

Communications Strategy 2024-27

Daniel Whitmarsh, Communication and Consultation Manager

Our Communications Strategy sets out, at a **high level**, our approach to all our communication activities.

It includes a clear **set principles** to guide engagement with our stakeholders – **communities, staff, Members** and **the media** to meet our communications **objectives and priorities**:

- Promote our services and achievements
- Build trust with our communities
- Safeguard our reputation.

The Communication Strategy is based on **six** overarching principles to support the delivery of the Council's priorities.

1. Promote and uphold our **reputation** as a **trusted, effective, efficient** and **innovative** organisation that is **focused on the public** and their needs.

2. Ensure all communication and engagement activities are **consistent** and **co-ordinated** across **all channels**.

3. **Promote** the Sevenoaks District as a **great place** for doing business, to live, work and visit.

4. Increase opportunities for people to **engage with us** on issues and services that affect them.

5. Coordinate **internal communications** with Staff and Elected Members.

6. Ensure our **digital communications** develop in line with advancing technology, social changes and customer needs.

The Strategy is supported by:

- Our **Council brand guide**
- **Publicity and media relations guidelines**
- Our **Paid-for advertising policy**
- The **Council Plan**

The day-to-day delivery of the Strategy is led by the Council's **Communications Team**, with the support of the entire organisation – staff and Members

The Strategy is put into practice by....

- Working to an **Annual Communications Action Plan** (considered by the Portfolio Holder for Communications), which includes our key activities and campaigns
- Individual **campaign plans** using the OASIS methodology
- A rolling, **daily communications plan** - a fairly detailed list, including national days and key events and activities

Communications Strategy

Where possible, we use a campaign approach using the OASIS framework...



Communications Strategy

We also have an annual campaign evaluation log...

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Campaign name	Dates active	Campaign sponsor	Objectives	Evaluation	Was the campaign a success, were the objectives met?	Learning
1	Local Plan - reg 18 consultation (part 2)	November 2023 to January 2024	Hannah Gooden	Achieve at least 2,000 individual responses. Produce short video. Promote over organic social media, In Shape feature, media briefings with local news outlets. Significant website updates. Planning policy lead on other comms - email to subscribers, posters and survey.	Around 5,300 responses • 11 Facebook posts - seen by 17,728 people • 11 X (Twitter) posts - seen by 4,620 people • YouTube video - 2.8k views • Promoted on the homepage of the Council website linking to a dedicated webpage. The page received 7,915 views from 23 November to 11 January	Yes Yes	Member feedback - the In Shape article could have been earlier in the magazine, possibly the lead story. Encourage more Members to share details of the consultation by sharing social media posts. Consider providing Members with materials they could share?
10	'Silver Bells' Christmas party	December 2023	Abbi Caine	Recruit 60 people to event. Promote over Website page News release Organic social media Poster Communication for partners	All 60 spaces booked but 9 people dropped out shortly before event so not all spaces were taken.	Yes Yes	Business team to have a contingency list?
11	Swanley Meeting Point - general	Ongoing	Emily Haswell	Sell office space at The Meeting Point Achieve 80% occupancy by end of year 3 (March 2026) Raise awareness of the service Engage with community groups Increase social media presence and following	Ongoing Social media account (as of 27 Feb 2024) Facebook - 122 followers (and 87 likes) 20,869 post reach in last 28 days X - 59 followers	Ongoing	Should have started the marketing earlier.

Three examples of our
communications plans....

Local Plan – Regulation 18

Activities shared between Planning Policy and the Communications Team

Objectives:

Communicate consultation to all communities and achieve at least 2,000 individual responses.

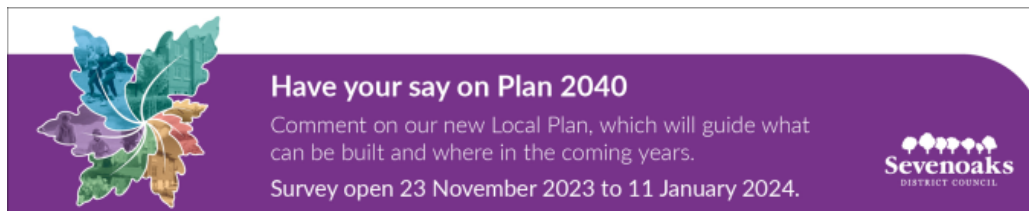
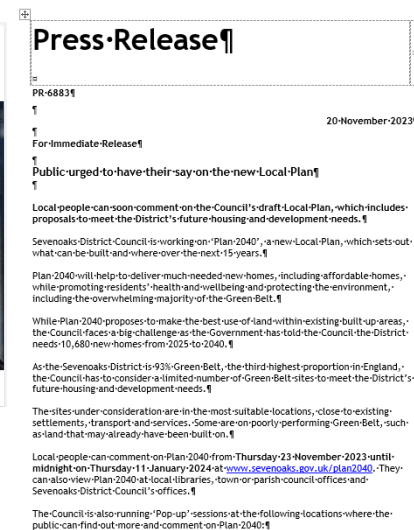
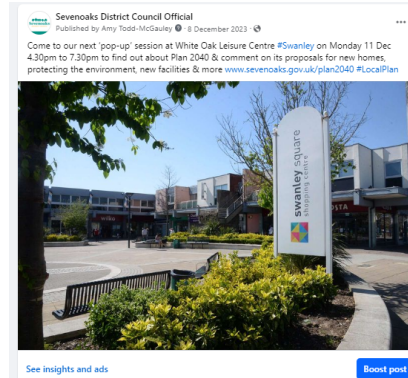
Strategy:

Your views will shape the future of the District
Be upfront about the challenges

Communications Strategy

Communications activities:

Animated video - organic social media - In Shape - media briefings - news releases - website - email newsletter for subscribers - posters - email banners and more...



Local Plan – Regulation 18

Evaluation:

- Around 5,300 responses
- 11 Facebook posts – seen by 17,728 people
- 11 X (Twitter) posts – seen by 4,620 people
- YouTube video - 2.8k views
- Promoted on the website homepage linking to a dedicated webpage that received 7,915 views
- Local media coverage – on and offline

Sevenoaks East to West Walking, Wheeling and Cycle route

Objectives:

- Communicate to people along the proposed route and other interested parties
- Achieve at least 200 consultation responses
- Explain the Council's ambitions to reduce the District's carbon emissions.

Strategy

Make it fun! Benefits of sustainable travel – health and carbon reductions. Could take some cars off the road. There's something for everyone!

Communications Strategy

Sevenoaks East to West Walking, Wheeling and Cycle route

Communications activities:

Animated video - In Shape – press release – paid for and organic social media – postcard – posters – simple but effective map.



Sevenoaks Town East to West Walking Wheeling and Cycling Route



Have your say on the SEVENOAKS TOWN East to West Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Route

We're working to deliver an exciting new route for walkers, wheelers and riders connecting the east and west of Sevenoaks town. It will provide a safe, environmentally friendly alternative to short car journeys, improving our health and air quality while cutting our carbon footprint.

To have your say, visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/walkwheelcycle by midnight on Friday 14 July 2023



You can find out more at our drop-in sessions at our Sevenoaks office in Argyle Road on Tuesday 6 June from 1pm to 4pm and Wednesday 12 July from 5pm to 8pm.



The route will provide a safe, environmentally friendly alternative for short car journeys. It will help to improve our health and air quality while cutting our carbon footprint. It will provide walkers, wheelers (people on scooters, parents with prams and wheelchair users) and riders with routes to six schools and Sevenoaks Rail station.



SEVENOAKS TOWN East to West
Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Route

To find out more and have your say, visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/walkwheelcycle by midnight on Friday 14 July 2023



You can find out more at our drop-in sessions at our Sevenoaks office in Argyle Road on Tuesday 6 June from 1pm to 4pm and Wednesday 12 July from 5pm to 8pm.



Sevenoaks East to West Walking, Wheeling and Cycle route

Evaluation:

- 490 responses
- Consultation webpage viewed 3,414 times
- Video viewed 1,540 times on YouTube
- Facebook boost – 4,902 impressions and 364 engagements
- Changes being made to proposal

Communications Strategy

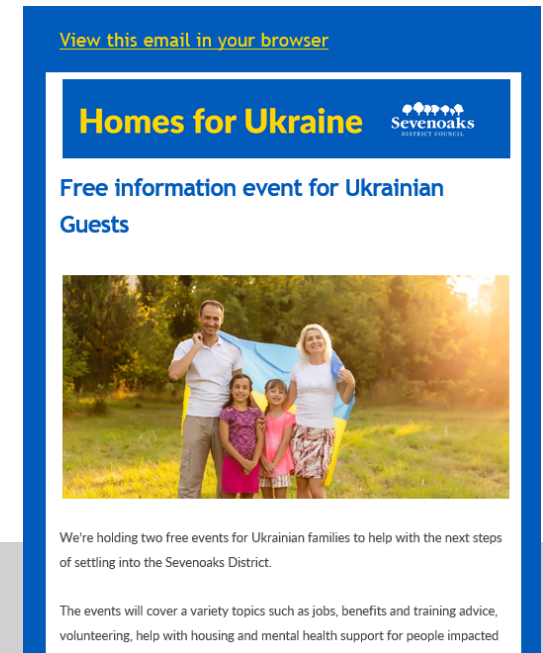
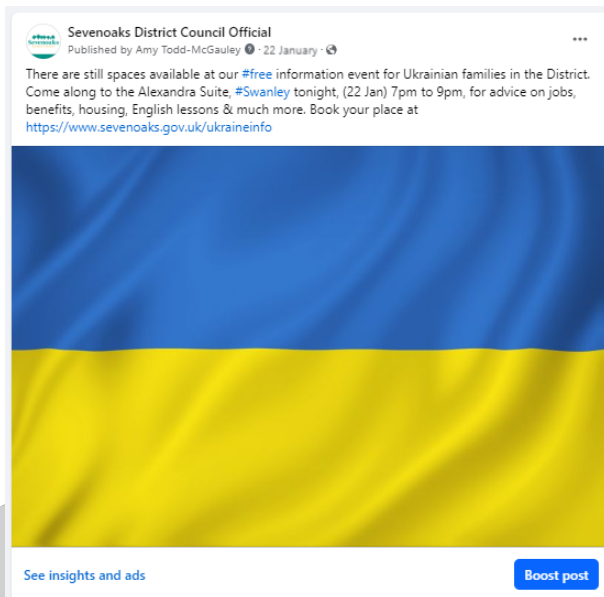
Ukrainian guests events

Objective

Recruit approx. 25 people for each of the two advice sessions

Comms activities

Email newsletter to stakeholders - organic social media - flyer - website – Eventbrite



Ukrainian guests events

Evaluation:

- Number of bookings - Sevenoaks 40 and Swanley 43
- Facebook - 14,123 impressions and 311 engagements
- X - 5,097 impressions and 89 engagements

Communications Strategy

In Shape magazine

Evaluated through our residents' survey
LGA Inform methodology

Views on In Shape	% satisfied
Easy to read	94%
Informs me of Council news / activities I have not previously heard about	88%
Is colourful and well produced	88%
Tells me about the Council's future plans	90%
It keeps me informed about the Council's work and local services	90%

Time spent reading In Shape	
Up to 10 minutes	56%
More than 10 minutes	30%
Don't read it	15%

**Thank you for your
time**