

Great Longstone Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

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Introduction

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), Great Longstone Parish Council (the Council) has a duty to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme describing:

- The classes of information it publishes
- How and where such information is published (e.g., website, paper copy, etc.)
- Whether or not a charge is made for such information

The purpose of the Council's Publication Scheme is to let everyone know what information will be automatically or routinely published by the Council and to ensure that a significant amount of information is available to the public, without the need for a specific request to be made.

Other information is available from the Council by individual request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Council also complies with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 where applicable.

If there is any information required that does not appear in the Council's Publication Scheme or you have any comments or suggestions on how it can be improved, please contact:

The Clerk to Great Longstone Parish Council, by post: c/o Longstone Village Hall, Church Lane, Great Longstone, Bakewell DE45 1TB
or by email: clerk@greatlongstone-pc.gov.uk

Responsibility for overseeing compliance with the Freedom of Information Act rests with the Parish Clerk as Proper Officer. The Full Council retains overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with statutory duties.

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Obtaining Information

Any person has the right to request recorded information held by the Council under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Much of the information listed in the Council's Publication Scheme is supplied free of charge and can be downloaded from our website:

www.greatlongstone-pc.gov.uk.

Where information is available only in paper format, this is stated in the Publication Scheme and can be viewed by appointment with the Council's Clerk, or a copy can be requested.

Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 must be made in writing (including email), must state the name of the applicant, provide an address for correspondence, and clearly describe the information requested.

Requests made verbally will not constitute a valid request under the Freedom of Information Act; however, the Council will offer reasonable assistance to help an applicant put their request in writing.

Requests for environmental information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 may be made verbally, although applicants are encouraged to confirm requests in writing wherever possible to ensure clarity. Requests should be sent to the Parish Clerk using the contact details set out in this policy.

The Council is not required to create new information in response to a request. The Act applies only to recorded information that is already held.

Acknowledgement and Clarification

The Council will normally acknowledge receipt of a request within 5 working days.

If a request is unclear, overly broad, or does not describe the information sufficiently, the Council may contact the applicant to seek clarification.

Where clarification is required, the statutory time limit for responding will pause until sufficient clarification is received.

The Council may also offer advice and assistance under Section 16 of the Act to help the applicant refine their request.

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Timeframe for Responding

The Council will respond promptly and in any event within 20 working days of receiving a valid request.

A response will:

- Confirm whether the Council holds the requested information
- Provide the information (unless an exemption applies), or
- Refuse the request, stating the reasons and the relevant exemption relied upon

Where a qualified exemption applies and a public interest test is required, the Council may extend the time for response beyond 20 working days where reasonable to consider the public interest. The applicant will be informed if this applies.

Fees and Cost Limits

Under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 the council is not obliged to comply with a request where the cost of compliance would exceed the appropriate limit of £450, calculated in accordance with the Regulations.

If the estimated cost of complying with the request exceeds this limit, the Council may:

- Refuse the request; or
- Offer to comply with a reduced scope request

The Council may charge for disbursement costs such as printing and postage as set out in the Schedule of Charges.

Exemptions and Refusals

The Freedom of Information Act recognises that certain information may be exempt from disclosure.

Where information is withheld, the Council will:

- State which exemption applies
- Explain why the exemption applies
- Where relevant, explain the outcome of any public interest test
- Inform the applicant of their right to request an internal review

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Common exemptions that may apply include:

- Personal data (Section 40)
- Information provided in confidence (Section 41)
- Commercial interests (Section 43)
- Information intended for future publication (Section 22)

Exemptions will be applied in accordance with the Act and ICO guidance.

Vexatious and Repeated Requests

Under Section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Council is not obliged to comply with:

- Vexatious requests
- Repeated requests for substantially the same information

A request may be considered vexatious where it:

- Imposes a disproportionate burden on the Council
- Is harassing or abusive
- Is obsessive or manifestly unreasonable
- Lacks any serious purpose or value
- Is intended to disrupt the Council's work

The Council will consider each request on its individual merits and in accordance with guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office.

Where a request is refused as vexatious or repeated, the applicant will be informed in writing and advised of their right to request an internal review.

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Internal Review Procedure

If an applicant is dissatisfied with:

- The refusal of information
- The application of an exemption
- The handling of their request
- The classification of a request as vexatious or repeated

They may request an internal review.

Requests for internal review should normally be made within 40 working days of the Council's response.

The review will:

- Be carried out by a person or committee not involved in the original decision where possible
- Be completed within 20 working days (and no later than 40 working days in exceptional circumstances)

The applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome.

If the applicant remains dissatisfied, they may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Record Keeping and Disclosure Log

The Council will maintain a record of:

- All FOI and EIR requests received
- The date received
- The nature of the request
- The response provided
- Any exemptions relied upon
- Whether an internal review was requested and the outcome

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Where appropriate and in the public interest, the Council may publish anonymised responses in a Disclosure Log, which will form part of the Publication Scheme.

This ensures:

- Transparency
- Consistency of decision-making
- Efficient handling of repeated requests

Records of FOI requests will be retained in accordance with the Council's Records Retention Policy.

The Council will ensure that Freedom of Information requests are monitored to identify patterns, training needs, and opportunities to improve proactive publication of information under the Publication Scheme.

Data Protection

Individuals have the right to request access to personal data held about them (a Subject Access Request) under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. You can do this by contacting our Data Information Officer: clerk@greatlongstone-pc.gov.uk

Complaints About the Handling of Requests

Complaints relating to the handling of a Freedom of Information request will be dealt with under the Internal Review Procedure set out above.

If, after the internal review process has been completed, the applicant remains dissatisfied, they may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which is the independent regulator for Freedom of Information in the United Kingdom.

You can contact the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF - phone 01625 545700 email: data@dataprotection.gov.uk or through their website at www.ico.org.uk.

Management of the Council's Publication Scheme

The Council is responsible for the adoption and maintenance of this Policy and the Publication Scheme and for ensuring that it is implemented effectively in practice.

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Information available from Great Longstone Parish Council under the model publication scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
<p>Class 1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This is current information only</p>		<p>Class 1</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Printed = See page 14</p>
<p>List of Council members and their responsibilities as well a list of Council Committees</p> <p>Details of any representation on local public bodies</p>	<p>Hard copy</p> <p>Website</p>	
<p>Postal and email address</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Noticeboards</p>	
<p>Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Noticeboards</p> <p>Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Any other named contacts including contact phone numbers and email addresses</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Location of main Council office and accessibility details</p>	<p>Not applicable as the authority does not have a publicly accessible office.</p>	
<p>Staffing structure</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Hard Copy</p>	

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<p>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit) Current and previous financial year as a minimum</p>		<p>Class 2 Website Printed = See page 14</p>
Statement of accounts and internal audit report in the format included in the Annual Return form	Website / Hard Copy	
Finalised budget	Website / Hard Copy	
Precept	Website / Hard Copy	
Borrowing Approval letter	Website / Hard Copy	
All items of expenditure above £100	Website / Hard Copy	
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website / Hard Copy	
Grants given and received	Website / Hard Copy	
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard Copy	
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard Copy	

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<p>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews) Current and previous year as a minimum</p>		<p>Class 3 Website Printed = See page 14</p>
Annual governance statement in format included in the Annual Return form	Website / Hard Copy	
Parish Plan	Not applicable / Not held	
Annual Report to Parish Meeting	Website / Hard Copy	
Quality status	Not applicable / Not held	
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DLUHC's guidelines	Not applicable / Not held	
Data Protection impact assessments (in full or summary format) or any other impact assessment (e.g. Health & Safety Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessments etc), as appropriate and relevant	Website / Hard Copy	
<p>Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum</p>		<p>Class 4 Website Printed = See page 14</p>
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website / Hard Copy	

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Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website / Hard Copy	
Minutes of meetings (as above) – excluding material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure	Website / Hard Copy	
Reports presented to council meetings – excluding material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure	Website / Hard Copy	
Responses to consultation papers	Website / Hard Copy	
Responses to planning applications	Peak District National Park Authority Website Hard Copy	
Bye-laws	Not applicable / Not held	
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only		Class 5 Website Printed = See page 14
Policies and procedures for the conduct of Council business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedural standing orders • Committee and sub-committee terms of reference • Delegated authority in respect of officers • Code of Conduct 	Website Hard Copy	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy statements 		
<p>Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services • Equality and diversity policy • Health and safety policy • Recruitment policies and details of current vacancies • Policies and procedures for handling requests for information • Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme) 	<p>Website</p> <p>Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Records management, personal data and access to information policies.</p> <p>Include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing and CCTV usage) policies</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</p> <p>Information legally required to hold in publicly available registers (Currently maintained lists and registers only.)</p>		<p>Class 6</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Printed = See page 14</p>
<p>Assets register, including details of public land and building assets</p>	<p>Website / Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to FOIA and EIR requests. These are recommended as good practice</p>	<p>Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Register of members' interests</p>	<p>Hard Copy</p>	
<p>Register of gifts and hospitality</p>	<p>Hard Copy</p>	

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<p>Class 7 – The services we offer (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses) - Current information only</p>		<p>Class 7 Website Printed = See page 14</p>
Allotments	Website / Hard Copy	
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Website / Hard Copy	
Community centres and village halls	Website / Hard Copy	
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Website / Hard Copy	
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Website / Hard Copy	
Bus shelters	Not applicable / Not held	
Markets	Not applicable / Not held	
Public conveniences	Not applicable / Not held	
Agency agreements	Not applicable / Not held	
Services for which we are entitled to recover a fee and details of those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Not applicable / Not held	
<p>Additional Information Information not itemised in the lists above</p>	Not applicable / Not held	

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Contact details

Requests for information should normally be made in writing (by letter or email) to the Parish Clerk using the contact details below. Please provide your name and either postal address or email address to which the Parish Clerk can reply.

Parish Clerk Great Longstone Parish Council
c/o Village Hall
Church Lane
Great Longstone
DE45 1TB

Tel: 07968 295258

E-mail: clerk@greatlongstone.gov.uk

Website: www.greatlongstone-pc.gov.uk

Schedule of Charges

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

Type of Charge	Description	Basis of Charge
Disbursement Cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white) @ 20p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost to authority
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal mail 2 nd Class

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Reviewing the Policy and Publication Scheme

This is a non-contractual document which will be reviewed, in line with the Great Longstone Parish Council Standing Orders, that all Policies will be reviewed on a 12 monthly basis for applicability in line with changes in current legislation and requirements of the Council.

All policies therefore, will be reviewed and adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council, irrespective of the date on which they were initially written.

Date of policy: February 2026

Approving body: Full Council

Date of meeting: 11th March 2026

Policy version reference: 2.0

Policy effective from: 11th March 2026

Date for next review: 13th May 2026