

Public Internet Acceptable Use Policy & Guidelines

Telford & Wrekin Library Service September 2005 (reviewed June 2016)

The Library Service recognises the value of the Internet but acknowledges that such a resource is potentially open to misuse and abuse. The following policy has been produced in order to safeguard the interests of the community it serves.

Access

- Free Internet access is available in all libraries in Telford & Wrekin. Charges are made for printing.
- Access is available to all library members, who must produce their library membership card when using a public access computer.
- Library members who have outstanding charges may be denied access to Internet facilities, at the discretion of the Library Staff.
- Parents and carers of children under the age of 16 will sign for a membership card on their behalf and are responsible for deciding what library resources are appropriate for their children, and guide them in the use of the Internet and the materials they can or cannot access.
- Library staff are unable to supervise your child's use of the Internet.
- Sessions may be booked up to a week in advance. There is no set upper time limit but it is governed by demand. If you are late for a booking the session will end at the set time and if you are 10 minutes late the computer will be made available for others to use.
- Parents or carers using the computers must take responsibility for their children whilst in the library.
- Computers will shut down 15 minutes before the library closes. It is your responsibility to print your work or save to an external storage device in good time. Failure to do so will result in the loss of your work.

Security

- You should be aware that the Internet is not a secure medium, and that third parties may be able to obtain information regarding your activities.
- If you are found to be interfering with any software or hardware you will be barred from subsequent use of any of the Library Service's IT facilities.
- If appropriate, you must ensure that you have properly logged/signed out of any website visited.
- If you choose to use credit or debit cards on a public access computer you do so at your own risk.
- Please ensure that you close all windows down and delete any work from the hard drive before ending your session.
- Connecting your phone to the computer should be avoided as, due to your phone settings, the content, including any pictures and videos, may copy onto the computer automatically.

Filtering

- Filtering software is used to help prevent access to web sites hosting illegal, offensive or inappropriate material. Please note that it is not possible to be completely effective in this, and that you must also take responsibility for your own activities.
- The filtering system may eliminate some material that is perfectly acceptable. The library service is willing to consider allowing access to any such site after careful checking, however this cannot be done immediately.

Misuse

- Public Internet access is monitored & random checks will be made on sites visited
- The Library Service reserves the right to refuse further Internet access to any individuals accessing or distributing materials which are deemed to be illegal or unacceptable.
- Where any contravention amounts to criminal and/or anti-social behaviour, the Police will be notified.
- Users are advised to report any instances of being able to access sites which they feel should have been blocked by the filtering system.
- Library staff on site will determine if any computer activity is unacceptable and have the right to instruct users to remove unsuitable images or text from the screen if, in the staff member's judgement, it could offend or disturb other users. We reserve the right to terminate users sessions if they suspect that the Acceptable Use Policy is being violated.

Certain uses of the computers are prohibited, these include:

- Viewing or sharing illegal information
- Viewing or sharing offensive or pornographic material
- Using bad language on and off the screen
- Writing & sending rude or offensive messages
- Accessing those chat rooms deemed inappropriate by the filtering system
- Attempts to make unauthorised access to other computers or networks
- Altering the settings or installing software without permission
- Damaging the computer equipment
- Watching live TV programmes, regardless of the country of origin
- Watching or downloading BBC programmes on demand (eg BBC iPlayer)
- Accessing payday loan sites. Library staff can signpost to alternative sources for managing money, which can also be found on the 'Your Money' library webpage
- Saving any inappropriate material on to the computer

E-mail

Library staff are not in a position to retrieve or send mail on behalf of members of the public. All e-mail must be phrased inoffensively and used for a proper purpose. The following in particular (but not exclusively) are prohibited through e-mail:

- Creating, sending or storing any abusive, offensive, obscene or indecent images, data or other material, or any data capable of being resolved into obscene or indecent images or material

- Harassment in any form (including sexual and racial harassment)
- Infringement of copyright under the provisions of the Copyright Act 1988. Circulating third party works by e-mail is not allowed, unless the author's consent has been obtained in advance.

Support

Library staff will try wherever possible to help customers in the proper use of the computers, however staff assistance may be very limited. They are able to signpost customers to local ICT courses and to free online tuition.

Disclaimers and Copyright

- Use of library computers and public wifi is entirely at your own risk. Telford & Wrekin Council cannot be held responsible for the privacy or security of your activities
- No guarantee is provided that you will be able to access the Internet service or third party website that you require.
- No guarantee is provided that you will be able to make a wireless connection.
- You are responsible for any information retrieved from the Internet at a public access computer and for the use of the information retrieved, under the provisions of the Copyright Act 1988.
- The Library Service accepts no responsibility for the nature, or the accuracy of the information and data accessed and retrieved.
- The Library Service accepts no responsibility for technical malfunctions that may prevent access to the Internet.
- Material downloaded from the Internet onto any type of external storage device may contain viruses. The Library Service does not accept any responsibility for any subsequent damage to users' home computers caused by such viruses.
- All customers of the Council's internet/e-mail/wifi facilities implicitly indemnify the Council against any claims, demands, costs, losses or damages that the Council may incur or suffer as a result of any breach of these protocols by users.

Data Protection

The Library service is bound by the regulations of the Data Protection Act (1998) and will not release information on the use of specific Internet resources by members of the public except as required by law, to disclose the commission of an offence or for the purpose of the management of the users use of the library services.

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