# Stoke-on-Trent City Council

# Computers, Wi-Fi and the Internet

# Acceptable Use Guidelines

**Introduction**

These guidelines govern the use of the Internet and all Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by members of the public at Stoke-on-Trent City Council's libraries.

All users must be a library member and must abide by the terms and conditions of the Acceptable Use Guidelines.

If you are not already a member of our libraries, you can join by filling in a membership form and showing proof of address such as:

- driving licence;
- utility bill (less than three months old);
- bank statement (less than three months old);
- medical card;
- rent card; or
- benefit book.

If you don't have proof of your address, you will still be able to use the library's computers, its' Wi-Fi service and borrow up to two books. When you bring in your proof of address, your membership will be extended to include the full range of items.
You can get an application form from any Stoke-on-Trent library. If you are under 16 years old, please ask your parent or guardian to sign the back of your form.

**Joining on-line**

You can also use our Libraries On-line service to join the library on-line. Enter your details on the on-line form and we'll email you a temporary library barcode number. You will then be able to reserve items on-line.
If you would like to borrow items from the library you will need a library membership card. This can be collected from your local library. Just tell the library staff that you have registered online, and bring one proof of address with you on your first visit to the library. This must be an official document, please see examples at the top of this page.

Before your first use, you will be requested to sign a declaration form that you have read and agree to our Acceptable Use Guidelines. If you are under 16, a parent/guardian must sign your form on your behalf to give their consent to you using our computer / Wi-Fi facilities. The library encourages parents/guardians to supervise their children's use of the Internet.

Failure to comply with any of these terms may result in your use of the ICT facilities and /or your membership being suspended or withdrawn.

**General**

You must use your own library card to book a PC or Wi-Fi session; you must not use anyone else's library card or pin code.

You must be prepared to show your library card if requested to do so by a member of staff.

You are fully responsible for all activities and communications that take place during your computer or Wi-Fi session.

Staff are authorised to view computer screens at any time during a session and to close a session down if they think you are failing to comply with our acceptable use guidelines.

Please be considerate to other library users and do not make excessive noise.

If you see a virus warning displayed on the computer please tell a member of staff.

All access to the Internet is filtered but we cannot guarantee that all offensive sites will be blocked. If you find a web site which you believe is unsuitable, please inform a member of staff who may request that it be blocked. Sometimes, however, filtering mechanisms can be crude and may also eliminate material that is perfectly acceptable. If you find a web site that has been inappropriately blocked you may request that the site be made available.

To ensure the safety of our customers we monitor use of the Internet, including web sites visited and we reserve the right to inspect files when investigating suspected misuse or illegal activities.

**Using Our Computers**

Library PCs are available for public use at all Stoke-on-Trent City Council's libraries and use is free of charge in accordance with our Acceptable Use Guidelines.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council operates a booking system. Guest users may use the library PCs for half an hour at a time. You may book up to twelve hours per week, with a maximum of two hours per day.

Bookings may be made in person, by telephone or through the automated booking system via a PC in the library. Sessions may be booked up to 14 days in advance.

You may use a PC without a previous booking if it is not booked out to anyone else, initially until the next booking or for two hours as appropriate.

You may book additional time if there are PCs available.

If you are late for your booked session, after 10 minutes the session will be automatically cancelled by the system. After that, the session may be offered to anyone else.

Library staff will assist users where possible. If you have little or no experience of using a computer, library staff can provide information about ICT training. Please ask a member for staff for details.

A charge will be made for all printouts. Please refer to the current list of charges.

Users are permitted to save information to USB storage pens. Pen drives can be purchased from our libraries.

We recommend that you do not save work to the hard drive, as this may be viewed by other computer users. Additionally, all saved files are automatically deleted each time the computer is switched off.

Users are not permitted to attach any personal equipment of any kind, including CD's and DVD's to library PCs or equipment.

Printing and saving of files should be completed in good time for you to vacate the computer at the end of your booked period. We recommend that you save your work every 10 minutes and print five minutes before your finishing time.

If a booked PC is left unattended for more than 10 minutes the session will be frozen, and after 20 minutes the session will be logged off.

No more than two people will be allowed to use a single library computer at any time.

You are responsible for logging off from your session.

All sessions end 15 minutes before the closing time of the library.

**Using our Wi-Fi Service**

Our Wi-Fi service is available at all Stoke-on-Trent City Council's libraries. Customers at our libraries can use our Wi-Fi service to connect to the internet with laptops and other mobile devices.

The Wi-Fi service is free of charge in accordance with our Acceptable Use Guidelines.

Library staff cannot help you set up Wi-Fi access on your device. You are responsible for setting up your own equipment. Use of the Wi-Fi service is unlimited.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council cannot guarantee that its Wi-Fi facility will be compatible with any equipment or hardware and assumes no responsibility for the safety of equipment or for laptop configurations, security, or data files resulting from connection to the Wi-Fi facility.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council cannot guarantee the availability of the Wi-Fi service.

Please note that our Wi-Fi network is unsecured and information sent over the network may be visible to others.

Printing is not available using the Wi-Fi service.


**Unacceptable Use**

The following activities are deemed unacceptable and are prohibited

You must not

- Use the internet to access sites that are illegal or could be considered offensive (for example, sites with strong language, pornographic, obscene, violent or racist content) or for criminal behaviour (such as hacking, downloading content illegally or cyber bullying).

- Send e-mails, messages, post blogs or publish content which could be considered to be offensive or amount to criminal behaviour.

- Infringe copyright legislation by making unauthorised copies of protected information or software. You must ensure you have obtained the permission of the owner of copyrighted information before copying or making use of it.

- Gain unauthorised access to or damage any program or data held in a computer.

- Interfere with another person's connection, their computer, or data in any way or engage in any illegal activities.

The above are examples only. A member of staff may deem other forms of behaviour to be unacceptable.


**Children and young people under 16**

Children and young adults under 16 may only use our computer / Wi-Fi service if a parent or guardian has completed a consent form giving their authorisation. Parents and guardians are advised that the Wi-Fi service uses an adult filter, for further details on the different filters in use by our computer and Wi-Fi service please speak to staff.

Parents or guardians are responsible for their children's use of technology. We strongly recommend that parents supervise their children's use (under 16 years of age) during their computer / Wi-Fi session and make them aware of the potential dangers of contacting other people via e-mail, chat rooms etc.

Library staff will not be responsible for children's use of our computer / Wi-Fi facility or use of the Internet. Children under 8 years of age should be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

Access to material on the Internet is filtered. However, please note that it is not possible to block all offensive sites, and as with other information sources, parents/guardians may consider some material to be unsuitable for their children. The responsibility for what children access remains with their parents or guardians at all times.

If you are concerned about your child's online safety please see www.thinkuknow.co.uk for further information and advice.

**Disclaimer**

Stoke-on-Trent City Council makes no warranties or representations either express or implied, as to the effectiveness of the computer and / or Wi-Fi service including but not limited to disruption of the service, acts of God, warranties of title, and non-infringement, or to the accuracy of any information online or suitability of sites. No advice or information given by a member of staff shall create such a warranty.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council makes no warranties or representations that any information, software, or other material accessible on the service is free of viruses or other harmful components. By connecting, the user acknowledges and accepts the risks associated with public access to the Internet and public use of an unsecured wireless network.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council excludes all liability to the maximum extent permitted by law for any loss or damage caused as a result of using our computer / Wi-Fi / internet facilities or any part thereof, or user's reliance on or use of any information provided, information or services provided online, or that result from mistakes, omissions, interruptions, deletion of files, errors, defects, delays in operation, or transmission or any failure of performance.

Nothing in the above clause is intended to limit or exclude our liability for:

(a) Death or personal injury resulting from our negligence;

(b) Fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation;

(c) Any other liability that cannot be excluded or limited by English law.

**Privacy and Data Protection**

As library computers and Wi-Fi is available to all members of the public, we cannot guarantee the privacy of any personal data. We advise you not to send confidential or sensitive personal information by email or via the internet, and we recommend that you leave secure sites as directed and exit the Internet browser and correctly log off at the end of your session.

If you do enter into online financial transactions or contracts, users are reminded to be careful. Stoke-on-Trent City Council shall not accept responsibility for any consequences as a result of transactions carried out by the public.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, we will only use any personal information you provide to us for the purposes for which you provide it, or where allowed by law. We will only hold your information for as long as necessary for these purposes and will not pass it to any other parties unless this is made clear to you. All employees who have access to your personal data or are associated with the handling of that data are obliged to respect the confidentiality of your personal data.

The City Council may also give personal information to the law enforcement authorities as part of a criminal investigation.

**Review**

Stoke-on-Trent City Council reserves the right to update or modify the above terms at any time without prior notice. Your use of the service following any such change constitutes your agreement to follow and be bound by these terms as modified. For this reason, we encourage you to review these terms whenever you use the service.