



STOKE LODGE AND THE COMMON PARISH COUNCIL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives individuals the right to access all types of information held by public bodies, including Stoke Lodge and The Common Parish Council.

The Act is designed to:

- Encourage greater openness and accountability in public authorities
- Help increase levels of public trust
- Encourage improvements in our dealings with the public.

As a general rule, an individual can request any information created within the Parish Council or received from elsewhere and held by the council for any reason although there are some exemptions.

Accessing information held by the council

There are two ways of accessing information held by the Parish Council. These are:

Publications Scheme

Part of the Act requires the Parish Council to hold a Publications Scheme. This scheme is a guide to the information routinely published by the Parish Council. It is not a list of actual publications, but rather it is a description of the classes of information published. The purpose of the scheme is to ensure that significant amounts of information are made available without the need for a specific request.

Individual requests for information

If the information required is not on the Publication Scheme or publicised on the web site, an individual may submit a Freedom of Information request. This request can be made in writing, by email or by completing the Parish Council's Freedom of Information Request Form. (Appendix 1).

If an individual submits a Freedom of Information request, the Parish Council is legally required to provide the information within 20 working days of receipt; however we will attempt to provide it sooner if possible.

The request will be acknowledged in writing. The Clerk will then find the information and check if any exemptions apply. The Parish Council will then contact the individual making the request to make suitable arrangements for them to view the information or receive a copy. If it is clearly going to take longer than 20 working days to collate the information that has been requested, the Parish Council will tell the individual requesting the information why and how long it will take.

If the information cannot be released due to an exemption or the cost of retrieving that information exceeds the threshold set out in the act, or if the Parish Council does not hold the information, the individual requesting the information will be informed accordingly.

Exemptions

Information can be exempt for several reasons, including:

- It is personal information that is covered by the Data Protection Act
- It is covered by the Environmental Information Regulations
- It is confidential
- It will be published in the future
- It is accessible by other means, such as the publication scheme
- It is prohibited by law
- It is about law enforcement
- It is about investigations and proceedings conducted by the council



APPENDIX 1

**STOKE LODGE AND THE COMMON PARISH COUNCIL
INFORMATION ACCESS FORM
(For Freedom of Information Act Requests)**

To: The Parish Clerk
Stoke Lodge and The Common Parish Council
The Pavilion, The Avenue
Stoke Lodge and The Common
South Gloucestershire, BS34 6BD

Request to view or receive copy of Information.

Applicant Name	
Applicant Address Postcode
Telephone Number	
E-mail Address	
Is this a Freedom of Information Act Request?	Yes/No (Please delete as appropriate)
Description of Request (Please include dates, areas of the Council and any other useful information)
Method of Communication	Post/Email (One only – Please delete as appropriate)

Do you want:

- a) The information to be sent to you.
- b) To inspect the information in person

Adopted by Stoke Lodge and The Common Parish Council: 13th July 2023
Review Date: July 2024