

Data protection legislation sets out what information can be held by organisations about individuals, and how this information is handled. These laws have been updated by Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on 1st March 2000

This section explains how you are protected by this Act. The Association recognises that residents, applicants, staff and committee members have a right to privacy and to expect that all personal information about them will be handled sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with the law.

This section sets out the ways in which we handle information about you and your rights in respect of that information.

What Information Do We Hold And How Do We Obtain It?

Generally, we receive information about you when you apply to us for housing and from third parties such as the local authority housing department, referral agencies who are supporting your application, previous landlords stated on your application form, or your GP where medical confirmation is required to support your application. We will also carry out a credit check on you using a credit checking agency. In some cases we may (with your consent) contact the Police or Social Services to find out if they have information about you, which they should disclose under the Crime and Disorder Act. This is done to protect our residents against the threat of crime or anti-social behaviour.

For What Purposes Do We Use Your Information?

We use information held about you for a number of purposes which are outlined below.

Provision Of Services

- To administer and maintain records about your tenancy.
- To ensure that the service we offer you continues to be the most appropriate service for your needs. For instance, we will pass your name, address and contact details to contractors providing repairs and maintenance services on our behalf, to enable them

to arrange with you a suitable time to gain access to your home to carry out repairs.

- If you have lived in a sheltered or supported accommodation we will keep records that you have given us about your medical conditions, your GP, next of kin and other support networks to enable us to assist in the co-ordination of support services, and will pass copies of these records to suppliers of any community alarm services.
- To respond to any query that you may have about your tenancy or your rent account.
- To update our system for enhanced service provision to you.

Other Purposes

- To disclose information about you to third parties under the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act.
- To disclose information about your tenancy to the Housing Benefits department.
- To disclose information about you to collection agencies and legal representatives for the purpose of collecting rents or other money you owe us.
- To enable us to consult you and keep you informed by post, telephone or email of services provided by the Association.
- To use information about you for the purpose of research and statistical analysis. To use information about you and your rent account for internal customer service monitoring.
- To disclose information about you to regulatory authorities in response to formal requests.
- To disclose information about you in response to legislative or court orders.

Caring For Your Data

We promise to keep sensitive information held about you secure, and to ensure that our data security is appropriate to the nature of the information we are holding, and the harm that might result from a breach of security.

We Also Promise

- Not to hold information about you which is excessive in relation to the purpose(s) for which it is processed.
- To keep any information about you accurate and where necessary up-to-date. To help us to do this, please keep us informed if any of your details change.
- Not to keep data for any purpose(s) longer than is necessary. We may retain records of your tenancy for a time after it has ended

to enable us to resolve any subsequent queries and comply with legislative requirements.

- To process your information in accordance with your rights under the Data Protection Act.

Your Rights

You have the following rights under the Data Protection Act in relation to the information that we hold about you:

- To access personal data held about you. You may apply to see personal data held about you by letter (please write to us, our details are in the Contacting Us section of this handbook), or by completing the form “**Data Protection – Request for Data Access**” which is available upon request. You may request details of the information that we hold about you and the purpose(s) for which it is held. We will provide the information, in a permanent form, as at the time of the request, subject to any routine processing continuing between that time and the time of response. We may make a small charge to cover our administration costs and the cost of the photocopy (£10 maximum). It is a legal requirement that we should allow you to inspect your file within 40 days of receiving your request to do so. We will ensure that we meet this target, and where possible we will try to make arrangements for you to see your file within 5 working days. You will be asked to prove your identity before being granted access to personal data held about you.
- To write to us requiring us to stop (or not to begin) processing personal data on the grounds that it is causing, or it is likely to cause substantial damage or distress to you or to another person and that damage or distress is, or would be, unwarranted. This right does not apply where:
 - you have consented to the processing;
 - the processing is necessary for entering into, or for the performance of, a contract;
 - the processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation;
 - the processing is necessary to protect your vital interests.

To consider such a request you will need to provide us with supporting evidence (where appropriate) to substantiate your grounds. We will, in any event, respond to such a request within 21 days stating the steps we will take to comply with your request or our reasons why we do not consider it necessary to comply.

- To write to us requiring us to ensure that no decision taken by, or on behalf of us and which significantly affects you is based solely on the automated processing of your information. No such arrangements currently exist within the Association.

The Information Commissioner

If you wish to know more about your rights in respect of protection of personal data, you should write to:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745
Fax: 01625 524510

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Data Protection Declaration

Data protection legislation sets out what information can be held by organisations about individuals and how this information is handled.

These laws have been updated by the Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on 1st March 2000. This form will be kept on your file to demonstrate that you have been advised of:

- What information we hold about you
- How we obtained it
- What purposes it is held for
- The circumstances under which we will disclose it to others
- And your rights under data protection legislation

I/we confirm that I/we have read and understood “Your Guide to data Protection within the Association” and give consent to personal data being held and processed by the Association in accordance with this document and Data Protection Legislation:

Name: _____ Name: _____
(Please print) (Please print)

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____