change and Housing Delivery.
- Produced a recycling campaign featuring employees from the Refuse Team to encourage residents to 'recycle it right.' The campaign attracted over 95k views and supported a reduction in the contamination rate from 18.5% to 14.1%.
- Developed a new approach to marketing the Council's annual events programme and the D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum which has supported a 27% increase in event attendance to over 31,000 and a 59% increase in visitors to our highest recorded visitor figure of 5,833 in 2025/26.
- Launched a tourism campaign to promote the Borough as a local, national and international tourist destination, supporting local heritage assets and economic growth.
- Introduced a regular programme of You Said, We Did communications to ensure residents feel that their voices have been heard and ideas acted upon.
- Secured local and national press coverage for Council initiatives including Stapleford Towns Fund, High Street Rental Auctions and the D.H. Lawrence Birthplace Museum.

Strategic Objectives

1

BRING COUNCIL PRIORITIES TO LIFE

Develop a compelling and engaging narrative to tell the story of what the Council is working to achieve for local people.

2

EMPOWER EMPLOYEES TO TELL OUR STORY

Provide the right opportunities and tools to empower employees to actively participate in delivering our vision and values and act as ambassadors for the Council.

3

LISTEN, RESPOND AND COLLABORATE

Listen and respond to local people and work with them to achieve our vision for Broxtowe.

4

BUILD EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORMS

Communicate and engage with the right people, in the right way, using the right channels.

Measure of success

- Employee survey results
- Service take up
- Resident satisfaction
- Behaviour change
- Digital channel usage
- Number of direct engagements

Risks

- Misinformation and distrust
- Resource constraints
- Uncertainty of LGR
- Pace of development for digital communications channels
- Emergency communications

Bringing Council priorities to life

Develop a compelling and engaging narrative to tell the story of what the Council is working to achieve for local people.

Residents increasingly want to hear about visible outcomes, so a focus on hyper-local content will help us shift our narrative from simply promoting services, to demonstrating impact and value.

User generated content and human-interest stories in a range of formats will help add authenticity to corporate messages and help build trust, which will become increasingly important during major transformation.

Actions

- 1** Pilot hyperlocal communications, including ward-level updates and ‘what’s happening near you’ content featuring residents, employees, community champions and local places.
- 2** Introduce more visible impact reporting, such as ‘Your Council in Action’ updates, facts and figures, infographics and before and after case studies.



Empower Employees To Tell Our Story

Provide the right opportunities and tools to empower employees to actively participate in delivering our vision and values and act as ambassador for the Council.

Ensuring employees are well-informed helps encourage employee advocacy and confidence in the Council and its values. Many employees are also local residents who can shape and influence perceptions of the Council through their interactions with family, friends and the communities in which they live.

In the current time of transformation, moving from internal updates to continuous dialogue with employees will be at the forefront, helping to foster a culture where employees feel supported and valued at a time of upheaval and providing organisational resilience.

Actions

Business as usual

- 1 Introduce a simple system for submitting internal stories about success, service improvements, resident feedback, photos and project updates.
- 2 Review communications approaches for frontline employees who are not desk based, such as mobile briefings, short video updates and quick-read leadership summaries.
- 3 Equip employees and Elected Members with more ready-made digital content packs to help them share messages within their communities.
- 4 Continue to develop the annual programme of employee roadshows and GMT Question Time sessions to ensure they stay useful and relevant.



Listen, respond and collaborate

Listen and respond to local people and work with them to achieve our vision for Broxtowe.

Consultation has been and will continue to be an important part of Council communications and decision making. As relationships are strengthened with residents and stakeholders, our model will also look at ways to achieve a continuous engagement and co-production model.

This will include investing our time in fostering working relationships with community leaders and groups and reviewing the options residents have to engage with and feedback to us in an accessible, inclusive way.

Actions

- 1** Consider options for pop up engagement in community spaces such as markets, supermarkets and at events to help reach residents who we are not currently engaged with.
- 2** Improve feedback loops with increased You Said, We Did content, which also explains what will happen next.
- 3** Work with the Broxtowe Youth Mayor, partners and stakeholder groups to increase engagement with young people.
- 4** Develop a clear, visible narrative which supports community cohesion and promotes and celebrates diversity.



Build effective communications platforms

Communicate and engage with the right people, in the right way, using the right channels.

Having effective communications platforms will be the building blocks of transformation activity over the coming years.

These platforms can only succeed if communications is considered a must have rather than an optional extra, so work will be undertaken to ensure there is an aligned approach to communications across the authority.

The focus will also shift towards data-led communications, bringing together insight from across the Council and our stakeholders to inform the content of our communications, how these are shared and lessons learned for future activity.

Actions

1

Improve processes for compiling consultation and demographic data across the Council.

2

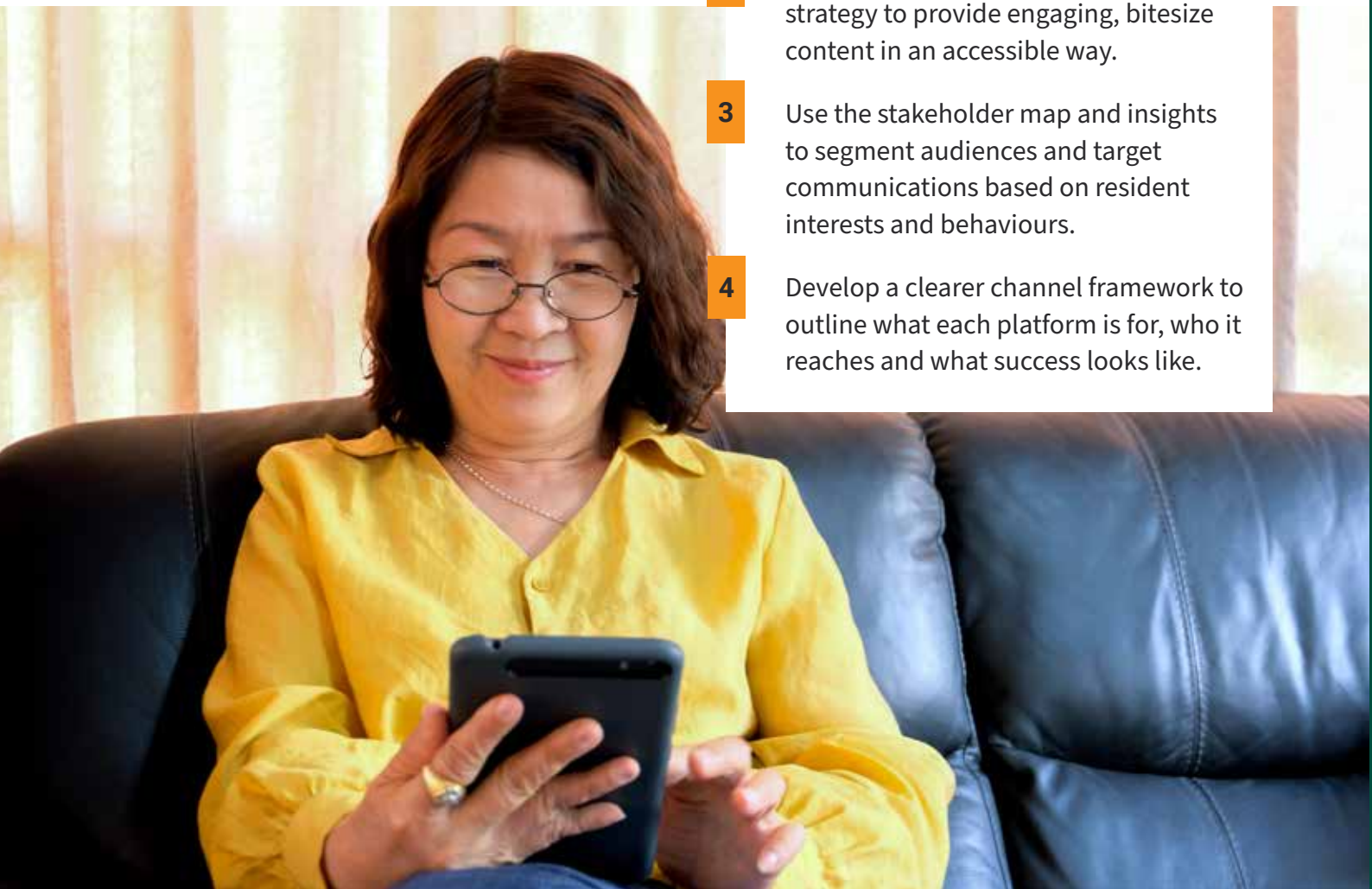
Create a stronger short-form video strategy to provide engaging, bitesize content in an accessible way.

3

Use the stakeholder map and insights to segment audiences and target communications based on resident interests and behaviours.

4

Develop a clearer channel framework to outline what each platform is for, who it reaches and what success looks like.



Local Government Reorganisation

Communications is an enabler of any successful change programme and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is no exception.

Whilst the LGR programme is currently paused, appropriate communications and engagement activity will continue to support employees, residents, Elected Members and other stakeholders during the on going period of uncertainty.

The actions outline how the Council will consult, communicate and engage through any reorganisation which does take place.

A proactive approach will ensure that the Council is prepared to undertake these actions if required.

Actions

- 1** Work with partners to communicate in an effective, consistent and engaging way about the future of local government, providing reassurance to residents and employees, explaining continuity of services, correcting misinformation and simplifying complex issues.
- 2** Design an approach to allow employees, Elected Members and local people to celebrate and reflect on the Council, the role it has played in local life and look forward to the future.
- 3** Ensure appropriate feedback arrangements are in place across the Council and as part of LGR workstreams to ensure service data, planning and insights are shared to shape future communications activity.
- 4** Explore the use AI-assisted tools to support content creation of FAQs, analytics and readability, whilst maintaining transparency and human oversight.
- 5** Use a range of accessible face-to-face and digital communications channels to ensure continuous listening, engaging and responding with residents, employees and Elected Members throughout the LGR process.
- 6** Refresh the Employee Forum and its scope to support two-way communications, messaging testing and sentiment analysis, particularly during LGR.
- 7** Adopt an employee first approach to LGR communications to ensure clear and timely updates using a blend of face to face and digital engagement options.
- 8** Providing toolkits and resources to equip managers to communicate consistently and confidently through the transition phase of LGR.
- 9** Support proactive communications and engagement activity around elections to Shadow Councils.

**This document is
available in large
print upon request.**

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