Use of digital devices in Libraries

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All Library Policies are reviewed annually
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Policy

The provision of digital access is a key element of the 2012 Library Strategy recognising libraries as key places in the community to access the Internet and use computers. We support people with accessing digital public services, communication, and information. The library service can play a pivotal role in ensuring that the gap between the information rich and information poor is reduced and that the digital economy is inclusive and available to all.

Gloucestershire County Council provides computers and interactive digital equipment for use by the public in libraries. In addition, Wi-Fi is available in Council run libraries for use by customers using personal portable digital devices.

Digital access is provided for a range of activity including:
- Research/Study/ School work/homework
- Email & communication & social networking
- Retail and other customer transactions
- Entertainment/video streaming/games/ television

This policy sets out the terms by which digital access is offered. It sets out how use is defined, what is deemed inappropriate and how filtering and monitoring occurs. It explains the actions if customer misuse is suspected. In addition, this policy sets out conditions of use for Gloucestershire Libraries’ members and visitors.

Exclusions:

Community Libraries provide Wi-Fi for customers. This policy does not cover the provision of that service. For more information please refer to the terms and conditions of use at each Community Library.

Digital access and unacceptable Use

All customers are required to act responsibly when accessing digital content within Gloucestershire Libraries. Our libraries are public spaces where all members of the community meet and access services together. Therefore we expect all customers to respect fellow customers and staff and not cause offense by accessing inappropriate and unacceptable content or make inappropriate use of digital communication within libraries.

Unacceptable Use, including but not limited to:

- The displaying, sending or retrieving of material that is illegal
- The displaying, sending or retrieving of material that may reasonably be deemed obscene, violent or offensive (text, image or sound).
- Participation in any activity which violates licensing or copyright law.
- Any activity which seeks to gain unauthorised access to the Gloucestershire County Council Network or any external networks nor any activity which seeks to damage or destroy computer hardware, peripherals, software or data belonging to Gloucestershire County Council or any devices connected to the Wi-Fi network.
• Use of the Internet for any threatening or illegal activity, e.g. libel or personal harassment or phishing, spam or nuisance activity
• Causing a disturbance whilst using a computer, digital device, Wi-Fi or a plug in point or whilst waiting for a computer, digital device, or access to a plug in point

If customers access information or receive information accidentally that is illegal or will cause offence they must disconnect immediately.

Managing digital access:

In order to manage provision of digital services, Internet access on the library computers, digital devices and public Wi-Fi is filtered. However, no filter can guarantee 100% coverage. In addition, all activity is monitored and recorded and further action will be taken if a breach of this policy is suspected. To support the policy, library staff are authorised to monitor public use of digital equipment and intervene if inappropriate use is suspected.

Misuse may result in personal access to library facilities being withdrawn or permission to use portable digital devices within the library suspended. Library staff are authorised to disconnect users from the library computers or block devices from Wi-Fi if they suspect that illegal or offensive information is being accessed. In cases of criminal or disruptive behaviour customers may be evicted/ excluded from Library premises and have their membership suspended. The Police will be informed if illegal activity is suspected.

Respecting Copyright

Permission from the rights holder has to be sought if copying sound recordings or film (including use of such material in presentations, broadcasts, and websites). If you are unsure as to the law, please consult library staff.

Conditions of access to library computers and digital equipment

• Customer access is subject to acceptable use as defined in this policy.
• Customers may only log in to computer sessions by using their own library card or as an authorised ‘visitor’. It is not permitted to use someone else’s account to log in or access information.
• Access to interactive digital equipment does not require a log in process however, by utilising this service customers are thereby agreeing to use it in line with this policy.
• Use by children aged under 16 years is the responsibility of the named Guarantor.
• Customer use of library computers may be blocked owing to outstanding fines or overdue items.

Conditions of access to Wi-Fi

• Customers must agree to the terms and conditions of use and register to access the Wi-Fi. Customers will be asked to identify themselves when registering and must not pretend to be anyone other than themselves.
- We strongly recommend that parents or guardians supervise their children’s use of the Wi-Fi service.
- Devices may be blocked if misuse is detected as set out in this policy.
- Customers must not use the Wi-Fi in an unreasonable or excessive way. Limits may be applied to manage download levels or length of access available.

If any of the above involves listening to items, including music or soundtracks, then this must be via personal headphones; Libraries cannot supply headphones.

Conditions of use for portable digital devices:
- Equipment can only be plugged into mains sockets identified as plug in points.
- No equipment can be plugged into library data points.
- The user is responsible for the security & safety of their own equipment and must not leave any items unattended. Gloucestershire County Council accepts no liability for any immediate or subsequent damage or problems relating to portable digital devices.
- Library staff cannot be responsible for handling or storing portable digital devices.
- Access to power sockets may be time limited dependant on demand by other customers.
- Library Health & Safety and Fire Evacuation procedures must be adhered to. In the event of a fire alarm the device should be unplugged immediately and taken with you.

Storage
Customers are responsible for saving work to a removable device, typically a memory stick. Alternatively customers should email work in order to save a copy. Customers should be aware that some makes of memory stick may not be accepted by People’s Network PCs. Gloucestershire County Council take no responsibility for work that is lost.

Disclaimer
Gloucestershire County Council applies safeguards and end point protection including firewalls and security scans to detect viruses and database intrusions to the public access computer network provided. However, the council cannot guarantee that any transactions conducted over the Internet will be successful and the council accepts no liability for any goods or services requested or any breach to personal data. Neither will we accept any liability for identity theft that occurs during use of the People’s Network or Wi-Fi.

Personal Portable digital devices remain the responsibility of the user at all times. Gloucestershire County Council accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to users’ equipment.