

Standards

Ask Us is a reference and information service, staffed between 10 and 4 Mondays to Fridays. The service is aimed primarily at users residing, working or studying within Gloucestershire. However, we will answer questions about Gloucestershire from enquirers outside the county.

- We will reply to enquiries received by phone, e-mail, Facebook or by referral through a branch library within three working days. In the case of more complex enquiries, we will let you know if it is likely to take longer than three days to provide the information. If you do not hear from us within five working days please contact us to check we have your correct contact details. We will reply to enquiries received by post within five working days
- Our specialist staff will use authoritative sources of information to answer enquiries, (this may include photocopies, printouts or scanned images subject to copyright restrictions) and we will quote our source. We can send you information on financial, health or legal subjects but we are unable to give interpretation or recommendations of, or advice on, financial, health, legal or personal matters. We cannot be held responsible for the contents of any external web sites, or for the compatibility and capabilities of customers' computer software.
- We will help you to answer your enquiry using our available resources within any licence restrictions, and if appropriate, suggest books, online resources or an appropriate organisation or specialist library where you can continue your own research. We cannot undertake personal or original research or provide written essays or homework answers.
- Enquiries received through social media sites will be dealt with appropriately. If material of a confidential or personal nature needs to be sent to you, then we will contact you to discuss a suitable way of getting the information to you.

Data protection

The details you provide, including contact information, will be used only to help us provide you with relevant information. We may forward your enquiry to another service of the county council if they are in a better position to deal with your enquiry. We will not pass your enquiry or contact details on to any outside organisation or agency without your permission.

Acceptable Use

In our experience, the vast majority of interactions we have with people are extremely positive, and lead to a successful outcome. In order to ensure effective delivery of our service to all our customers, however, we have established some guidelines. The following cases would constitute unacceptable use of the service:

- Any use of this service for unlawful or offensive purposes
- Deliberately using this service to attempt to degrade or disrupt system performance
- Inappropriate use of staff time. This could include repeated or re-worded requests for information already supplied, or requests for information which exceed our 30 minute time constraint.

In such cases, the service manager reserves the right to terminate a transaction and, if appropriate, exclude from the service a user who does not follow the acceptable use policy.

For further information, please see Gloucestershire County Council's "Safer Working With People" document.