Welcome to our new Brand

Brand Guidelines v1.0
2023

Breckland
COUNCIL

Contents

Brand overview

Who we are, what we do, our values and what drives our vision to make Breckland a place where people and business thrive

1.1 Who we are

Breckland Council is an organisation that cares, listens, and supports people and businesses within our district.

We are working for everyone in our area – especially those who need our help the most.

We are proud of our area, and through driving investment and enabling opportunities, we can maximise its full potential. We want to inspire aspiration to live, work, visit, or do business here: we want our district to be one of choice.

Our Corporate Plan brings together our strategic priorities for the coming years and outlines what we'll do to make a difference in Breckland to ensure it is a place where people and businesses can thrive.

This includes a commitment to leading our area into a greener future, in partnership with others, so that together we can bring sustainable outcomes.

The council has big ideas and we are innovative in our approach, coming up with ways to meet the needs of the local communities that we serve. Through our actions, we want to make things better.

Listen

But we know that we can't do it alone. We are a collaborative organisation and we work together with others to make a greater impact.

We are also an employer which supports its staff to grow and develop and we empower our officers to achieve and succeed.

Care

Support

1.2 Corporate plan

Our corporate plan is our strategy from 2021 – 2025 and our priorities for the future are grouped across four key themes.

Inspiring communities

We want to build on the many strengths of our local communities so that people can lead happy, healthy, fulfilling lives in Breckland and we support people through targeted services that make a difference.

We care, and we will always be there when people need us most. We want all our residents to have a place they can call home in Breckland, and feel proud to be here.

Working Smarter

We are a **dynamic, innovative** organisation which embraces change and new ways of working. We take a commercial approach and empower our people so they can make a difference for our local communities, and the businesses and people we serve.

People want to work for and with us, including indirectly delivering services on our behalf.

We are a forward-thinking employer and a trusted partner of choice.

Breckland 2035

We will be a role model for sustainability, take action, and enable others to make informed choices so that together we can all make an impact and contribute to greener lifestyles.

Our approach to sustainability will underpin everything we do as an organisation, informing the decisions we make and the actions we take.

Thriving Places

We continue to **drive investment** to unlock the significant potential and opportunities in our district.

By listening to people, by understanding what they need, and by working together, we can shape what we have to offer in our places to benefit those who are already here and those who choose to come – to live, work, visit, or do business.

1.3 Our Vision

What we want for people
and businesses in our region.

Breckland
A place where people and business can thrive

1.4 Values

Our values are the driving force behind our vision of making Breckland a place where people and business can thrive.

We inspire

We work tirelessly to make our district the place people choose to live, work or do business in.

We support

We will always be there when people need us most.

We work together

We collaborate with others so everything we do has a greater impact.

For residents & communities

We provide excellent services that support all our residents' needs, enhancing their quality of life.

We help everyone in our area and provide services that make a meaningful difference.

We listen to our residents so we know what they need from us – and work alongside them to achieve it.

For businesses

We attract investment in our district and make it a fantastic place for new or growing businesses to be.

We are generous with our time and support of businesses in our area in order to help them thrive.

We collaborate with local businesses and provide them with exactly the support they need.

For staff and our partners

We embrace change and new ways of working so people want to work for and with us.

We look after our staff and support their health and wellbeing.

We empower our people to be the best they can be through supporting their wellbeing, development and training.

Personality

Positive

We are dynamic, innovative and have very high standards. We are determined to create a district where people can live happy, healthy fulfilling lives and won't rest until we know we've done our absolute best.

Caring

We are helpful, approachable and understanding. We can be trusted to offer the right support when and where it's most needed.

Collaborative

We know we can achieve so much more working alongside others. We listen and we understand and respect others' views and emotions.

2

Brand toolkit

All the new elements that help bring the Breckland Council brand to life, creating a caring and trustworthy brand.

2.1 Our logo

The Breckland logo is made up of the 'Stag' and our name in our Primary green.

Master logo

Always use this logo where possible, and it should only be used on a white or very pale background.

White logo

This logo is to be used on darker colours and dark areas over photography. Please make sure there is plenty of contrast for accessibility

Black logo

For single colour and monotone usage.

Logo files:

All logos are available in ai , jpeg and png files.

Master logo
BRE Logo CMYK.ai

White logo
BRE Logo White.ai

Black logo
BRE Logo Black.ai

2.2
Logo clearspace

The logo needs plenty of breathing space for clarity and legibility.

When using the logo, please make sure that the minimum clearspace is used as illustrated.

2.3 Logo do's

Our logo is very important and must never be compromised.

Please respect all versions and use them in the correct way.

A few examples of how to use our various logos correctly.

Correct minimum clearspace

Use white logos on dark colours (Please refer to Accessibility on page 16)

Black logo on tints

Use white logos on dark areas of photography

2.4 Logo don'ts

Please think really carefully about how you use our logo.

You must, under no circumstances, change the Breckland Council logo or create your own version as this will compromise the brand.

Here are some simple things to avoid.

Logo files:
Only use the supplied logos, never create your own versions.

Never distort the logo

Never add a strapline

Never change or move any elements

Never use the master logo on a coloured background

Never use the black logo on a dark background background

Never edit or change the logo colours

Never use the master logo on photographic dark areas

Never house the logo in a box

Never change the typeface

2.5 Logo sizes

Size and positioning

The logo has been created at 100mm, making it easy to size the logo correctly. eg 25mm = 25%

Whenever possible the logo should be positioned **top right** with the correct **minimum clearspace** (**page 10**).

To maintain a consistent use of the Breckland Council logo across different materials, logo sizes have been specified for a range of 'A' sizes.

For each A-size of paper we have defined a width for the logo, which works for both landscape and portrait orientation.

Minimum size

The logo should not be used any smaller than 25mm (25%) width.

A5 portrait/land

Logo
30mm / 30%

All margins
minimum 8mm

A4 portait/landscape

Logo
35mm / 35%

All margins
minimum 10mm

A3 portait/landscape

Logo
50mm / 50%

All margins
15mm

2.6 Affiliate logos

Breckland programmes

When creating any communications for Breckland initiatives like Inspiring Communities, you should always lead with the programme logo (top left or right).

The Breckland logo and any other affiliated logos should appear smaller within the footer area and adhere to any minimum size requirements.

Minimum size

The logo should not be used any smaller than 25mm (25%) width.

2.7 Brand colours

An extended palette has been developed that will help the brand thrive and work in harmony with the four themes of the corporate plan.

Primary colours

Breckland green, black and a neutral grey form the basis of our primary palette.

Secondary colours

These are based around our four corporate themes

Please don't mix 'theme' colours. The only time this is allowed is when creating Breckland communications and using the hexagons.

PANTONE 569	BLACK	PANTONE 454
C 96 M 22 Y 63 K 8	C 0 M 0 Y 0 K 100	C 22 M 18 Y 37 K 3
R 0 G 128 B 110	R 0 G 0 B 0	R 205 G 197 B 167
#007F6D	#1D1D1B	#CDC5A7

PANTONE 7484	PANTONE 7470	PANTONE 519	PANTONE 718
C 92 M 38 Y 76 K 38	C 98 M 47 Y 38 K 26	C 70 M 88 Y 31 K 24	C 18 M 77 Y 100 K 8
R 0 G 87 B 64	R 0 G 88 B 112	R 91 G 50 B 95	R 193 G 78 B 0
#005740	#005870	#5B325F	#C14E00

PANTONE 7737	PANTONE 314	PANTONE 2592	PANTONE 165
C 64 M 13 Y 95 K 1	C 100 M 22 Y 24 K 8	C 60 M 85 Y 0 K 0	C 0 M 70 Y 87 K 0
R 107 G 165 B 58	R 0 G 125 B 165	R 158 G 40 B 181	R 255 G 104 B 29
#6BA53A	#007DA5	#9E28B5	#FF681D

PANTONE 375	PANTONE 3125	PANTONE RHODAMINE RED	PANTONE 130
C 50 M 0 Y 100 K 0	C 91 M 0 Y 23 K 0	C 12 M 91 Y 0 K 0	C 1 M 39 Y 100 K 0
R 148 G 214 B 0	R 0 G 172 B 200	R 230 G 8 B 149	R 246 G 168 B 0
#94D600	#00ACC8	#E60895	#F6A800
50%	50%	50%	50%

Breckland 2035

Thriving Places

Working Smarter

Inspiring communities
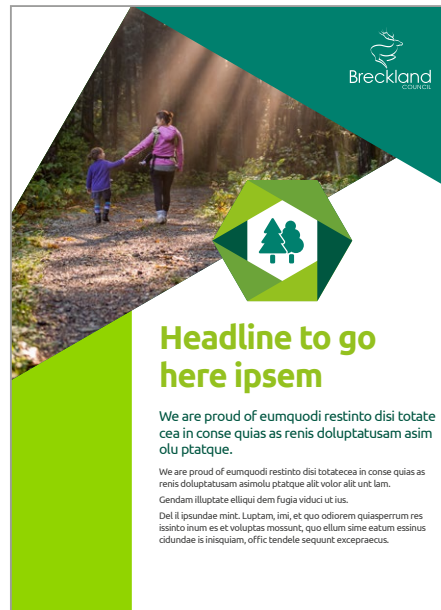
2.7 Brand colours

Using our colours

When creating Breckland Council communciations where Breckland green is used, you can also use the lightest secondary colour as well as the 'neutral' grey (shown here).

Please do not use any of the darker secondary colours with the Breckland Green.

When using **Adobe Creative Suite**, you will be able to edit shapes within the hexagons as well as using imagery inside sections of the hexagon and changing their colours according to the colours shown here.

PANTONE 569 BRECKLAND GREEN

PANTONE 375

PANTONE 3125

PANTONE RHODAMINE RED

PANTONE 130

PANTONE 454

Headline to go here ipsem

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Headline here lorem ipsem

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Visit **breckland.gov.uk**

Headline here lorem ipsem

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We are proud of eumquodi restinto disi totatecea in conse quias as renis doluptatusam asimolu ptatque alit volor alit unt lam. Gendam illuptate elliqui dem fugia viduci ut ius.

Del il ipsundae mint. Luptam, imi, et quo odiorem quiasp errum res issinto inum es et voluptas mossunt, quo lquunto blabori dem ex erum, ommolut imendeb itationecab is ex excero omni dolorruptur?

Visit **breckland.gov.uk**

2.8 Accessibility

Providing a public service to our residents accessibility is extremely important to all our communications.

Colour and accessibility

Our colours convey our passion to help people and businesses in our region thrive; they are a distinctive and vital part of our brand. However, some combinations of our colours can be difficult to read, particularly when text appears on a coloured background, and don't meet current accessibility requirements.

The new Breckland brand is predominantly white, for a fresher look and clarity of information.

Coloured backgrounds should be used sparingly to call out specific pieces of content such as quotes or important notices.

Text should be enlarged to ensure legibility. Small text, such as body copy and image captions, should not be placed on any of our lighter colours and should be used sparingly.

#007F6D
✔ #FFFFFF

#1D1D1B
✔ #FFFFFF
✔ #007F6D
✔ #FF681D
✔ #94D600
✔ #00ACC8
✔ #F6A800

#CDC5A7
✔ #1D1D1B
✔ #005740
✔ #005870
✔ #5b325f

#FFFFFF
✔ #1D1D1B
✔ #007F6D
✔ #005870
✔ #5b325f
✔ #c14e00
✔ #007da5
✔ 9E28B5

#005740
✔ #FFFFFF
✔ #CDC5A7
✔ #94D600

#005870
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✔ #94D600

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✔ #CDC5A7
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✔ #94D600

#C14E00
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#6BA53A
✔ #FFFFFF
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✔ #FFFFFF

#FF681D
✔ #1D1D1B

#94D600
✔ #1D1D1B
✔ #005740

#00ACC8
✔ #1D1D1B

#E60895

#F6A800
✔ #1D1D1B
✔ #5b325f

AA/AAA Large text is 18 – 24pt

AA/AAA Normal text is 16pt

2.9 Typography

We have a range of typefaces to be used within our refreshed brand.

Corporate typeface

Ubuntu has been chosen as the corporate typeface for the refreshed Breckland Council brand. It is modern, soft and accessible with a great range of weights making it a very versatile typeface.

Please use for all headline text, in any weights you see fit. Bold has the most impact.

Ubuntu is an Open source **Google font**, meaning it is free to use online or in print.

A modern, approachable and professional typeface

Light /
Light Italic
Regular /
Regular Italic
Medium /
Medium Italic
Bold /
Bold Italic

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABC
DEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

1234567890!@£$%^&*()

2.9 Typography

Roboto slab has been selected as our secondary typeface to compliment Ubuntu.

A range of secondary typefaces have been selected to be used sparingly alongside our corporate tyepface Ubuntu.

These can be used to add emphasis, variety, energy, fun and personality to any communications.

Please note:

These shouldn't be used in any top level corporate communications.

Ubuntu
is our corporate typeface.

Roboto Slab
is our secondary typeface.

" But in certain instances, other typefaces can be used to inject, energy, fun and, PERSONALITY INTO ANY communications "

Roboto Slab

Barriecito

PERMANENT MARKER

American typewriter

2.10 The Hexagon

This symbolises the collaborative approach of Breckland Council.

It illustrates a number of elements coming together as one, providing an aperture like focus in the middle where imagery, text or icons can be used to focus on.

The hexagon creates a range of dynamic shapes, which can be used in numerous ways across the brand.

Hexagons can also be rotated, but only by multiples of 30° at a time.

Hexagons can also be flipped horizontally and vertically.

Hex_Corporate-1.ai

Crops of the hexagon can be taken to create a dynamic layout, but please use at least one other hexagon in your layout

2.10 The Hexagon

We have a range of hexagons to illustrate the four themes of our corporate plan.

We have two sets with different colour emphasis for use on white backgrounds as well as a white version, see **page 22**

When creating communications for any of the four themes, **ONLY** use hexagons from **Set 1** or **Set 2** or **WHITE** for that theme.

Please note:

Do not use hexagons together from different themes for any 'themed' communication

Inspiring communities

Breckland 2035

Thriving Places

Working Smarter

Set 1

Hex_Inspiring Comms-1.ai

Hex_Breckland2035-1.ai

Hex_ThrivingPlaces-1.ai

Hex_WorkingSmarter-1.ai

Set 2

Hex_Inspiring Comms-2.ai

Hex_Breckland2035-2.ai

Hex_ThrivingPlaces-2.ai

Hex_WorkingSmarter-2.ai

The ONLY time all of the hexagons can be used together:

is for communications for the overall **Breckland brand**, where the corporate hexagon is used and it isn't 'themed'

2.10 The Hexagon

We also have a set of hexagons for use on the darkest coloured background

White versions

These are available to use on the darkest colours. When using typography on these design, always use white to ensure the maximum contrast for accessibility (**see 2.8 Accessibility on page 17**)

Please note:

These are not finished designs, just examples of how the WHITE hexagons can be used.

Hex_Inspiring Comms-1 WHITE.ai

Always use white text

for maximum legibility and accessibility

Hex_Breckland2035-1 WHITE.ai

Always use white text

for maximum legibility and accessibility

Hex_ThrivingPlaces-1 WHITE.ai

Always use white text

for maximum legibility and accessibility

Hex_WorkingSmarter-1 WHITE.ai

Always use white text

for maximum legibility and accessibility

2.11 Photography

Photography should be

Natural and Aspirational

Positive

Bright

2.11 Photography

Reality is key to the Breckland brand

People

Where possible, Breckland imagery should illustrate real people and services with natural reportage style photography.

Please avoid obvious 'stock' photography with models smiling directly at the camera. When using 'stock' imagery, please choose carefully and try to select images that:

• are human-focused

• show emotion

• depict real and specific situations

• Illustrate the impact we have on people in our region

• use natural lighting and colour

Please note:

Images are for illustrative purposes only apart from those marked*, bought for inspiring communities

2.11 Photography

Reality and honesty is key to the Breckland brand.

Places

We are all proud of our beautiful region, it's diversity and want to celebrate our rural and urban areas.

Photography should be bright, positive and showcase our region in a positive, thriving, inspiring way.
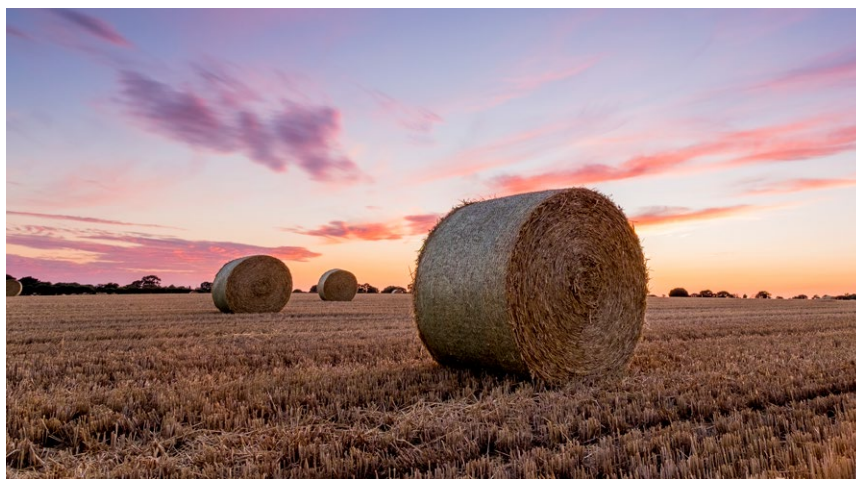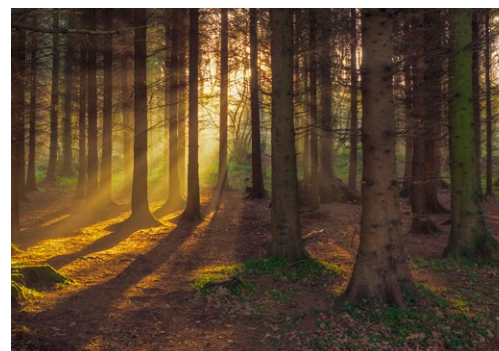
2.12 Icons

The council has a large range of services and needs a large suite of clean and legible icons to represent these services.
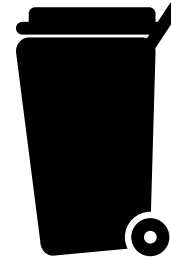
Here are a few examples of our icon suite which are available in Breckland green, black and white.
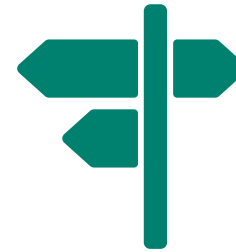
Icons are avaialble in:

Illustrator SVG and PNG formats

Community / Wellbeing / Leisure

Waste/Rubbish

Places

Report it
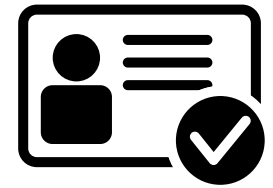
Housing

Benefits

Business

Elections / Vote

Council Tax

License

2.12 Icons – Black

Icons are available in: Illustrator SVG and PNG formats

Avian Flu	Benefits	Business	Business Rates	Business Support	Caring
CCTV	Commercial	Council Tax	COVID		

Events Calendar	Flood	Food Safety	Funding	Housing	Information/Governance
Jobs / CV	Job Alert / Recruitment	Laptop / IT	License		

Meeting	Meeting room booking	My Breckland	Pavements	Pay	Places
Planning	Report it	Residents update	Roads		

Rubbish/Waste	Survey	SWEP	Environment / Trees	Vote / Elections	Weather
Web update	Wellbeing 1	Wellbeing 2/ Community			

2.12 Icons – Breckland Green

Icons are available in: Illustrator SVG and PNG formats

Avian Flu	Benefits	Business	Business Rates	Business Support
Caring	CCTV	Commercial	Council Tax	COVID
Events Calendar	Flood	Food Safety	Funding	Housing
Information/ Governance	Jobs / CV	Job Alert / Recruitment	Laptop / IT	License
Meeting	Meeting room booking	My Breckland	Pavements	Pay
Places	Planning	Report it	Residents update	Roads
Rubbish/Waste	Survey	SWEP	Environment / Trees	Vote / Elections
Weather	Web update	Wellbeing 1	Wellbeing 2/ Community	

2.12 Icons – Breckland Green

Icons are available in: Illustrator SVG and PNG formats

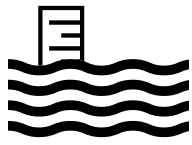|					
Avian Flu	Benefits	Business	Business Rates	Business Support	Caring
CCTV	Commercial	Council Tax	COVID		

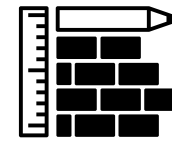|					
Events Calendar	Flood	Food Safety	Funding	Housing	Information/ Governance
Jobs / CV	Job Alert / Recruitment	Laptop / IT	License		

Meeting	Meeting room booking	My Breckland	Pavements	Pay	Places
Planning	Report it	Residents update	Roads		

Rubbish/Waste	Survey	SWEP	Environment / Trees	Vote / Elections	Weather
Web update	Wellbeing 1	Wellbeing 2/ Community			

2.13 Illustration

Illustration

If you feel that photography isn't relevant, then illustration could be used instead.

A few placeholder examples from **istockphoto.com** here could be used.

Wellbeing

Families

Support

business

Let's get
talking

Breckland are keen to atem fugia nonet et hicilit ommolorae vendunde dolumet

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Facilis consequat dolores duis minim voluptat ipsem magna etat nulla.

Find out more visit

www.breckland.gov.uk/letsgettalking

Brand in action

All the new elements that help bring the Breckland Council brand to life, creating a caring and trustworthy brand.

3.1 Stationery

To keep a consistent and professional brand, our stationery has been updated too.

Corporate stationery should be set using the corporate typeface Ubuntu. The Breckland Council logo and addresses must be in their fixed position at all times.

Business cards should include the contact's name, position, address, mobile, telephone and email as well as the council web address and social media icons.
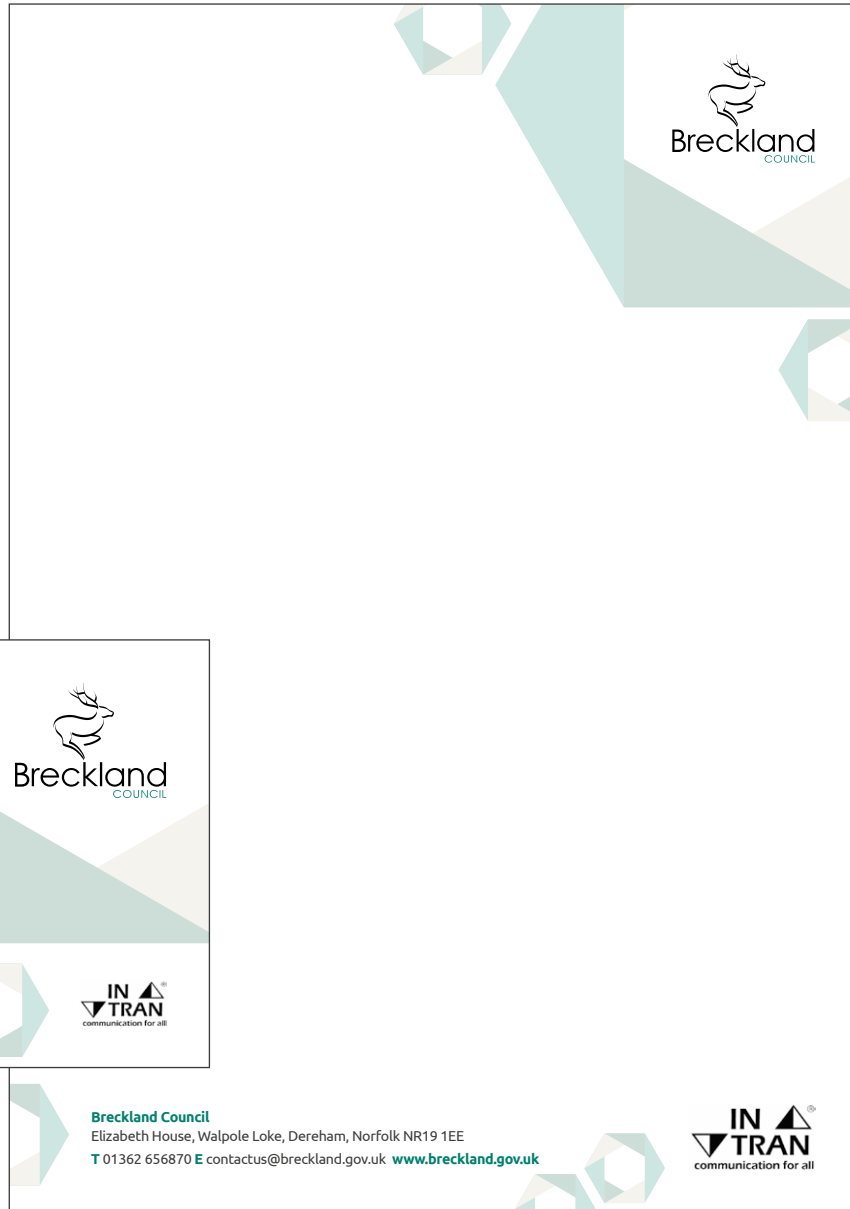
Logo
A4 35mm with minimum clearspace applied

Hexagon
Hex_Corporate-1.ai

Maxine O'Mahony
Chief Executive
E maxine.omahony@breckland.gov.uk
T 07342 088 334

@MaxineOMahony

Breckland Council
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1EE
www.breckland.gov.uk

A place where people and business **thrive**

With compliments

Breckland Council
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1EE
T 01362 656870 **E** contactus@breckland.gov.uk **www.breckland.gov.uk**

IN
TRAN
communication for all

Breckland Council
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk NR19 1EE
T 01362 656870 **E** contactus@breckland.gov.uk **www.breckland.gov.uk**

IN
TRAN
communication for all

Typography
Ubuntu regular and bold, 10/13pt

3.2 Editorial

Our Transforming Breckland magazine is our main printed form of communication to our residents

Full of useful information about how we are investing and helping the people and businesses of Breckland thrive.

To reflect this, it has taken on a fresh, dynamic look with more impactful imagery, less text and more drives to the website.

Typography
Use of secondary typefaces

Masterhead
Bold, colourful and clear information

Icons
Used to illustrate key facts and stories

Hexagon
Use of hexagon device to hold key information for standout

Imagery
Strong, on brand, impactful imagery

Call to action
Clear drive to the website

3.3 Leaflets

A4/A5 leaflets

All leaflets, should ideally use at least 50% white space, more than one hexagon where possible and a clear hierachy of typography.

On this example, the information is divided up into clear sections of information, making it easy for the reader to pick out key information.

Hexagons are used to highlight some key facts too.

3.4 Posters

A4/A3 Posters

Internal posters to inform staff and visitors with a range of messages from health, to awareness, and directional signage.

Full colour can be used, but please adhere to **2.8 Accessibility** on **page 17** .

Clear typography, generally white space, heaxagons and icons are all used to convey information.

Health and safety
Reminder

Please remember COVID is still around.

Mask wearing is now optional throughout our offices, but some people may still choose to wear one.

PLEASE RESPECT THEIR DECISION

Find out more:
www.breckland.gov.uk

Welcome
to Breckland Council

Helping you find your way:

Council Tax and benefits

Health and safety for business

Planning and Building Control
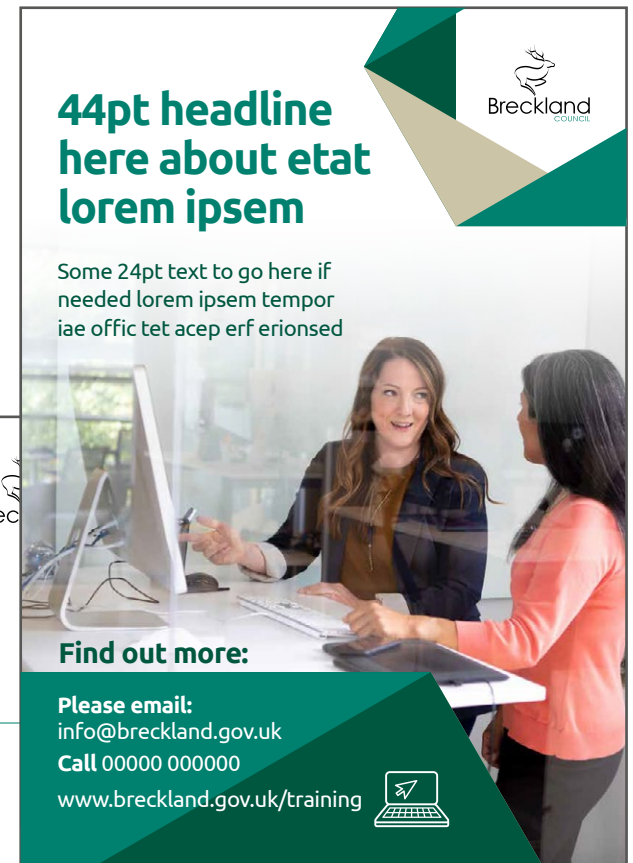
44pt headline here about etat lorem ipsem

Some 24pt text to go here if needed lorem ipsem tempor iae offic tet acep erf erionsed

Find out more:

Please email:
info@breckland.gov.uk
Call 00000 000000

www.breckland.gov.uk/training

Welcome
to Breckland Council

Helping you find your way:

Council Tax and benefits

Health and safety for business

Planning and Building Control

3.5 Powerpoint

Our Powerpoint template contains all the pages you need to create a presentation.

The template contains 'Title pages' for our corporate presentation and our four themes shown here.

Icon (PNG files) can be used as shown here if required.

'Corporate' title page

'Theme' title pages

3.5 Powerpoint

Some examples of content pages.

Corporate

This template leads with the Breckland branding top right.

Themed pages

This template leads with the 'Theme' logo top right, and Breckland logo bottom right throughout.

'Corporate' text heavy page

Powerpoint title and date here

40pt subheading here

30pt – Introductory text here uam aboruntum none ped ut fuga uiam qui dendiae pa sape qui landa quas del mos quiani to molupta que latem imaio.

24pt body copy – Mos quiani to molupta que latem.Rum quam laut labor mil ea quatecabo. Lent ipicae ra doluptiur si aliquam re volore event fuga. Ipsuntori ulparuptate veles ut archil modis rerchil ma voluptasi corum re ad moluptatem quis quis magnihil

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www.breckland.gov.uk

3.6 Identification

ID Cards and lanyards

Our new branding has been applied to our Lanyards and ID cards.

A simple corporate hexagon to frame the photos and a Breckland green lanyard with a range of bright hexagons.

For ID cards a face on a white background preferred where possible.

Nathan Flatman
Senior Communications Officer

Nathan Flatman
Senior Communications Officer

3.7 Bannerstands

Exhibition panels

Our exhibition panels use a clean, white design with the 'hexagon' device used as a header as well as for housing imagery if used.

Themed banners **only** use hexagons and colours from thats theme, eg Breckland 2035 shown here.

Breckland 2035 'theme' banner

1 Lead with theme branding top right

2 Endorsed by Breckland logo

3 Hexagon used **Hex_Breckland2035-1.ai**

4 **Icons can be used too**

Corporate banner

1 Breckland master logo only

2 Hexagon used **Hex_Corporate-1.ai**

3 Social media #placetothrive

Theme banner

1 Lead with theme branding top right

2 Endorsed by Breckland logo

3.8 Email newsletter

Internal communciations newsletter

Our staff newsletter has been updated with our vibrant new brand.

A 'network' of hexagons has been used to illustrate our collaboration with all stakeholders across our region.
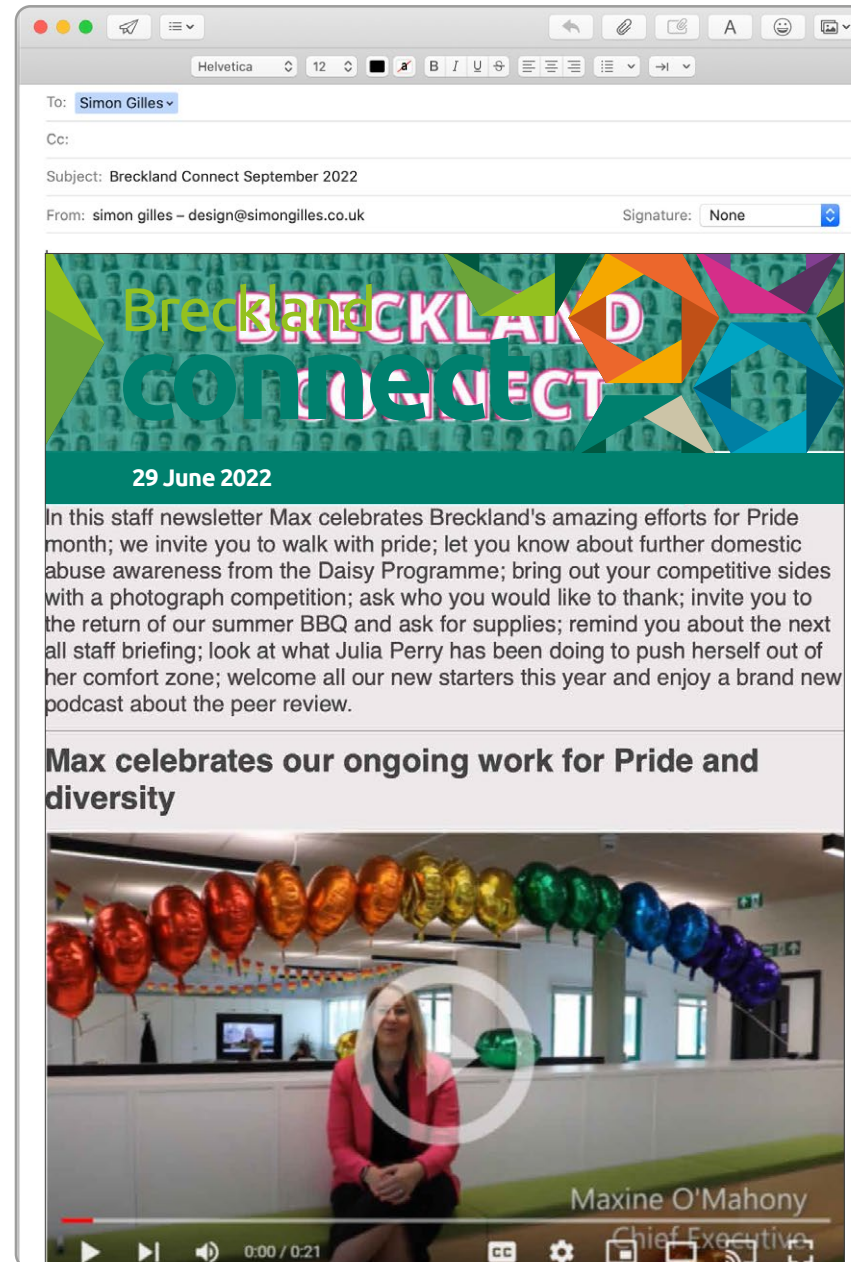
3.9 Social media

Our social media cards are created in Canva, using the brand toolkit.

Any post needs to be clear, informative and easy to read.

Typography
Ubuntu bold

Corporate hexagons used

Roads update

Logo with minimum clearpsace

Icon from our library

Grants update

Other colours that can be used

#007F6D	#005740	#005870	#5B325F
✔ #FFFFFF	✔ #FFFFFF	✔ #FFFFFF	✔ #FFFFFF
	✔ #CDC5A7	✔ #CDC5A7	✔ #CDC5A7
	✔ #94D600	✔ #94D600	✔ #F6A800
			✔ #94D600

#6BA53A	#007DA5	#9E28B5	#C14E00
✔ #FFFFFF	✔ #FFFFFF	✔ #FFFFFF	✔ #FFFFFF
✔ #1D1D1B			

3.10 Signage

For sale/To let

Our signage needs to follow our new brand, using the **Hex_Corporate-1.ai**, our new typeface **Ubuntu**.

Information needs to be very clear, uncluttered with plenty of white space.

For Sale

Retail unit
800 – 2,00 Sq ft

Breckland COUNCIL

For more information
Call 00000 000000
Email Officestolet@breckland.gov.uk

To Let

Commmercial unit
800 – 2,00 Sq ft

Breckland COUNCIL

For more information
Call 00000 000000
Email Officestolet@breckland.gov.uk

4

Style guide

Consistent messaging and how we speak to all our stakeholders is an integral part of the Breckland brand and our values.

It builds trust and reassurance among all stakeholders.

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Most organisations have their own brand and house style for their publications and digital content.

Having a clear and consistent visual brand and writing style makes our publications and content more recognisable – and helps improve the public's perception of the council.

Remember:

our brand is more than the council logo – it's about our values, beliefs and what we want people to think of us.

Following a consistent style ensures our content is:

• Recognisable

• Accurate

• Easy to read and understand

• Punctuated consistently and correctly

• Describes things (such as departments and roles) in the same way

• Uses the same style for numbers and dates

• Avoids common grammatical mistakes.

All our communications - external, internal, digital or printed - should be produced in accordance with this guide.

Our values

Our corporate values underpin our brand:

• We inspire people to live, work, visit and do business in our area

• We support people and will always be there when they need us most

• We work together and collaborate with others so everything we do has a greater impact.

Our personality

Brand voice is Breckland Council's personality, expressed through the words we use, our tone and our culture.

It affects how people see, think and respond to us.

All our communications should demonstrate the following personality traits and values:

• We are collaborative, supportive and approachable.

• We are flexible, innovative and bold.

• We inspire, care and provide leadership.

• We are professional, efficient and friendly.

• We are helpful, understanding and listen.

• We are honest, trustworthy and reliable.

• We are knowledgeable, fair and respectful.

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Tone of voice

Our tone of voice is the way in which we write and speak, what we say and how we say it.

Like a person, what we say is dictated by our values and aspirations, how we say it is informed by our personality.

We don't change who we are, but we do moderate our tone, depending on the context and who we're communicating with.

For example, your tone might be formal when writing to someone about their recent planning application, or informal when replying to a resident's query about leisure centre opening hours on social media.

Use **I, we, your, our** where possible as it will make your writing sound more personal and sincere.

Some examples

Letter to residents

Communication from the council regarding new recycling collection arrangements

Tone Clear, helpful, supportive, approachable

Your recycling – which we currently collect on Tuesdays – will now be collected every Friday, starting Wednesday 1 June 2022.

We hope this change won't cause you any problems, but if you'd like to talk to us about it, you can contact us on 01362 656870.

We hope you find the enclosed fridge magnet a helpful reminder of your new recycling collection day!

Phone call to a business owner

Alleged fly tipping on the caller's land

Tone Calm, understanding, impartial

I'm very sorry to hear you've had this experience - it must be very upsetting and inconvenient for you and your business.

I will let my colleague who investigates fly tipping know that you've been in touch.

They'll then call you to let you know how we can support you.

Facebook comment to a member of the public

What time does Breckland Leisure Centre open tomorrow morning?

Tone Helpful, knowledgeable, reliable

Hi Dave, thanks for getting in touch.

The gym opens at 6am, the swimming pool opens at 7am, and the first exercise class is step aerobics at 7.45am.

You can check out all the opening times and full timetable on the website: https://www.leisurecentre.com/breckland-leisure-centre-waterworld.

I hope you enjoy your visit to the centre, whatever you choose to do!

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Email to a member of the public
Complaint about the increase in the cost of parking in council-run car parks
Tone Understanding, respectful, honest
Thank you for your email and feedback regarding the recent increases to car parking charges in the town centre. It's never an easy decision to increase car parking charges, particularly at the moment as we know many of our residents' finances are stretched. We sympathise with your concerns and assure you the decision was not taken lightly. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, fewer people are commuting to work and as a result are no longer buying season tickets for our car parks. This meant our car parks were no longer bringing in enough money to cover the cost of maintaining them and ensuring safety. We explored other ways of covering the shortfall, but sadly found our only option was to increase the cost of parking by 10p per hour. We keep parking costs as low as possible for residents and businesses and have guaranteed there will be no further increases for the next four years. I hope this helps reassure you and explain why we had to make this extremely difficult decision. Do let me know if you have any further questions and I'll do my best to help.

Inclusivity

Our content should be accessible and welcoming to everyone who uses it.

Inclusive language helps us build trust with our audience and provide a better service.

Ability and disability

Every person is a whole person - no matter how they interact with the world.

Consider what they need to do, what tools they use and avoid making assumptions.

Avoid terms that contribute to stigmas around disability and mental illness.

Age

Avoid referring to someone's age, unless it's relevant to what you're writing about.

Write **older person** rather than elderly.

Gender and sexuality

Make content gender neutral wherever possible.

If you're writing about a hypothetical person or if you're unsure of a person's pronouns, use 'they' or 'them' instead of 'he' or 'she'.

Nationality

Try to avoid grouping people by nationality or making generalisations about people from a particular country.

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Race, ethnicity and religion

Avoid using words, images or situations that reinforce racial, ethnic or religious stereotypes.

Be relevant

For each piece of communication, ask yourself:

Who is the communication for and what do they need?

What's the context of the communication?

What am I trying to achieve?

Where possible, get straight to the point.

Most readers will look at the first few words of a paragraph and decide whether it's worth reading the rest.

Be concise

Keep sentences simple, with no more than 20 words.

Paragraphs should be no longer than three or four lines.

Use bullet points where appropriate - they're much easier to read than a list forming part of a sentence.

For online content, carry out some keyword research and use your findings in your writing.

Be understood

Try not to use formal or long words when easy or short ones will do.

For example, use:

• **Buy** instead of purchase

• **Help** instead of assist

• **About** instead of approximately

• **Like** instead of such as.

Avoid government buzzwords and jargon that people might not understand or find annoying.

Examples of words and phrases to avoid include:

• Access
• Deliver
• Dialogue
• Drive
• Enable
• Facilitate
• Robust
• Streamline
• Utilise
• Going forward.

Make it practical

If your writing is giving advice or asking people to do something, try to make it actionable.

You can do this by:

• **Listing the steps required to complete a task** – if you're advising someone to do something, show them exactly how to do this

• **Provide examples** - sometimes it's easier to understand why you should do something - or how - when it's brought to life with a case study or you can see what the end result will look like

• **Consider your readers' resources** - not everyone will have access to the same time, budget or tools, so provide alternatives so as many people as possible can benefit

• Provide options for further support or where to find out more information.

Tense

Write in the present tense wherever possible to help make your writing fresh and immediate.

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Active vs passive voice

Content should be written in active voice wherever possible.

Passive voice (where the subject of a sentence is used after the verb) is acceptable, but should be used sparingly.

Active voice is fluid and easy to read, while passive voice can be more awkward.

Search engines also favour active voice.

In order to use the correct voice, it's important to understand the difference between active and passive voice.

Active voice – when using active voice, the sentence subject performs an action.

For example: Breckland Council provides an excellent range of services.

Passive voice – when using passive voice, an action is applied to the subject.

For example: The excellent range of services is provided by Breckland Council.

Upper case/lower case

Capital letters make reading more difficult and should only be used when necessary.

Never use block capitals as it's very hard to read and can be interpreted as shouting.

You should, however, use capital letters when using the council's full title, or when naming specific departments, committees or an individual's name and job title.

For example:

- **Proper names**
  Elizabeth House, Norfolk Museum Service

- **Proper names of organisations**
  Breckland Council, Citizens Advice Bureau

- **Full job titles in conjunction with the postholder**
  John Smith, HR Manager

- **Councillor when it forms part of a title**,
  for example, Councillor Jane Smith

- **Directorate names**
  Contracts and Operations, Environmental Services, Property and Infrastructure

- **Committee names** - Licensing Committee. Use lower case when talking about licensing committees in general.

Don't capitalise (unless they start a sentence):

- **council** - unless it's part of a full title, for example Breckland Council

- **councillor or councillors** when talking about them in general

- **government** – it's never Government unless part of a full title, for example Local Government Association

- Words like **county, district** and **region**

- When referring generally to jobs or positions, for example, **managers, officers, councillors, librarians, teachers**

- When referring generally to organisations like **local authorities, district councils, parish councils, health authorities, leisure centres, libraries and charities**.

Acronyms

If you have to use an acronym which may be unfamiliar to your readers, spell it out the first time it's mentioned, with the acronym following in brackets.

You can then use the acronym alone for further mentions.

For example: The Business Rural Initiative and Training Enterprise (BRITE) project was completed this year.

All of the 15 organisations involved worked together seamlessly, helping the BRITE project achieve everything we set out to do for local businesses.

Don't use a lesser-known acronym if you're not going to use it again later in the text, just write it out in full.

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Abbreviations

Abbreviations should not be used other than those which are extremely commonly used and understood.

For example: The Breckland Council planning meeting will start at 6pm on 1 December.

The majority of people understand what pm means, so it's fine to use this abbreviation.

Other common abbreviations that can be used without definition include: **NHS**, **BBC**, **ITV**, **UK**, **EU**, **MP**, **MEP**.

There may be others, but if you're in any doubt, write out the full title in the first instance.

Ampersands should only be used if they are part of official titles or names. Otherwise, spell out **and**.

Don't use full stops in abbreviations.

If you wish to abbreviate Councillor when it forms part of a title, use **Cllr**, not Coun.

Internally, Breckland Council may be shortened to **Breckland**.

Breckland Council should always be written out in full in public facing content.

Numbers

Write out numbers up to ten and use figures for 11 onwards.

For example: Breckland Council has four directorates, 30 councillors and 300 employees. The Breckland district has 140,000 residents.

Use a combination of a figure and a word for very large round numbers (such as multiple millions/billions).

Spell out words for **first**, **second** and so on, up to and including **tenth**.

Use the number and **st**, **nd**, **rd**, or **th** for larger ordinal numbers.

Don't use superscript (to prevent problems with line spacing).

Always use figures and symbols for percentages, measurements and currency. Use commas to punctuate large numbers.

Figures should also always be used for ranges of numbers.

For example: We are providing extra support to adults aged 70 to 75 years.

Never start a sentence with a numeral, write it out in full.

Always spell out per cent when quoting figures in text. Only use the % symbol when working in a table. Percentage is one word.

Avoid using fractions, instead convert them into decimals or percentages.

When quoting a decimal figure less than one, put a 0 in front, for example use **0.25 per cent**, not .25 per cent.

Don't write numbers out as words when providing financial information, just use figures.

Weights and measures

Use decimal and metric systems.

Use abbreviations with figures and no spaces.

For example:
12mm, 1.2cm, 40m, 100km, 25g, 20kg

Telephone numbers

Use **Telephone:** or **Mobile:** and not Tel or Mob.

Where you include an extension number, write **x1234**, not ext 1234.

Include the area code for all telephone numbers, leave one character space and write the remaining digits.

For example: 01362 656870

For mobile numbers, add the first five digits, leave a space, then write the remaining digits.

For London telephone numbers, write the area code first, leave one character space, write the next four digits, leave another character space, then add the last four digits.

For example: 020 8123 4567

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Times and dates

Always use the **12-hour clock**. The 12-hour clock uses a full stop between the hours and minutes.

Dates and times should be written in the following format:

The Breckland Council planning meeting will start at 6.30pm on 1 December 2022.

Don't use an additional .00 for times on the hour and close up space between the number and the 'am' or 'pm'.

Use **noon** or **midnight** instead of 12, 12 noon or 12 midnight.

Always put the date before the month.

Don't use th etc with dates - just the number and month - and never precede the number with the.

Use days with dates only for emphasis or the avoidance of confusion/ambiguity.

Financial or school years can be written: **2022/23**.

Date ranges should be written: **2022 to 2023**.

Bullet points

You can use bullet points to make text easier to read.

Use upper case at the start of each bullet point.

Don't punctuate the end of bullet points which are a list of items.

If the bullet points form a complete sentence with preceding text, add a full stop to the end of the last point.

Subject-verb agreement

When referring to a noun that denotes a single group of people (**for example**: **Breckland Council, council, government, team, public**) use a singular verb.

For example:
Breckland Council submits plans for £1.6 million shared prosperity funding.

The public needs information about the changes to the way Breckland Council's car parks are run.

American English

Do not use the US spelling unless you are quoting an American speaker or from American text (in which case the original should be kept).

Emojis

Conservative, relevant use of emojis suitable for the audience can be used in email subject lines and on social media.

One emoji per post is acceptable.

Emphasis

Adding emphasis on a word should generally be avoided – but if there's no other way around it, you can use bold text.

Don't underline a word to create emphasis as this generally suggests a hyperlink, especially on web pages.

Italics can be hard to read.

Headers and subheaders

Headers and subheaders help break up your content so it's easy to read.

For this reason, a header or subheader should be used at least every 10 paragraphs.

Web addresses and hyperlinks

When sharing a web address via a printed document, our style is:

www.breckland.gov.uk/etc

When writing content that will be read online, don't write out the link in full, use a hyperlink.

Never write click here – the linked text must tell the reader (and search engines) what the destination page is about.

For example: **View our opening times**.

Don't hyperlink full sentences (unless they're extremely short).

Try to link from a snippet of text that makes sense on its own.

Internal links always open in the same window, external links always open in a new window.

4.1 Breckland Council style guide

Apostrophes

Incorrect use of apostrophes is common.

Here's some guidance on how to use them:

Apostrophes are used to indicate:

That a letter (or letters) have been missed out, for example, is not being shortened to isn't or it is being shortened to it's.

To indicate ownership. In most cases, the apostrophe is followed by the letter s,

For example, **the council's services, Thetford's population**.

If the word ends with s, the apostrophe is added on its own at the end to indicate ownership. This applies whether the word is singular or plural.

For example,
the managers' decisions, the businesses' progress.

If an s is being added to a number or abbreviation to make it plural, an apostrophe is not needed.

For example:
• **The service is available to over 18s**
• **The MPs visited the council offices last month**.

Remember that it's with an apostrophe means it is or it has, not belonging to it.

So if you're referring to the council's budget, **its budget** is correct - not it's budget.

Brackets

Use brackets sparingly to add something to a sentence.

The full stop should be added outside the brackets - unless what's inside is a full sentence.

Any sentence in which you use brackets should still make sense if the words inside the brackets are removed.

Exclamation marks

An exclamation mark is used to show strength of feeling. Use them sparingly.

Inverted commas

Use double inverted commas to show direct speech.

Single inverted commas can be used when, for example, you're quoting from a report or referring to a book's title.

Spaces

Sentences should always be separated by a single space, never two spaces.

Slashes

Avoid using the slash (/) symbol apart from when referring to school or financial years
(**please see the times and dates section**).

Our vision to make Breckland a place where people and business thrive.

By following these guidelines you are helping us endorse this vision.

For further information contact
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