



Report – Website and email Provision for Hever Parish Council October 2025

Current set up

Currently the HPC website is hosted by Mulberry Webdesign and is based on a WordPress system. The website was designed some years ago.

Mr Computing are the current company used for emails and file back-ups. Emails are run through IONOS with a .org email address.

The Clerk uploads information and files and updates the website.

HPC have a .org domain but local Councils are being strongly encouraged to have a .gov.uk domain name for website and email addresses so it is UK based, instantly recognisable as an official, authentic government organisation and communications can be trusted.

Compliance

Local Councils must ensure compliance with current Accessibility Requirements including WCAG 2.1AA

NALC have published an updated SPPP (Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel) Guide for 2025 which refers to AGS Assertion 10 – Digital and data compliance and states it is best practice to use .gov.uk domains for emails and websites. In addition, this enables:

- easier management of Data Subject Access and FOI requests.
- maintains a consistent and professional image.
- ensures communications are from the council. Reduces risk of Cyber scams.
- Website Accessibility

These changes will be reviewed during the Audit of 25-26 year.

The current website and email set up will not be compliant, hence the urgency to review.

Provider Review

I have looked at several providers who also look after other Parish Councils so are aware of the requirements that need to be met.

These include:

- Vision ICT
- Aubergine
- Hugo Fox

Costs

Provider	Website build	Mailboxes	Hosting
Vision ICT	£1200 – includes .gov.uk website and first year hosting	£15 per mail box pa with 10gb storage * 13 mailboxes = £195 pa plus a one off £75 migration fee	£225 pa plus £32.50 pa domain name (.gov.uk)
Other information	SSL certificate is required but is not available with the current website provider		

Recommendations for Council

Having taken into account cost, service and system usability I would like to recommend Vision ICT as the preferred supplier.

Plan of action

Once approved, Clerk to appoint new provider and inform previous provider of exiting. There will be a six-week implementation plan with Vision ICT managing the build of the new website and transition of data. All current community users, such as HRA, The Link, Hever Rose & Horticultural Society will continue to have access to the new site. Training will be provided to those who edit the website. Traffic visiting the old site will be redirected to the new site.

New email addresses will be issued and all emails transferred over to the new system. The new email system, like the current one, is a webmail based system but can also be run through Outlook to enable the continued use of calendars.

Report produced by Rachael Turner, Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
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