

# .gov.uk domains

Welcome to our information page to help Suffolk's local councils understand and consider/plan a move to .gov.uk domains.

## What is a .gov.uk domain

A domain acts as an address to help people find you (like a street address). The difference between a .co.uk domain and a .gov.uk one is that .gov.uk are only available to government departments and agencies. This means registration is strictly controlled and this can help provide assurance that your council is an official layer of local government. The Parish Council Domains Helper Service have released a short video explaining the 'what and why' of .gov.uk domains - [click here to view the video](#).

## What are the benefits and risks

As a tier of the public sector, it is vital that town and parish councils work securely and effectively. The benefits of having a .gov.uk domain includes better controls and protection against cyber harm and consistency on the way information is handled and stored. This will result in enabling a more efficient way of handling freedom of information or subject access requests. Administratively it is also easier when somebody leaves the organisation for a host of reasons including ensuring data is deleted which is currently not possible where individual private email addresses are used.

## What to do if your council is considering moving

You should contact the Parish Council Domain Helper Service to help you get started by [completing this form](#). This will register your interest and result in you being invited to one of their virtual introductory sessions which will last approximately 45 minutes. You will be able to choose a date and time with new dates being added throughout the year. The service will provide guidance at key stages including picking the best Approved Registrar, setting up your new domain and maintaining good practices after your new site has gone live. The Service will also tell you how you can access funding (£100 plus VAT) to help with the initial set up costs. This funding is only available for this financial year and will be awarded to the first 1000 councils. So far, almost 500 councils have benefitted from the funding and it is expected that all funding will be allocated by February 2025. It has now been confirmed that funding will not be available in future years and the Parish Council Domain Helper Service would encourage councils who have ambition to move in this financial year, to engage as soon as possible. All funding is allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

## Questions?

We have put together some frequently asked questions below and will continue to add to this information to help parishes in Suffolk below. In addition you can [download this document with FAQs](#) (*this link will take you to a shared Google drive and a live document which is being kept up to date*) which will help support a business case/report when a council is considering these matters. In addition, we have also started to map questions coming through to SALC below:

### ● [What help is available and does this include funding?](#)

The Parish Council Domain Helper Service has been set up to help raise awareness and support to the sector and in this current financial year has funding available. They will provide guidance at key stages including picking the best Approved Registrar, setting up your new domain and maintaining good practices after your new site has gone live.

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