

SECTION 9: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

This policy must be observed by all members of staff – failure to observe procedures may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct and will be dealt with according to the company's normal disciplinary procedures.

Any member of staff who becomes aware of any problems concerning abuse of the electronic communication facility must advise their Head of Department at once.

9.1 Use of the Internet

- Beales web site may be found at www.bealeshotels.co.uk. This web site has been prepared with great care and is intended to convey our values with regards to excellent value, superior quality and first class customer service. All members of staff are encouraged to give feedback concerning the site and new ideas are very welcome. These should be submitted to the Managing Director, the only member of staff who is authorised to make changes to Beales web site.
- No member of staff may use the company's facilities to access any web site whatsoever which is not related to the business of the company.
- The unauthorised downloading or use of copyright information will be regarded as gross misconduct. Due to potentially damaging viruses, it is strictly forbidden to download from the internet any enabling software (whether to assist downloading of any web site information or otherwise), screen saver, music or multimedia presentation, or other software based facility made available via the internet without prior authorisation from the General Manager.
- **Use the internet wisely!** If the information you are seeking may be available more quickly by conventional means or by picking up the phone, use the most time efficient method.



9.2 Use of email - THE GOLDEN RULE!

If you wouldn't say it in public or send it by post – DON'T email it!

- Email normally may be used only to communicate internally with colleagues and externally to clients and suppliers on business related issues. Urgent or important messages to family or friends are permitted, but must be **kept to the minimum length necessary**, be of a serious nature and permission must first be obtained from the Head of Department. The viewing, accessing, mailing and/or saving of sexually explicit or otherwise materials, either internally or externally, will be regarded as gross misconduct and may also need to be reported to the police.
- No **internal or external** email may contain any references to **any third party** (whether individuals or otherwise) which might be construed as libellous. Beales could incur significant liability even from a careless statement made within an internal email.

- No email communication which might be regarded as harassment or insulting may be sent using the Beales facilities. Complaints about the performance or service of other departments or individuals must be made on a face-to-face basis, as is normal courteous practice, through the normal company grievance procedure.
- Email may be used for the despatch of formal documents such as contracts or proposals, but it must be borne in mind that contracts issued this way are just as legally binding as those sent conventionally and the usual authority to send must be obtained. The approved email version of Beales terms of business must be used. All such items must be followed up with a signed formal hard copy in the usual manner and a photocopy retained.
- Emails sent internally may be informal in style but must observe the normal courtesy shown in written memos or conversations conducted in public. Emails which are sent to recipients outside Beales should be composed in a business-like manner. Any attachments such as letters must be headed and written according to Beales corporate image and approved as per hard copy items.
- Unsolicited emails may not be sent at any time. The Head of Department should be informed of any 'junk' mail received in order that steps can be taken to alert the Beales system to reject future 'junk' mail from the same source.
- It is the responsibility of staff members to alert senders of email to any absence from their place of work and to arrange for forwarding during absence to a person approved by the Head of Department.
- All information sent via the Beales system belongs to Beales.
- Staff must not use passwords for internal or external email attachments unless authorised by the Head of Department to whom the password should be confirmed by conventional confidential means.
- All email correspondence relating to Beales business must be stored or archived according to the laid down procedures. Beales Hotels reserves the right to monitor all internal and external emails.

9.3 SOCIAL NETWORKING

The Company recognises that online social networking sites (such as Facebook and Twitter) provide a simple way to keep in touch, exchange ideas and have fun, and have become a significant part of many people's lives.

Before participating in any online community, understand that anything posted online is available to anyone in the world. Any text or photo placed online becomes the property of the site(s) and is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online - even if you limit access to your site. You should not post any information, photos or other items online that could embarrass you, your family, or the Company. This includes information that may be posted by others on your page. Never post your home address, local address phone number(s), birth date or other personal information.

Unfortunately, social networking sites have also been used for less appropriate purposes, and the Company would therefore like to make its policy clear. Please:

- do not use language that would be offensive to others in a face-to-face setting.
- avoid contributing to online groups that isolate, mock or victimise (staff or guests of the Company).
- ensure that you never use such sites for accessing or sharing illegal content.

The Company takes a serious view of any misuse of social networking sites. In particular, cases of online bullying or harassment will be dealt with exactly as if they had taken place face-to-face.