

## **SEDLSCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL POLICY RE MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

1. All parish councils have access to information and maintain records. Two Acts of Parliament, the **Data Protection Act 1998** and the **Freedom of Information Act 2002** govern the way information is made available to the general public.
2. Public authorities are under a duty under section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. On 11/11/08, Sedlescombe Parish Council adopted a publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2002 to take effect from 1 January 2009. Virtually all the documents under this Scheme will be available through the Sedlescombe Parish Council website [www.sedlescombe.org.uk](http://www.sedlescombe.org.uk). Hard copies are available through the Clerk at the cost of 15p/side plus postage.
3. All documents deposited by the Parish Council at the County Record Office, Lewes, are open to public viewing within the Record Office public searchroom.

In brief, the following records have been deposited:

- Minutes of Council meetings and annual parish meetings December 1894 to April 2002, including some Committee Meeting Minutes 1974-2002.
- Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office, April 1925 to May 2003.
- Members Register of Interests, 1974-1999.
- Standing Orders of Sedlescombe Parish Council.
- Parish Council Accounts Books 1934 to 1995/6.
- Annual Financial Statements 1921-2002/3.
- Sedlescombe Playing Field Trust Accounts 1993/4-1997/8.
- Rating valuation list of parish January 1956.
- Precepts 1945-2004.
- Papers concerning the management of Sedlescombe village green.
- Title deeds, leases, agreements and contracts:
  - Playing Field
  - East View Play Area
  - East View Kickabout Area
  - Sportsfield
  - Pestalozzi 1964, 1974

- Old village hall
  - Brede Lane car park management 1996-2001
- Management of village hall charity
- Copy photographs of Sedlescombe
- Photocopy of registers of electors in Sedlescombe for 1892 and 1894
- Publications issued by Parish Council:
  - What's What in Sedlescombe 1980, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1993
  - Sedlescombe Newsletters 1983-1991 & 1998-January 2004
  - "A Century of Village Life 1894-1994" by Pauline Raymond 1994
  - Sedlescombe Parish Map Original by James E Davies 1994
  - "Sedlescombe new village hall: the search for a site 1975-2001" by Pauline Raymond 2001
  - The Sedlescombe Directory 2001-2002
  - A Walk through History in Sedlescombe 2001
  - Footpath Walks Around Sedlescombe 2002
  - The Sedlescombe Directory 2002-2003
  - The Sedlescombe Directory 2003-2004
- Byelaws:
  - Village Green 1902 & 1992
  - East View Terrace Playground 1993
- Allotment rent books and registers 1932-1961
- Purchase and development of allotments
- Village of the Year Competition 2002
- Sedlescombe Parish Council Centenary Celebrations 1994
  - Newsletters
  - Car Show
  - Exhibition
  - Dinner

4. Parish Council Accounts have to be retained for 6 years. The latest three years are retained in the Clerk's house. The earliest three years are retained in the cupboard of Committee Room 1 of the village hall ready for disposal in due course after extraction of successful contract papers that have to be retained for 15 years. These papers may be inspected by the public on application to the Clerk.

5. Playground inspection books & reports dating from 1979 are kept in the cupboard of Committee Room 1 of the village hall. These documents have to be retained for 40 years. These papers may be inspected by the public on application to the Clerk.
6. Paper Parish Council working files are retained at the Clerk's house and in the cupboard of Committee Room 1 of the village hall. They are destroyed from time to time after withdrawal of historical data which is sent to the County Record Office for permanent retention. The working files are not open for public inspection.
7. Electronic Parish Council working files are maintained on the Parish Council computer. These files are not open for public inspection.
8. Sedlescombe Parish Council is registered under the **DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998** for the promotion of the work of the Parish Council. The Data Protection Act provides a right of access to individuals in respect of personal data of which they are the subject. Upon making a written request and paying the requisite fee, amongst other things an individual is entitled to have communicated to him in intelligible form:
  - information which forms any such personal data, and
  - any information available to the data controller as to the source of those data.

In some circumstances, responding to a request may involve providing information relating to another individual (third party) who can be identified from that information. This can give rise to conflict between the data subject's right of access and the third party's right to respect for his or her private life. When dealing with such requests, therefore, the Clerk will be sensitive to and give proper consideration to this potential conflict before deciding whether to disclose third party information as follows:

The Clerk will carefully consider all requests from data subjects for information held by the Council and to what extent it is possible to communicate the information sought without disclosing any third party information, such as an e-mail address, and will give as much information as possible to the data subject without revealing the identity of the third party.

If it is not possible to communicate the information sought without disclosing any third party information, the Clerk will ask the third party for consent to disclose. If this is given, the information will be disclosed. If it is refused, or it is not possible to obtain for some other reason, the Clerk will consider whether it is reasonable to disclose without the third party's consent. If the Clerk decides not to disclose, the data subject will be informed of the reason his/her request has not been met.

9. When the Council receives correspondence that contains personal information about an individual or the personal opinions of an individual and it is a matter that needs to be considered by the Parish Council, the subject will be included on the agenda and/or reports without reference to any personal information/allegation. Neither will this information/allegation be included in Council Minutes.
10. E-mail has become the primary business tool for both internal and external communication and as a result will need to be treated with the same level of attention as given to drafting and managing formal letters and memos. Because of their written nature, e-mails should not be treated as an extension of the spoken word, as they are treated with greater authority. All e-mail messages are subject to Data Protection and Freedom of Information Legislation and can be used in evidence in legal proceedings. E-mails containing inaccurate information in the form of opinion or fact about an individual or organisation, may result in legal action being taken against the person sending the e-mail and anyone forwarding the e-mail on to others.
11. Neither the Clerk, nor councillors acting on behalf of the Council, will forward e-mails from members of the public to another member of the public not mentioned in the e-mail or another body without permission.