



Savernake Parish Council

IT Policy

Introduction

Savernake 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 (**users**). The policy aims to safeguard both the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive information, and ensure the council's compliance with legal obligations, and provide clear expectations for acceptable use of IT resources

Scope

This policy applies to all users of Savernake Parish Council's IT resources, data, and email accounts. Savernake Parish Council does not provide hardware such as computers or phones, so all users will be using private devices, but must adhere to this policy to maintain digital security. These requirements include:

- Using strong passwords for all accounts (preferably using a password manager).
- Downloading the latest operating system security updates.
- Using anti-virus software.

Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Savernake Parish Council email accounts are only to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Savernake Parish Council data (such as parishioners' addresses) 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. Users are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that data is securely disposed of when no longer needed.

Users must comply with all relevant legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (**GDPR**), which governs the processing of personal data. Employees and councillors must be familiar with their responsibilities under this legislation and act in accordance with the data protection principles set out in the GDPR.

Users must be careful about which Wi-Fi networks they join. Public Wi-Fi networks in coffee shops or on trains can be targeted by hackers. Always use a trusted internet connection, which is password protected when carrying out official business.

Email communication

Email accounts provided by Savernake 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.

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Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links. Do not download and open anything if the source is unclear

Password and account security

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.

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 IT administrator, Nikki Boutal, for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

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 annually 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 Nikki Boutal.

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Savernake Parish Council's IT and email systems.

By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Savernake Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.