



CLIFFE AND CLIFFE WOODS PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

What is Freedom of Information?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) gives people a general right of access to information held by public authorities. Information held by public authorities should be available and accessible to everyone.

The act was introduced to help bring about a culture of openness within the public sector and give the public a better understanding of how authorities carry out their duties; why they make the decisions they do; and how they spend public money.

Every public authority has two main duties under the FOI act:

- to adopt and maintain a publication scheme, overseen by an independent Information Commissioner, which sets out:
 - details of information it will routinely make available;
 - how the information can be obtained;
 - whether there is any charge for it.
- to comply with all requests for the information, unless there is an exemption from disclosure. The authority normally has a maximum of 20 working days to respond to the request; however there are circumstances when this time limit can be extended.

How do I make an FOI request?

If there is something you would like to know about the Parish Council's activities, take the following steps:

- Search the Parish Council website as what you're looking for might already be [here](#)
- If you can't find the information you are seeking on the website, you can submit your request via email or via post.
- All requests must provide a valid email or postal address for us to reply to.

When you submit your request, give as much detail as possible to help us correctly identify the information you are seeking. If we do need more detail from you to identify the information, we will contact you.

Before you submit your request, we recommend that you first visit the Information Commissioners Office website.

How long does it take?

We will have 20 working days to respond. We will advise you if we are likely to need to extend the time.

Exceptions and exemptions

There are legal reasons why information may not be released to you. These are known as exceptions/exemptions. If we do not release information to you because an exception/exemptions applies we will explain why.

Requests under FIO may be refused because:

- it is a matter covered by data protection legislation
- it is available under our publication scheme
- it might be considered prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.

Charges may be made for information published under this scheme:

- a charge of £1 per sheet or per email message will be made. This covers such items as staff time for research, photocopying, postage and packing. There is no charge for items viewed via the Parish Council's website.

This policy was adopted by the Parish Council on 15/5/2025