

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The UK Cohousing Network (UKCN) needs to collect and use certain types of information about citizens and other individuals who come into contact with the organisation. This personal information must be dealt with properly however it is collected, recorded and used, whether on paper, in a computer, or recorded on other material.

1. Data Protection Act 1998 and 2003

It is important that all Directors and any employees are aware of the existence of the Data Protection Act and the principles on which it is based.

The Act applies to all personal data (information that applies to a living person) whether it is held on a computer system or a piece of paper.

The UKCN regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important and endorses the aims of the Act, which are embodied in the eight Data Protection Principles.

2. Data Protection Principles

The UKCN in compliance with the Act will;

1. Obtain and process information fairly.
2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes
3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes
4. Keep it safe and secure
5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date
6. Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive
7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose of the purposes
8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to an individual on request

1.3 Management and Controls

UKCN will, through appropriate management and controls:

- Observe fully conditions regarding the fair collection and use of information;
- Meet its legal obligations to specify the purposes for which information is used;
- Collect and process appropriate information, and only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements;
- Ensure the quality of information used;
- Ensure that the information is held for no longer than necessary;
- Ensure that the rights of people about whom information is held, can be fully exercised under the Act. (These include: the right to be informed that processing is being undertaken, the right of access to one's personal information, the right to prevent processing in certain circumstances and the right to correct, rectify, block or erase information which is regarded as wrong information);
- Take appropriate technical and organisational security measures to safeguard personal information;
- Ensure that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards;
- Treat people justly and fairly whatever their age, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity when dealing with requests for information.

In addition UKCN will ensure that;

- one of our staff has specific responsibility for Data Protection.

- everyone handling personal information understands that they are responsible for following good data protection practice.
- queries about handling personal information are promptly and courteously dealt with.
- a regular review and audit is made of the way personal information is held, managed and used.
- a breach of the rules and procedures identified in this policy by a Board Member or employee is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.
- this policy will be updated as necessary to reflect best practice and to ensure compliance with any changes or amendments to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Signed: Chair of UKCN		Date:	
Subject to review, monitoring and revision by:	Board	Every:	36 months or sooner if work activity changes