

# ANTINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL IT POLICY

Antingham Parish Council recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who use the Parish Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

## **Acceptable use of IT resources and email**

At the current time Councillors use their own private/personal email accounts however, in the longer term these will be upgraded so that full adherence to Data Protection Act, GDPR and FOI requests can be complied with.

Parish Council IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

## **Device and software usage**

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by the Parish Council for work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

## **Data management and security**

All sensitive and confidential parish council data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

## **Email communication**

Email accounts provided by the parish council are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

### **Password and account security**

Parish council users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security. A copy of all passwords is held by the Chair to the council in a sealed envelope, only to be accessed should the clerk be incapacitated.

### **Mobile devices**

Mobile devices provided by the parish council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication.

### **Email monitoring**

The parish council reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

Retention and archiving Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

### **Reporting security incidents**

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the Clerk and Chair.

### **Training and awareness**

The parish council will provide any necessary training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, technology updates, email security and best practices.

### **Compliance and consequences**

Breach of this IT and Email Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate.

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

### **Contacts**

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the clerk.

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of the parish council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Antingham Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

Adopted February 2026 To be reviewed March 2029