



ACCEPTABLE USE (I.T) POLICY

POLICY NO. 58

Date Reviewed:	August 2025
Date of Next Review:	August 2028
Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management	RS 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose. Guidance: 4.3 <i>The governing body identifies risks that might prevent it from achieving the RSL's purpose and has effective strategies and systems for risk management and mitigation, internal control and audit</i> RS 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity Guidance: 5.1 <i>The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity and, through the actions of the governing body and staff, upholds the good reputation of the RSL and the sector.</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets forth the principles that govern the use of I.T and telecommunication systems, services and resources provided by Glen Housing Association to its employees.

2. THE POLICY

- 2.1 The I.T and telecommunication systems, services and resources provided by Glen Housing Association, are company property, and in general, may only be used for authorised company purposes. The information created by, distributed with, or stored on company property is, by definition, also company property.

Those services/resources include, but are not limited to;

- Phones (land and mobile lines),
- PCs, laptops, tablets
- Computer network
- Internet
- Email

- 2.2 All employees will have access to phones, e-mail and the internet, and personal use of all these facilities is permitted, provided it is kept to a reasonable length of time. At no time should the Company be liable for excessive costs arising from personal use. In exceptional circumstances costs can be incurred once agreement for repayment has been made with the Director (e.g. international calls).

- 2.3 Glen Housing Association does not permit use of electronic communication to harass, intimidate or bully others.

- 2.4 Some employees are provided with mobile phones and/or laptops/tablets which are enrolled on Microsoft Intune. This is a cloud-based service which allows IT administrators to remotely manage and secure mobile devices.

Users must ensure that they are familiar with the type of contract provided and use their discretion as to the types of calls made, where possible using land lines if the numbers being called are not classed as inclusive, and overall keeping the length of calls to a minimum.

Personal use of mobile phones is permitted, but employees must keep such calls to a minimum. The Director/Corporate Manager will use discretion when determining whether those personal calls exceed reasonable usage and may request the user to reimburse the Association for all personal calls/texts.

Loss of a mobile device must be reported immediately to the Corporate Manager who will report this directly to the IT support company, to ensure that unauthorised use is prevented, via Microsoft Intune.

Phone numbers / pin codes/ passwords, must not be written anywhere on the device and it **must** have an automatic lock screen set for when it is not in use.

2.5 You may not use Glen Housing Association's telephone, e-mail or internet services for illegal or immoral purposes or in support of illegal or immoral activities. Glen Housing Association reserves the right to provide information about any of its employees or their account when required to do so in connection with the investigation or prosecution of criminal or civil matters.

2.6 External software/data may only be downloaded onto the system once it has been checked for viruses and for system compatibility issues. Personally owned software should not be downloaded onto the system without prior permission from the Corporate Manager.

2.7 USB memory stick – there should be no reason for any member of staff to take a USB memory stick off-site but in the interests of security, if one does have to be removed from the office and it contains personal information, the Officer should ensure that it has been encrypted to protect any data within. This will be carried out by the Corporate Manager in conjunction with Brightridge and any instructions for the encrypting procedure will be given at that time.

2.8 It is recognised that there may be a need to transfer Association data/information to a staff member's personal email account to provide staff with a degree of work flexibility. Any employee wishing to do this should seek the Director's permission and all data/information sent must be password protected and **never** of a confidential nature.

2.9 Glen Housing Association reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to remove any information, software or other content or material accessed or provided through use of the e-mail and internet facilities that is:

- potentially illegal
- could subject Glen Housing Association to liability
- otherwise in violation of this Acceptable Use Policy

3. **WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE USE OF GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION RESOURCES?**

3.1 This Acceptable Use Policy identifies the actions that are considered as abuse and consequently prohibited. In addition to the other requirements of this policy, each employee may only use systems, services and resources in a manner that is consistent with the defined purposes of such systems, services and resources. If you are unsure of whether a contemplated use or action is permitted under the terms of this policy, you should contact the Corporate Manager for official determination.

3.2 The examples identified in Appendix 1 are not exhaustive and are provided in part for guidance purposes. In general terms the examples of Unacceptable Use can be summarised as follows:

Each employee shall not post, transmit, re-transmit or store material on or through any such system, services or resources that:

- (1) Is in violation of any law.
- (2) Is defamatory, indecent, offensive, obscene, threatening or contains inappropriate language or that otherwise could adversely affect any individual, group or entity or could be damaging to the reputation of Glen Housing Association.
- (3) Violates the rights of any person, including disclosure of any confidential and/or sensitive information or any violation of any right protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or any intellectual property laws, including but not limited to, the installation or distribution of software products that are not appropriately licensed for use by the employee.

4. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING ALLEGED ABUSES

- 4.1 Any employee who receives inappropriate e-mails/texts/social media messages/phone calls, should report this to their Line Manager in the first instance. Any employee who is aware that another employee is breaching this policy should also raise this with their Line Manager. In both situations, action by the employee is encouraged for their own protection and in all cases, the Director will be informed and may be required to investigate the situation further.
- 4.2 Glen Housing Association may from time-to-time monitor employee telephone, e-mail or internet usage to ensure that this policy is being adhered to.

5. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

In the event of a breach of this policy, normal disciplinary procedures will apply.

6. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis, unless there is a requirement to review earlier in response to new practices.

APPENDIX 1

GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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Examples of unacceptable use

- A.** Activities which are prohibited as potentially illegal, include, but are not limited to:
1. Unauthorised copying of copyrighted material including, but not limited to, digitisation and/or distribution of the following works in any form: photographs from any copyrighted source (such as newspapers, magazines or books); musical works and recordings; movies and video; or copyrighted software.
 2. Exporting software or technical information in violation of U.K. or other applicable export control laws.
 3. Posting or emailing of "make-money-fast" schemes, "pyramid" or "chain" letters or other similar activities
 4. Messages of a threatening nature.
 5. Making fraudulent offers of products or services.
 6. Distributing viruses to or from glenhousing.co.uk.
 7. Otherwise trafficking in illegal content.
 8. Attempting to access the accounts of others or attempting to penetrate security measures of glenhousing.co.uk or other entities' systems ("hacking"), whether or not the intrusion results in corruption or loss of data.
 9. Harassing others by "mail-bombing", "news-bombing" or "unauthorised spamming". "Mail-bombing" constitutes sending more than ten (10) similar mail messages to the same email address. "News bombing" constitutes sending more than 10Mb of data to a newsgroup. "Spamming" constitutes the transmission of unsolicited commercial mass mailings.
 10. Sending bulk email messages to more than 10 recipients unless through legitimate directories or address book groups.
 11. Sending unsolicited email messages where the recipient objects to the content or receipt of the message is also prohibited under these conditions. A message is unsolicited if it is posted in violation of applicable laws, regulations, or service provider policies. For the purposes of this provision, merely making one's email address accessible to the public shall not constitute a request or invitation to receive messages.

12. Utilising, without authorisation, glenhousing.co.uk, Glen Housing Association equipment or any Glen Housing Association electronic mail address to send the same or substantially similar unsolicited electronic mail message, whether commercial or not, to a number of recipients other than in the normal course of business. This prohibition extends to the sending of unsolicited mass mailings from another service, which in any way implicates the use of Glen Housing Association, its equipment or any of its electronic mail address.
13. Accessing, storing or transmitting any item or items having indecent, pornographic or violent content.
14. Engaging in activities that are vulgar or profoundly offensive. Profoundly offensive activities include, but are not limited to, posting or transmitting of material discriminating against any individual or group protected within the Equality Act 2010 as per the Association's Equality & Diversity Policy.

B. Even though not necessarily prohibited by law, you may not use Glen Housing Association facilities for, or in support of inappropriate purposes, such as:

1. Revealing your account password to others; or allowing use of your account by others other than authorised users in your workplace
2. Forging any message header, in part or whole, of any electronic transmission, originating or passing through glenhousing.co.uk services.
3. Installation of automated or manual routines which generate excessive amounts of net traffic or disrupt newsgroups or email use by others. This prohibition does not apply to use of automatic responses to emails received while away from the office.