



RURAL HOUSING TRUST LIMITED

DATA PRIVACY AND PROTECTION POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1.** This policy sets out our commitment to protecting personal data and how we implement that commitment with regards to the collection and use of personal data. Rural Housing Trust Limited (RHTL) is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office, an independent body set up to uphold information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
- 1.2.** We are committed to ensuring that we comply with the eight principles of 'good information handling' set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). These are as follows:
- 1.2.1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully.
 - 1.2.2. Personal data shall be obtained for one or more specified and lawful purposes and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
 - 1.2.3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant, and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
 - 1.2.4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
 - 1.2.5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
 - 1.2.6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR.
 - 1.2.7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised and unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
 - 1.2.8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

2. Policy statement

- 2.1.** RHTL's policy is to ensure that everyone who has dealings with RHTL has a right to privacy and to expect that all personal information about them will be handled sensitively and with due regard to its confidentiality.
- 2.2.** RHTL will:
- 2.2.1. comply with the law regarding the protection and disclosure of information
 - 2.2.2. treat all personal and sensitive organisational information as confidential

- 2.2.3. not disclose personal information without the prior consent of the individual concerned, except to RHTL's professional advisors (e.g. solicitors) or in the circumstances outlined in Paragraph 3
- 2.2.4. not gain or attempt to gain access to unauthorised information
- 2.2.5. only send marketing materials and general information about RHTL to those shared owners who have given their consent to receive such documents.
- 2.3. All staff and officers of the Company have a duty to respect the confidentiality of personal information held by RHTL. In meeting this duty staff and officers of the Company are expected to exercise judgement and common sense.
- 2.4. All enquiries regarding data protection should be passed to RHTL's Company Secretary (via email at enquiries@ruralhousing.org.uk, by phone on 0207 9355042 or by writing to The Company Secretary, Rural Housing Trust Limited, 54 Weymouth Street, London W1G 6NU).

3. Disclosure

- 3.1. RHTL's staff and officers will be able to see and process your personal information. However, there will also be times when we will share relevant information with third parties, for the purposes as outlined (see below), or where we are legally required to do so. When sharing personal information, we will comply with the GDPR. Sensitive information (as defined in the GDPR) is subject to particularly strict security and confidentiality measures.
- 3.2. Where necessary or required, RHTL may share information as follows:
 - 3.2.1. With RHTL's contractors, in order to undertake repairs, maintenance or improvement works (both planned and responsive works).
 - 3.2.2. With other third party service providers, in connection with services performed on our behalf. Our relationships with such providers are governed by our contracts with them which include strict data sharing and confidentiality protocols.
 - 3.2.3. With housing associations, trusts and landlords, in connection with tenancy references and associated enquiries.
 - 3.2.4. With community partners in connection with the delivery of co-ordinated local services.
 - 3.2.5. With utility companies and their representatives, in connection with unpaid bills (gas, electricity & water).
 - 3.2.6. With credit reference agencies and debt collection agencies, in connection with some housing applications and in relation to any outstanding charges owed once residents leave their Hastoe tenancy.
 - 3.2.7. With local authorities and government departments, as necessary for administering justice, or for exercising statutory, governmental, or other public functions (e.g. to give the name, address and stated local connection of applicants for housing to local authorities as required by a planning agreement which gives priority to people with a local connection).
 - 3.2.8. With police and other relevant authorities (e.g. Probation Service, Department of Work & Pensions, HM Revenues & Customs) in relation to the prevention or detection of crime and fraud; the apprehension or prosecution of offenders and the assessment or collection of tax or duty.
 - 3.2.9. With other statutory organisations where there is considered to be a health or safety risk to an individual or members of the public, e.g. social services & health authorities, as necessary for exercising statutory functions.

- 3.2.10. With parties with a legal interest in a property to comply with lawful requests for information from such parties and as necessary to deal with compliance with landlord and tenant covenants in the tenant's lease and superior title.
 - 3.2.11. In connection with court proceedings or statutory action or any other appropriate actions to enforce compliance with tenancy conditions (e.g. occupation as only residence).
 - 3.2.12. Providing information anonymously for bona fide statistical or research purposes, provided it is not possible to identify the individuals to whom the information relates.
 - 3.2.13. In any other circumstances in which exemptions from the Data Protection Act apply.
- 3.3.** This list is not exhaustive as there are other circumstances where RHTL may also be required to share personal information, for example:
- 3.3.1. to meet legal obligations
 - 3.3.2. in connection with legal proceedings (including court orders)
 - 3.3.3. to protect the vital interests of an individual (in a 'life or death' situation).
- 3.4.** RHTL will never knowingly share your information with third parties for the purposes of direct marketing, unless we have obtained your consent (i.e. agreement) to do this.

4. Procedure for obtaining your data and what it may be used for

4.1. RHTL has procedures in place to ensure compliance with this policy.

- 4.1.1. RHTL never sells personal data. RHTL will not share your details, except in accordance with this policy.
- 4.1.2. Personal information is obtained from an application form completed by all applicants for our shared ownership accommodation. Personal information may also be obtained from an occupier questionnaire, which is sent to all of our shared ownership accommodation periodically to ensure that the data we hold is correct and up to date.
- 4.1.3. The information provided on the application form is used for the purposes of assessing that the applicant is eligible for occupation of a shared ownership home; and has the financial resources to fund the purchase and ongoing living expenses. Contact details are required for communication. RHTL asks shared owners to advise of any changes to these for updating purposes.
- 4.1.4. Personal data provided by applicants is assessed by qualified housing and financial managers employed by RHTL against criteria required by local authorities and the company's financial sustainability criteria.
- 4.1.5. An applicant's name, current and former addresses, and connection with a parish may be passed to the local housing authority where required for verification and approval of the application.
- 4.1.6. Reports to provide routine management information, will be anonymised to ensure confidentiality.
- 4.1.7. RHTL is required by law to retain accounting records for 7 years and these are deleted on a rolling basis after the sale of the property.
- 4.1.8. Personal data is held on a secure database owned by RHTL. Database hosting and IT security is managed on behalf of RHTL by a specialist company holding data in the UK. Paper data can be held in an office which is locked at all times and to which no public access is permitted. RHTL has a records destruction policy to ensure data is not held longer than necessary.

4.1.9. Disclosure of personal information, other than as specifically authorised in an application form or as set out in 3 above, is approved by a Director.

4.1.10. If you have given your express permission for RHTL to do so, RHTL may also send you a regular newsletter providing you with some useful information on shared ownership accommodation and some points shared owners should be aware of. You can withdraw your consent to receiving such information by contacting RHTL's Company Secretary via email at enquiries@ruralhousing.org.uk, by phone on 0207 9355042 or by writing to The Company Secretary, Rural Housing Trust Limited, 54 Weymouth Street, London W1G 6NU.

5. How long we keep your information

RHTL keeps your information during the period of your ownership of our shared ownership accommodation and after your period of ownership for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal information is processed.

6. Your right to object to us processing your information

6.1. Where RHTL's processing of your information is based solely on its legitimate interests (or those of a third party), you have the right to object to that processing if you give RHTL specific reasons why you are objecting, which are based on your particular situation. If you object, RHTL can no longer process your information unless it can demonstrate legitimate grounds for the processing, which override your interests, rights and freedoms, or the processing is for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims.

6.2. Please contact RHTL's Company Secretary (via email at enquiries@ruralhousing.org.uk, by phone on 0207 9355042 or by writing to The Company Secretary, Rural Housing Trust Limited, 54 Weymouth Street, London W1G 6NU) if you wish to object in this way.

7. Your rights to correct and access your information and to ask for it to be erased

Please contact RHTL's Company Secretary at enquiries@ruralhousing.org.uk or 0207 9355042 if (in accordance with applicable law) you would like to correct or request access to information that RHTL holds relating to you or if you have any questions about this notice. You also have the right to ask RHTL for some but not all of the information we hold and process to be erased (the 'right to be forgotten') in certain circumstances. RHTL will provide you with further information about the right to be forgotten, if you ask for it.

8. Keeping your personal information secure

8.1. RHTL has appropriate security measures in place to prevent personal information from being accidentally lost, or used or accessed in an unauthorised way. Those processing your information will do so only in an authorised manner and are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

8.2. RHTL also has procedures in place to deal with any suspected data security breach. RHTL will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected data security breach where we are legally required to do so.

9. How to complain

We hope that we can resolve any query or concern you raise about our use of your information. If not, contact the Information Commissioner at ico.org.uk/concerns/ or telephone: 0303 123 1113 for further information about your rights and how to make a formal complaint.

10. Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed from time to time to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of RHTL and is in line with current legislation.

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