

Acceptable Use of Computers in Anyshire Public Libraries

1. Introduction

In response to advances in technology, and the changing needs of the community, Anyshire public library service is delighted to provide access to the Internet and other information technology, to support the educational, recreational and cultural needs of the community.

The Internet

The Internet enables access to valuable information resources in many different formats. The Library and Information Service does not deny legitimate access to information by any member of the public, but recognises that such a resource may be open to misuse and abuse. The following policy has been produced in order to safeguard the interests of the library service and the community it serves.

2. The Internet & Your Responsibility

Whilst the Internet contains a wealth of valuable and interesting information, some of this information may be inaccurate, out of date, controversial, offensive and/or illegal.

Anyshire Libraries accept no responsibility for the quality, accuracy or availability of information accessed through the Internet, although we will try to signpost sites that appear to be authoritative. As a user, therefore, it is your personal responsibility to ensure the accuracy of information you discover. Anyshire Libraries assume no liability for any loss, damage or injury, direct or indirect, suffered as a result of using these computer resources.

3. Conditions of Access

Membership

Access to computers in Anyshire Libraries is available to all.

All users will be asked to complete a Declaration form stating that they have read the 'Acceptable Use of Computers in Anyshire Public Libraries' document and agree to abide by its terms and conditions.

Children and Young People

Children and Young People under the age of 16 will be allowed access to the computers provided that a parent or legal guardian has signed a consent form.

Cost

The use of computers in Anyshire Libraries is free of charge. However, other charges may be applied to computer usage. These are:

Floppy Disks: 50p per disk

Example 1

Printing: 5p per sheet

Booking a computer session

Sessions may be booked in advance, up to seven days ahead, by telephone, online by e-mail or other means, or in person.

Sessions can be booked in hourly slots with a maximum of two consecutive sessions. If the demand for computers is not high at the time, a session may be extended.

Subject to availability, some computers may be available for unbooked use.

No more than two people may use a computer at any one time, at the discretion of library staff.

4. Your Session in Progress

Library staff will try wherever possible to help users in the proper use of the computers. However, as demand for computer access rises, staff may not always be able to give dedicated assistance.

Anyshire Local Authority can monitor access to Internet sites, and any public access of illegal, offensive or controversial material may be the subject of further action.

Monitoring of computer usage may be performed electronically or manually.

5. Security

Filtering

The Internet service will be unfiltered on the computers provided in the adult areas of the library and filtered on those in the junior areas. Filtering mechanisms can be crude and may also eliminate material that is perfectly acceptable. The library service is willing to consider releasing any such site after careful checking.

Virus-checking software will run on all computers.

Users may not 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).

Information from the Internet may be downloaded (within copyright restrictions) to a floppy disk or CD-ROM. To reduce the risk of computer virus infection all disks must be submitted to library staff and checked before the downloading of any information. This does not include new disks purchased in the library.

6. Prohibited Uses

Anyshire Libraries do not prohibit specific online activities as long as they are not considered to be illegal, offensive, obscene, abusive or troublesome to other computer users. However, users should be aware that risks are attached to some online activities:

- Broadcasting personal or private details over the network may lead to the receiving of unwanted mail or unwanted attention
- Online financial transactions are an increasingly common use of the Internet and are often conducted safely over secure connections. However, Anyshire Libraries cannot be held responsible for any losses resulting from sending confidential financial information via the Internet.
- Some online activities (e.g. gameplaying) can seriously impact on the ability of the network to deliver other services. Anyshire Libraries reserve the right to restrict access to such services.

Users must not interfere with equipment, amend or delete existing software.

7. Penalties for misuse

Library staff will direct computer users to remove inappropriate images or text from the screen if, in the staff member's judgement, the image or text is displayed in such a way that other library users cannot reasonably avoid viewing it.

Anyshire Libraries reserve the right to refuse further computer access to any individuals accessing or distributing materials which are deemed to be illegal or unacceptable or have the potential to offend or disturb others. Library staff on site will determine whether any computer activity is unacceptable and this determination will be subject to confirmation by a Senior Officer of the Library Service.

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

In the case of a junior computer user who violates this Acceptable Use Policy, the parent or guardian who signed the consent form will be notified.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains timely and relevant.

Example 1