

## **Sandford St Martin Parish Council IT Policy**

Adopted by Sandford St Martin Parish Council on 18 September 2025

### **Introduction**

Sandford St Martin 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.

All members and employees are responsible for the safety and security of Sandford St Martin Parish Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this policy Sandford St Martin Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

### **Types of Reserves**

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

### **Acceptable use of IT resources and email**

Sandford St Martin Parish Council's 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.

### **Device and software usage**

Where possible, authorised devices, software and applications will be provided by Sandford St Martin Parish Council for work-related tasks.

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

### **Data management and security**

All sensitive and confidential Sandford St Martin 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.

### **Network and internet usage**

Sandford St Martin Parish Council does not have a network.

Sandford St Martin Parish Council does not provide employees or members with internet connections.

### **Email communication**

Email accounts provided by Sandford St Martin 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.

All users must use due care and attention with regards to attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Sources must be verified before attachments are opened or links followed.

### **Password and account security**

Sandford St Martin 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.

### **Mobile devices and remote work**

Sandford St Martin Parish Council does not provide its employees or member with mobile devices.

When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if they were in a council office.

### **Email monitoring**

Sandford St Martin 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.

### **Retention and archiving**

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Users should 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 designated IT point of contact for investigation and resolution. Any email-related security incidents or breaches should be reported to the Clerk immediately.

### **Training and awareness**

Sandford St Martin Parish Council will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and members will receive regular training on email security and best practices.

### **Compliance and consequences**

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

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed and updated to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

### **Contacts**

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