



SOMERSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came into force on 1st January 2005 enabling greater access to information that is held by public authorities.

The Freedom of Information Act gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. It sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

Any person who makes a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information, and subject to exemptions, must be supplied with that information.

For a full list of exemptions and further information relating to the Act, see the Department for Constitutional Affairs website or the Information Commissioner's website.

Individuals already have the right of access to information about themselves under the Data Protection Act 2018. As far as public authorities are concerned, the Freedom of Information Act will extend this right to allow public access to all types of information held.

Every public authority is required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme setting out the classes of information it holds, the manner in which it intends to publish the information, and whether a charge will be made for the information.

The purpose of a scheme is to ensure a significant amount of information is available, without the need for a specific request. Most routinely published information provided by the Council is available from this website. If after using the search facilities you are still unable to access the information you require. Please submit a Freedom of Information request to the contact details below. Your request must be made in writing. This can be in any written form, such as a letter, fax or email. The request must state your name and address for correspondence and describe the information required.

Freedom of Information requests will generally be dealt within 20 working days of being received, although this timescale can be extended in certain circumstances. You may request that the information be supplied in any form, however the Council will take into account the cost of supplying the information in this form before complying with your request. In particular, you may ask for a copy of the information sought, or for permission to inspect the records containing the information. The Council will provide the information in the form requested unless it is unreasonable to do so.

The Council will charge the full cost for disbursements such as copying and printing. A fees notice will be sent to you that will put a hold on the 20 days for responding to your initial request until the fee is paid. If after three months the fee is unpaid, it will be assumed that you no longer require the information.

Contact details:

Jennie Blackburn - Parish Clerk
The Knoll, 1 All Saints Road, Creeting St Mary, Ipswich IP6 8NF

Tel: 01449 721369

Email: somersham.pc@outlook.com

Somersham Parish Council - Freedom of Information Publication Policy

The Parish Council is required to produce a publication scheme for information availability under the above Act. Accordingly be it known that the Core Classes have been adopted by Somersham Parish Council as follows:-

Class 1 - Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, representatives on Village Organisations are readily available upon request to the Parish Clerk, on the Parish Notice Board or on the website.

Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it

All the functions and financial transactions of the Parish Council are subject to Government Audit under the auspices of the Audit Commission. The current external auditors are PKF Littlejohn, 15 Westferry Circus, London E14 4HD. Telephone 020 7516 2200 and the current internal auditor may be contacted via the Parish Clerk. On publication of the notice of audit, a parishioner may, on application to the Clerk in accordance with said notice, view:-

- (i) Annual Return Form (Limited to the last available)
- (ii) Annual Statutory Report by Auditor (Limited to the last available)
- (iii) Receipt/Payments books and Back Statements (Limited to the last financial year)
- (iv) Precept Decisions (Limited to the last financial year)
- (v) VAT Records (Limited to the last financial year)
- (vi) Standing Orders
- (vii) Assets Register
- (viii) Risk Assessment Information

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing

An Annual Report is produced every year. This is available from the Parish Clerk upon request.

Class 4 – How we make decisions

Agendas and supporting papers for Council meetings for any forthcoming meeting is available for inspection by application to the Parish Clerk. Meetings are normally held at the Village Hall, Somersham. Parish Council Meetings are held on the **1st Wednesday** of every month (Public invited to attend and to address the Parish Council as per public session item time on the agendas). The Annual Meeting of the Council is usually held on the **1st Wednesday of May**. Approved minutes of all meetings may be viewed by application to the Parish Clerk or via the Council's website. A summary of meetings held is usually provided in The Link Magazine.

All responses to planning applications are contained within the Council minutes published by the Parish Council. The decisions are also available via the Council's website.

Class 5 – Our policies and procedures

Somersham Parish Council has adopted the revised 2022 Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils and this may be viewed by arrangement with the Parish Clerk. The Member's Declarations of Acceptance of Office, the Register of Interests or the Register of Members

Interest Book may be viewed by arrangement with the Parish Clerk or the Monitoring Officer at Mid Suffolk District Council.

The Council has adopted and follows various policies - Procedural Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme - all of which may be viewed by arrangement with the Parish Clerk.

Class 6 – Lists and Registers

The Council retains all publicly available registers and lists which are available for inspection.

Class 7 – The services we offer

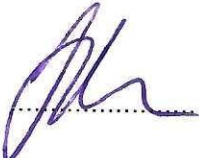
Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses are readily available from the Parish Clerk, on the Parish Notice Board or via the website.

Other information about the Somersham Village Hall, community events and organisations are available from the appropriate committees or village groups/organisations.

This Publication Policy was reviewed and adopted by Somersham Parish Council on 1st November 2023

Signed 

Chairman, Somersham Parish Council

Signed 

Clerk, Somersham Parish Council

Review Date – 1st November 2026