

HOPE WITH ASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Information Technology Policy

Reviewed and Adopted:

Date: 9th February 2026

Parish Council Minute: 185/25.1

1. Introduction

Hope with Aston 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.

2. Scope

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

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Hope with Aston 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.

Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

4. Device and software usage

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

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

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Hope with Aston 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.

6. Remote working

All Hope with Aston Parish Council work is carried out remotely. Internet connections used should be password protected and used responsibly.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by Hope with Aston 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.

Caution should be taken with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Sources should be verified before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

Hope with Aston 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.

9. Mobile devices

Mobile devices provided by Hope with Aston Parish Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication.

10. Email monitoring

Hope with Aston 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.

11. Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Emails will be regularly reviewed and deleted where appropriate to maintain an organised inbox.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the Clerk for investigation and resolution. If the breach is by the Clerk it should be reported to the Chair.

13 Training and awareness

Hope with Aston Parish Council will provide training and resources as required to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates.

14. Compliance and consequences

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

15. Contacts

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

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