

Peoples Network



Safety and security on the internet

Using the Internet is a wonderful way to find information, communicate with other people and even do your shopping, but there are some important points to remember.

When you are using the People's Network computer, please be aware of the following:

- access to the Internet is at the users' own risk
- websites are filtered but we cannot guarantee the complete exclusion of undesirable material (for more information see "Filtering of Internet sites")
- Hampshire County Council cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy, quality, availability or appropriateness of the resources found by users
- be aware that you are in a public place and it may not be appropriate to view some websites or communications
- you must not use these computers to watch live television
- you can use the PCs to order goods and services, this is at your own risk. Hampshire County Council will not be liable in any way for queries, complaints, loss, damage or any claims arising from third party transactions
- as you are in a public place other people may be able to see what information you are entering such as an address or bank details - consider the confidentiality of what you wish to do before you make use of the computers
- log off completely when you finish your session to ensure that the next user will not have access to any work or searches you have done or emails you may have sent.



Keep yourself and your information safe

- Only give personal information (full name, address, phone numbers, email addresses and user IDs and passwords) to people you know, whether on a website or in a chat room.
- Read any 'terms and conditions' documents to make sure you know what will happen to any information you enter onto a website - look for options to receive or prevent further contact from the site.
- Only enter financial information on a secure site which you trust - a secure site will have an address starting https// and a padlock symbol in the taskbar at the bottom of the screen.
- To reach a trusted website always type the name into the address box, do not use links in emails you may have received.
- If you log in to a site using a name and password, always log out when you have finished using it - do not use 'save password' or 'remember me' options, select the 'always ask' or 'extra security for public computers' options when they are offered.
- Remember that other people may be able to see what you are doing and could take note of any information you enter.
- Always log off the computer when you have finished your session. There is an 'end session' icon in the bottom left corner for this.



For more suggestions look at the 'Protect yourself' section of the Get Safe Online website:
<http://www.getsafeonline.org>

Children and young people also need to be aware of the risks on the internet -see User Guide 22, guidance for parents is also available in User Guide 21.



Safe shopping

Think about the same issues when shopping on the Web as you would in other situations. In particular:

- only use companies that you know about or which have been recommended to you
- check that the company you are using has a physical address and contact phone number, so that you have other ways of following up questions
- be careful with companies which are not based in the UK, as you will not have the same rights if something goes wrong
- try to use a method of paying which will give you some protection if the goods are not delivered
- make sure the website you are using is a secure site - the address starts https// and a padlock symbol is displayed in the taskbar at the bottom of the screen.

The Office of Fair Trading has produced useful guidance about buying on the web which can be found in the Online Shopping section of their website:

<http://www.oft.gov.uk/Consumer/Your+Rights+When+Shopping+From+Home/Online+shopping.htm>

The Get Safe Online website mentioned above also has more details.



Quality of information

Information on the Internet comes from a wide range of sources. Anyone can put up a web page with no checks involved so information you look at is not always accurate or even correct.

Unless you are sure that the site you are looking at is truly authoritative, you should always consider double-checking the information elsewhere, particularly if you are looking for medical or legal information.

To check if you have found a good quality site, consider the following.

- Who has written the information and put it on the web?
 - Have you heard of the company or individual?
 - Do they have expertise or a good reputation in their field?
 - Do they have a particular agenda or bias?
 - Is there any way of contacting them offline, such as a postal address or landline phone number? (Be wary of anonymous sites.)
- with references to other sources (both on the internet and in print) are they to reputable sources and is it clear when you are being taken to an external link?
- How recently was the content written (not just when it was put on the website).
- Check where the information relates to - the web is dominated by American sites, so information you find may only be relevant for the USA.
- The quality of the writing and design will be a guide to how professional the producer is (this is not as good a check as the others, wrong information can be beautifully presented or a subject expert may have a badly designed website).