

Acceptable Terms of Use of Public Access Computers and Online Services in West Lothian

Introduction

West Lothian Council provides free public access to the Internet, Microsoft Office and other information technology via public access PCs to support the leisure, learning and cultural needs of the community.

The Council supports free access to information by any member of the public, but recognizes that such a resource may be open to misuse and abuse. The following document has been produced in order to safeguard the interests of the council and the community it serves.

Users should be aware that the public access PCs are located in a public place and confidentiality cannot be assured while using PCs in public libraries or community centres.

Where Wi-Fi is available, the internet may be accessed using wireless devices. It cannot be guaranteed that wireless devices will connect to the access points and the Council cannot offer any support for wireless devices.

Security

Access to the internet is filtered. Users should be aware that the filtering software may not block all offensive sites. Parents or guardians should be aware that filters may not block chat rooms that children may try to access. It is requested that any child under the age of 16 does not access chat rooms on the public access PCs. The Council cannot be held accountable for materials accessed by persons under 16, which a parent or guardian may consider unsuitable. Library or Community Centre staff cannot supervise the use of the service by children and cannot take responsibility for any material accessed which a parent or guardian may not consider appropriate.

Filtering mechanisms can sometimes eliminate material that is perfectly acceptable. Library or Community Centre staff can contact the Council's IT Service to consider releasing any such site after careful checking, and will let you know the decision within 12 working days. Library or Community Centre staff can also consider asking IT Services to block sites that you feel are unsuitable. Should you wish to request that a website be blocked or released, you should ask staff for the relevant form.

Anti-virus software

PC hard drives are cleaned each time the computers are switched off. West Lothian Council cannot be held responsible for any virus transmission.



The Internet & Your Responsibility

Whilst the Internet enables access to valuable and interesting information, some of this information may be inaccurate, out of date, controversial, offensive and/or illegal. West Lothian Council accepts no responsibility for the quality, accuracy, legality, validity or availability of information accessed through the Internet. As a user therefore, it is your personal responsibility to ensure the accuracy of information you discover. Users are responsible for all activities during their session. Users should be aware that risks are attached to some online activities and that:

- Broadcasting personal or private details over the network may lead to the receiving of unwanted mail or unwanted attention.
- West Lothian Council cannot be held responsible for any losses resulting from sending confidential financial or other information via the Internet.
- Some online activities (e.g. game playing) can seriously impact on the ability of the network to deliver other services. West Lothian Council reserves the right to restrict access to such services.

West Lothian Council will assume no liability for any loss, damage or injury, direct or indirect, incidental or consequential, suffered as a result of using these computer resources.

Users must comply with the relevant laws which apply in the UK. Please be aware that material that is legal in this country may be illegal in another and vice versa.

Conditions of Access

Access to public computers is available to individuals who have a library membership and to non-members as guest users. You can use the public access PCs as a guest on one occasion, thereafter you must provide ID and register as a member of the library. Membership cards are not transferable and must be produced at the start of each session, or customers must be able to answer a security question as proof of identity.

All users will be asked to complete the West Lothian Libraries membership form, which includes a declaration that they have read the **Acceptable Terms of Use of Public Access Computers and Online Services in West Lothian**. It is the user's responsibility to be aware of this document and agree to abide by its terms and conditions. Those users who have long outstanding charges owing to the Library service can use the PCs as long as they pay off these charges or make a contribution towards them. Non-members and visitors can also access the PCs as a guest user once, thereafter they must register as a member of the library.

Customers who require access to the PCs for job search or welfare/benefit applications can do so, even if they have outstanding charges due to the Library Service.



Where children and young persons under the age of 16 access the PC's and online facilities, it is the responsibility of the child's parent or guardian to allow, or restrict, use of the Internet. Filtering cannot be a guarantee that your child will not access unsuitable material. It is not the responsibility of the library or community centre staff to police children and young person's use of the computers.

Sessions

Sessions may be booked in advance, up to seven days ahead, by telephone, online, or in person, in hourly slots.

All sessions are in hourly slots but if the demand for computers is not high at the time, a session may be extended. Users should end the session and leave the PC if asked to do so by library or community centre staff.

Charges

There is no charge for the use of computers in libraries or community centres, but there are charges for printing.

Printing is free for customers who are accessing the PCs for job search purposes, however printing of CVs is limited to 10 copies.

Your Session in Progress

West Lothian Council reserves the right to monitor access to Internet sites, and any public access of illegal, offensive or controversial material may be the subject of further action, including criminal investigation and prosecution where appropriate.

Users should not:

- Access, download or transmit material/websites which could be considered illegal, racist, sectarian, pornographic, obscene, offensive, inappropriate, in breach of copyright or troublesome to other computer users.
- Alter the set-up of the computer hardware or software
- Save documents and/or software on the hard drive
- Transmit information, photographs or images of another individual without their knowledge and consent.
- Download or access material which considerably slows the performance of the network
- Distribute unsolicited adverts or spam
- Attempt to make unauthorised access to other computers or networks or damage or modify computer equipment



- Use PCs and online facilities if they have been prohibited from doing so by a court order or any other sanction.
- Load their own software or connect their own computer equipment to library computer equipment. Exceptions are possible for special equipment to help with general computer use (e.g. adaptive hardware for users with special needs), and USB pen drives.

Penalties for misuse

Library and community centre staff will direct computer users to remove inappropriate images or text from the screen. In addition, West Lothian Council reserves the right to refuse further computer access to any individuals violating the *Acceptable Terms of Use* by accessing or distributing materials that are illegal or deemed to be unacceptable or having the potential to offend or disturb others. Library or community centre staff on site will determine whether any computer activity is unacceptable, and this determination will be subject to confirmation by a Senior Officer of West Lothian Council.

As well as the loss of computer privileges, other West Lothian Council disciplinary options may be applied, including criminal prosecution.

In the case of an under 16 user who either violates the Acceptable Terms of Use, or who is found through random monitoring to be accessing unsuitable material, the parent or guardian who signed the consent form will be notified.

How We Will Use Your Personal Information

For details please refer to the Library Privacy Notice, this is available on display in the library and online and it is expected you should read this.

[Library Privacy Notice](#)

Data Protection Act 1998

West Lothian Council reserves the right to monitor all usage of public access PCs and where it is necessary keep logged records of ICT in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The information provided by users, whether as guest users or permanent or temporary members, will be used to ensure compliance with this document and for statistical purposes.

Review

This document will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains up-to-date. West Lothian Council welcomes feedback and comment on the content and operation of the guidelines.

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