



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Re-Adopted: 5th May 2026

Review Date: May 2027

1. Introduction

Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council is committed to openness and transparency and complies with the **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**.

The Council has two main responsibilities under the Act:

- To maintain a **Publication Scheme**
- To respond to individual requests for information

This policy sets out how the Council meets those responsibilities.

2. Publication Scheme

The Council has adopted the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Model Publication Scheme for Local Councils**.

The Council will:

- Proactively publish information about its activities
- Maintain and regularly review published information
- Make information available via its website wherever possible

Information will be made available in alternative formats on request where reasonably practicable.

3. Classes of Information

The Council publishes information under the following classes:

- What the Council is and what it does
- What the Council spends and how
- What the Council's priorities are and how it is performing
- How the Council makes decisions
- The Council's policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- The services the Council provides

Information may be withheld where it is exempt under FOIA, including where it contains personal or commercially sensitive information.

4. Making a Request for Information

Requests for information should be made in writing (including email) and must include:

- The applicant's name
- A contact address
- A clear description of the information requested

Requests should be sent to the Parish Clerk.

The Council will respond within **20 working days**, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

5. Requests for Personal Data

Requests for an individual's own personal data will be handled under the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

6. Refusal of Requests

Information may be withheld where an exemption applies under FOIA.

Where a request is refused, the Council will:

- Provide the reason for refusal
- Identify the relevant exemption
- Provide details of the applicant's right to request an internal review

Requests may also be refused where the cost of compliance exceeds the statutory limit.

7. Internal Review

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

Requests for review should be submitted within 40 working days of the response.

The Council will aim to complete the review within **20 working days**.

8. Complaints

If a requester remains dissatisfied after the internal review, they may complain to the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**.

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

9. Charges

Information published on the website is normally free of charge.

Reasonable charges may be made for:

- Photocopying
- Printing
- Postage

Any charges will be advised in advance.

10. Accessibility

The Council will make information available in alternative formats where reasonably practicable, in accordance with the **Equality Act 2010**.

11. Responsibility

The Parish Clerk is responsible for handling Freedom of Information requests and ensuring compliance with this policy.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.