

BETCHTON PARISH COUNCIL

IT POLICY

Introduction

Betchton Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all IT resources are used responsibly, securely, and effectively. This policy sets out the standards for the use of Parish Council-owned IT equipment, software, and Parish Council emails by Parish Councillors, employees, and volunteers.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who access or use the Parish Council's IT systems, including:

- Parish Councillors
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Third-party service providers (where applicable)

It covers the use of:

- Parish Council-owned computers, phones, tablets, and other electronic devices
- Email access
- Software, data, and digital services
- Remote and cloud-based systems

Acceptable Use

All users must:

- Use IT equipment and services only for Parish Council-related work and in accordance with this policy.
- Keep login credentials secure and not share passwords.
- Official correspondence must be sent and received by the .gov email address.
- Ensure sensitive or confidential data is handled appropriately and securely.
- Report suspected data breaches, malware, or IT issues immediately.

Unacceptable Use

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Using Parish Council IT systems for personal gain, illegal activities, or political campaigning.
- Accessing, storing, or sharing offensive, abusive, or inappropriate content.
- Installing unauthorised software or altering system settings.
- Connecting unapproved personal devices to Parish Council networks without prior consent.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

All users must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Email

- Parish Council email addresses must be used solely for Parish Council business.

Parish Council Devices - Security and Updates

- Users must not disable or bypass antivirus or security settings.
- Parish Council devices must be kept up to date with security patches and software updates.
- Lost or stolen devices must be reported immediately.

Remote Working

When working remotely:

- Maintain confidentiality, especially in shared or public spaces.

Monitoring and Compliance

- Serious breaches of this Policy may be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if significant changes occur in technology, legislation, or Parish Council operations.