

Bredhurst Parish Council
IT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy



Adopted: June 2026

Next Review: May 2028

This policy sets out the acceptable use of Bredhurst Parish Council IT systems, email, internet access and electronic communications by councillors, employees and authorised users.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect Council information and systems;
- ensure compliance with GDPR and data protection legislation;
- promote safe and responsible use of technology;
- reduce cyber security risks.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Parish councillors;
- employees;
- contractors and volunteers using Council systems or devices.

3. Acceptable Use

Council IT equipment and internet access must be used primarily for official Council business.

Users must:

- act professionally and responsibly;
- comply with data protection requirements;
- avoid accessing inappropriate or unlawful material;
- not install unauthorised software.

4. Email Usage

Council email accounts should be used for Council business wherever possible.

Users should:

- maintain professional standards in communications;
- avoid opening suspicious attachments or links;
- not send offensive or inappropriate content;
- report phishing or scam emails to the Clerk.

5. Passwords and Security

Users must:

- use strong passwords and two factor authentication where possible;
- keep passwords confidential;
- not share login credentials;
- lock devices when unattended;
- report lost or stolen devices immediately.

6. Data Protection

Personal data must only be accessed or shared where necessary for Council duties.

Users must comply with:

- UK GDPR;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- the Council's Data Protection Policy.

7. Personal Devices

Where personal devices are used for Council business, users must ensure:

- devices are password protected;
- software is kept updated;
- Council information is stored securely.

8. Social Media and Internet Use

Users must not:

- post confidential Council information online;
- make defamatory or offensive comments;
- present personal opinions as official Council views unless authorised.

9. Monitoring and Misuse

The Council reserves the right to investigate misuse of its IT systems.

Serious breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action or withdrawal of access.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required.