

# Vision and Principles

## Our principles for involving communities

As a minimum, we will comply with any legislation that is currently in force or comes into force in the future. This includes any national legislation in an emergency situation, such as the coronavirus pandemic.

We will tailor our approach where needed for specific issues, audiences and the scale of proposals.

Our main principles of involving the various communities in the planning process are set out below:

- encouraging our communities to **contribute** by providing opportunities to put their ideas forward where there is scope to influence our decisions;
- we will be **transparent** and clear about the planning process, what is being proposed and the scope to influence;
- we will use a **variety of methods** to make it easier for people to take part in the planning process, this will be appropriate for the subject being consulted upon;
- we will design engagement exercises to be **accessible**;
- we will encourage better **inclusion** of everyone affected by a planning matter, making the effort to include “hard to reach” groups such as young people, ethnic minorities, disabled people, Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
- we will **make information available** that is appropriate and understandable, raise awareness of planning matters and ensure people are kept up to date. All data stored and published will be compliant with our data protection policy;
- we will analyse carefully and, where appropriate, **provide clear feedback** to participants after an engagement exercise within a published timescale. This will include changes we have made as a result of comments;
- we will protect Buckinghamshire’s residents by **redacting** sensitive information before it is made public, such as personal addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and dates of birth. Where we are able to we will also redact statements which we consider may cause offence to the wider community; and
- we will encourage **acceptable representations** (comments), by only accepting comments that are relevant to the subject being consulted on. No profanities, statements inciting hate, racism, religious bigotry, defamatory comments towards groups or individuals or any such statements that can be considered offensive to any members of society will be accepted. If your representation is rejected, you will be notified of the reason for this once it has been processed.

## Your Council, Your Way

We want residents to be at the heart of what we do. There are lots of different ways for people to get involved in shaping the new Council's knowledge, plans, policies and planning decisions. We have sought to include all of these in our Statement of Community Involvement.

More information on our values and how these are delivered through our services can be found in the Council's [Corporate Plan](#).

## Equalities

As required by [law](#), this document has been drafted to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups.

This SCI has also used the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#).

More detail on the Council's equalities commitment is set out in the Council's [Corporate Plan](#).

## Digital

Buckinghamshire Council is committed to delivering a digital planning service. We are working with the MHCLG and other authorities to improve our service through digital innovation and technology, including the use of emerging digital tools. With these tools, we hope to improve community engagement while making planning more accessible, transparent, and efficient.