

# DATCHET PARISH COUNCIL



## Freedom of Information Policy

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Next Review Date (Review every 3 years or sooner should legislation dictate.)	
Version 1	

Document Revised on	Revision Tracking



## 1. Introduction

Datchet Parish Council is committed to openness, transparency and accountability. This policy explains how the Council meets its obligations under:

- The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)
- The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR (where requests involve personal data)

The Council publishes a significant amount of information proactively through its Model Publication Scheme, which should be consulted before submitting a request.

## 2. Scope of the Freedom of Information Act

Under FOIA, any person has the right to:

- Request information held by the Council
- Be informed whether the Council holds that information
- Receive the information (unless an exemption applies)

Requests do not need to state why the information is sought.

## 3. How to Make a Request

Requests for information under FOIA must:

- Be in writing (email or letter)
- Include a name and contact address
- Describe the information requested

Requests should be sent to:

The Clerk  
Datchet Parish Council  
1 Allen Way, Datchet, SL3 9HR  
Email: [clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Requests for environmental information may be made verbally, but written requests are encouraged for clarity.

## 4. Publication Scheme

The Council maintains a Model Publication Scheme, approved by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

This sets out the information the Council routinely publishes and how it can be accessed.



Where information is already published, FOIA does not require the Council to provide it again.

## 5. Responding to Requests

The Council will:

- Acknowledge and log all requests
- Respond within **20 working days**
- Provide the information unless an exemption applies
- Explain any refusal and cite the relevant exemption
- Advise and assist applicants where requests are unclear or too broad

If a request is complex or voluminous, the Council may extend the deadline (FOIA) or apply a reasonable extension (EIR). Applicants will be informed.

## 6. Fees and Charges

Most information is provided free of charge.

Charges may apply for:

- Photocopying or printing
- Postage
- Staff time where permitted under FOIA cost limits
- Disbursements (e.g., USB drives if requested)

The Council's Schedule of Charges is published within the Model Publication Scheme.

If a fee applies, the 20-day response period pauses until payment is received.

## 7. Exemptions

FOIA contains exemptions that allow the Council to withhold information in certain circumstances, for example:

- Personal data
- Information provided in confidence
- Commercially sensitive information
- Information intended for future publication
- Legal privilege
- Health and safety



- Prejudice to law enforcement or investigations

Where an exemption applies, the Council will:

- Explain the exemption
- Provide partial information where possible
- Apply the public interest test where required

## 8. Vexatious or Repeated Requests

The Council may refuse requests that are:

- Vexatious
- Repeated without reasonable justification
- Exceed the FOIA cost limit (£450 / 18 hours of staff time)

Applicants will be informed of the reason for refusal.

## 9. Data Protection and Personal Information

Requests for personal information about the applicant are handled under the UK GDPR / Data Protection Act 2018 as a Subject Access Request, not FOIA.

The Council will provide guidance where a request falls under the wrong regime.

## 10. Complaints and Appeals

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the Council's response, they may request an internal review within 40 working days.

Internal reviews will be conducted by a member of staff or councillor not involved in the original decision, where possible.

If the applicant remains dissatisfied, they may contact:

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)  
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

## 11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.