

FLETCHING PARISH COUNCIL

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

The Freedom of Information Act (2000) came into force in January 2005. The Act applies to all public authorities, including parish councils.

Under the Act any individual is able to make a request for information, except in certain specific cases where the 'exceptions' to the duty to disclose prevail.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Fletching Parish Council complies fully with its legal duties and adheres to its aspiration to be an open and transparent organisation.

The Council will ensure that it complies with the Act by:

- Making as much information available as possible through the 'model publication scheme' that accompanies this policy and sets out:
 - The classes of information published, or intended to be published
 - The manner in which publication is, or is intended, to be made
 - Whether the information is available free of charge or if payment is required (the parish council reserves the right to waive the charges if deemed appropriate)
- Aiming to comply with the 20 working day deadline for responding to a request
- Using the 'exemptions' to the Act – the reasons not to give information out – as a last resort and implementing the public interest test to decide whether information subject to an 'exception' can be released in response to an individual's request.

The Council is not obliged to respond to vexatious or repeated requests for information.

Individual enquiries related to the Act can be made to the Information Commissioner. The Commissioner's website also provides helpful guidance and information for the public:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Information line: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745

Fax: 01625 524510

Email: casework@ico.org.uk / **Website:** <http://www.ico.org.uk/>