



# **Cornwood Parish Council**

## **Freedom of Information Policy**

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# **Cornwood Parish Council**

## **Freedom of Information Policy**

CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL has a commitment to openness and transparency and will make relevant information available wherever possible to individuals who request it, subject to safeguarding the privacy of individuals and to legitimate considerations of national security, law enforcement and commercial interests where relevant.

### **1. The Freedom of Information Act 2000**

The Freedom of Information Act, which came into force on 1 January 2005, gives everyone a statutory right of access to information held by bodies such as Parish Councils.

### **2. Publication Scheme**

CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL has a publication scheme based on that issued by the Information Commissioners Office. This is available on the Council's website. In the first instance, Freedom of Information requests should be checked against what is readily available via the Publication Scheme.

### **3. Website**

A significant amount of the information for CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL (including financial payments) can be accessed on our website – [www.cornwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.cornwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### **4. Requesting Information**

Individuals or organisations may make a written request for information which they believe CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL holds. To request information under the provisions of the Act, and to help CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL in identifying the precise information you require, please email [clerk@cornwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cornwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk) or write to the Parish Clerk at 2 The Orchard, Sparkwell, Plymouth, PL7 5AQ.

As required by the Act, the following will need to be included with the request:

- Name of person requesting the information;
- Postal Address or email of the person requesting the information;
- A clear description of the information being requested;
- A preference of how the information is to be communicated e.g. hard copy, electronic or the opportunity to inspect a record containing the information. CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL will try to provide the information in the preferred media as far as is reasonably practical, or will notify the person requesting the information if CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL cannot do so.

## **5. Responding to Requests**

CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL will inform the person requesting the information in writing if CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL holds the information requested and if so will provide the information no later than 20 working days after receipt of the request.

## **6. Information Exempt from the Act**

The Freedom of Information Act does identify a number of categories of information which CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL is not required to disclose under the Act. In this case CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL will write to the person requesting the information stating the exemption which provides the basis for refusal within the Act. CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL will communicate this within 20 working days.

## **7. Charges**

There is no 'flat rate' fee to receive information under the Freedom of Information Act and in many cases CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL will provide the information free of charge. However, if the information requested is not readily available in the media in which it is requested, CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL may charge a fee based on the costs associated with providing the information e.g. photocopying and postage.

## **8. Refusal of Requests**

The Freedom of Information Act does permit CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL to refuse a request if CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL estimates that it will cost in excess of the appropriate limit of 10 hrs work.

## **9. Freedom of Information Fees Notice**

If a fee is required, CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL will write advising of the fee required within 20 working days of receipt of the request. This is known as a 'Fees Notice'. When a Fees Notice has been issued, the 20 working day limit for responding stops and will start again when CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL receives payment. If CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL does not receive the fee within three months CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL is not obliged to comply with the request.

## **10. Complaints**

If persons requesting information are dissatisfied with the way CORNWOOD PARISH COUNCIL has responded to a request for information, please write to the Parish Clerk at 2 The Orchard, Sparkwell, Plymouth, PL7 5AQ.

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) is responsible for enforcing the operation of the Act, and you may raise issues with this office at any time. More information can be found on the ICO website or by writing to the Information Commissioners Officer, Whycliffe House, Water Lane, Wimslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.