



2026

WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENCE POLICY



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Version History

Version	Reviewed at	Approved at
Version 1.00	Full Council meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 9 th June 2021	Full Council meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 9 th June 2021
Version 1.00	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 11 th May 2022	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 11 th May 2022
Version 1.00	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 17 th May 2023	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 17 th May 2023
Version 1.00	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 8 th May 2024	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 8 th May 2024
Version 1.00	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 14 th May 2025	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 14 th May 2025
Version 1.00	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 13 th May 2026	Annual Meeting of Wootton Parish Council on 13 th May 2026

To be reviewed at each Annual Council Meeting.

Anonymous Correspondence Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines how Wootton Parish Council will act upon information contained in anonymous letters and other anonymous communications 'anonymous communications' – see definition below.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of Wootton Parish Council, including staff and aims to provide a consistent approach to dealing with anonymous communications.

Definition of Anonymous Communications

A written or verbal communication where no name, address or identifying factors are given. This may include telephone calls, 'round robins', newsletters, emails, texts, blogs, websites, social media and all other forms of electronic communications.

Verbal Anonymous Communications

Any member or staff member receiving a verbal anonymous communication should respond stating Wootton Parish Council will not take any action in respect of such a communication unless it is put in writing. A visitor or caller should be encouraged to provide their contact details which will be passed to the Clerk to the Council for recording and decision on any further action. If no written communication is provided by the visitor or caller, a note summarising the verbal communication exchange should be created by the member or staff member and passed to the Clerk to the Council, again for recording and decision on any further action.

Steps to be taken with Anonymous Written (including Electronic) Communications

Unless of a purely trivial or frivolous nature all anonymous written communications should:

- Be treated as being in strict confidence by all members and staff members;
- Be circulated by the Clerk to the Council via email to all members (and staff members if appropriate) with any personal and sensitive information redacted;
- An un-redacted copy shall be made available only for inclusion on an agenda (if appropriate) and produced at that meeting.

When determining what action to take next, the following should be considered:

- Wootton Parish Council will not consider anonymous letters or other anonymous communications unless there is corroborating evidence, and the parish council expressly reserves the right to take no action unless the anonymous communication alleges significant health & safety issues, a criminal offence, fraud or irregularity and where there exists supporting information which suggests the allegation can be substantiated;
- The seriousness of the issues raised and effect on the community;
- Criminal and legal implications;
- Health and Safety of members and staff members;

- Credibility of the concern;
- Whether sufficient information is provided to corroborate the allegation(s) and enable an investigation to be carried out;
- Fraud and any other irregularities detrimental to the parish council;
- Anonymous communications or indeed any form of communication considered to be vexatious or malicious may be forwarded to the appropriate authorities, and Wootton Parish Council will provide full support for those authorities to carry out their investigation.

Other Matters

The log/record of anonymous communications should be reviewed periodically to identify any developing trends. Where the writer has provided contact details but requested anonymity, their right to privacy should be respected. Due caution should be taken when reacting to anonymous communications which appear malicious, potentially libellous or of an extremely personal nature.