

# Batheaston Parish Council

## Freedom of Information Policy



**Batheaston**  
*Where community matters*

This Policy is provided for adoption by the council at its meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

### 1. Introduction

Batheaston Parish Council ("the Council") is committed to openness and transparency in its decision-making and the services it provides.

This policy sets out how the Council complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the principles of accountability and public access to information.

The Council will:

- Make information available proactively wherever possible
- Respond promptly and fairly to requests for information
- Comply with statutory requirements and guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

### 2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All recorded information held by the Council, regardless of format
- Information created, received, or maintained by the Council
- Councillors, employees, and contractors acting on behalf of the Council

Information may include:

- Minutes, agendas and reports
- Policies and procedures
- Financial records
- Correspondence
- Electronic records

### 3. Publication Scheme

The Council adopts the ICO Model Publication Scheme for Parish Councils.

The Council will proactively publish information in the following categories:

- Who we are and what we do
- What we spend and how we spend it
- What our priorities are and how we are doing
- How we make decisions
- Our policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- Services we offer

Information is published on the Council's website where possible.

#### 4. Making a Freedom of Information Request

Requests must:

- Be made in writing (email or letter)
- Include the requester's name and contact details
- Clearly describe the information requested

Requests should be sent to:

The Clerk to Batheaston Parish Council at:

[clerk@batheaston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@batheaston-pc.gov.uk) or

60, Gloucester Road, BATH, BA1 7BN (01225-923820)

#### 5. Council Response

The Council will:

- Acknowledge requests promptly
- Respond within 20 working days of receipt
- Provide the information requested unless an exemption applies
- Explain reasons where information is withheld

Where clarification is required, the 20-day period will begin once sufficient detail is received.

#### 6. Fees and Charges

The Council may charge for:

- Printing, photocopying, and postage
- Providing information in alternative formats

Charges will be reasonable and in line with ICO guidance.

If a request exceeds the statutory cost limit, the Council may:

- Refuse the request, or
- Offer to supply information within the cost limit

## 7. Exemptions

Some information may be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. Common exemptions include:

- Personal data (covered by Data Protection legislation)
- Confidential or commercially sensitive information
- Information intended for future publication
- Legal privilege

Where exemptions apply, the Council will:

- State which exemption is being used
- Explain the reasoning (where applicable)
- Apply the public interest test where required

## 8. Environmental Information

Requests for environmental information will be handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), which may require disclosure unless specific exceptions apply.

## 9. Data Protection

Requests involving personal data will be handled in accordance with:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018

Personal data will not be disclosed where it would breach data protection principles.

## 10. Internal Review Procedure

If a requester is dissatisfied with a response, they may request an internal review.

Requests for review should:

- Be submitted within 40 working days
- Clearly state the reasons for dissatisfaction

The review will be carried out by a senior officer or councillor not involved in the original decision.

A response will normally be provided within 20 working days.

## 11. Complaints to the Information Commissioner

If the requester remains dissatisfied after the internal review, they may complain to:

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

## 12. Responsibilities

- The Council is responsible for ensuring compliance with FOIA
- The Clerk is responsible for managing requests and maintaining records
- Councillors and staff must assist in providing information when required

## 13. Records Management

The Council has a Records Retention Policy, available here: <https://www.batheaston-pc.gov.uk/policies>, which ensures that it

- Maintains accurate and up-to-date records
- Follows a records retention policy
- Ensures information can be easily retrieved.

## 14. Accessibility

The Council is committed to making information accessible. Where reasonably practicable, information will be provided:

- In alternative formats upon request
- In line with accessibility standards (including WCAG guidance)

## 15. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually, or in line with legislative or regulatory changes

Adopted by Batheaston Parish Council: \_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Last reviewed and agreed by Council:

12<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Next scheduled review:

May 2027