



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Data Protection Making a Subject Access Request: Guidance notes

1. What is the Data Protection Act?

This Act affects all data controllers of computerised and manual filing systems and specifies how we can use personal information. As a controller of many computerised and manual systems, the Council must ensure that personal information is obtained and processed lawfully, used for specified purposes only and that it is relevant and accurate. The Council must also ensure that information is not kept longer than necessary and that security measures are in force to prevent unauthorised access and accidental loss.

2. Notification

The Council has had to specify what information is held and what it is used for in a Notification process. The person who is responsible for overseeing all data controllers is the Information Commissioner who is appointed by the Government. His address is in section 6.

3. What are your rights?

Any member of the public may inspect the Council's Notifications (one for Electoral Registration and another for the rest of the Council's systems) at Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell St, Bedford MK42 9AP. Copies of the Council's notifications are available there for inspection at Borough Hall. They can also be viewed online at <https://ico.org.uk/>

As an individual, you may then:

- i) Apply for a copy of any personal information about you held on the Council's computers and in manual filing systems;
- ii) Have any information corrected, if wrong, or erased if inappropriate.

4. Applying for a copy

You can apply for a copy of information held about you by sending a signed letter and supporting documents to: Freedom of information, Riverside Building, Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP. Alternatively you may visit the Customer Service Centre, Horne Lane (formerly the Civic Theatre) where staff will be pleased to assist.

You will need to provide proof of identity (e.g. Passport, Driving Licence). The request letter, or the form (which is attached to these notes) should you choose to use it, should provide as much detail as possible to enable us to process your request without delay.

If you visit the Customer Service Centre the staff will check your letter or form and give you a receipt for the application. The request will be passed to the Officer responsible within the Service Area concerned who will deal with it. It may be necessary to request more detailed information in order to be satisfied of the identity of the Data Subject or to enable the information to be located.

Alternatively an online Subject Data Access Form is available at Bedford Borough Council's website at http://www.bedford.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/data_protection,_foi_eir/data_protection_act_1998.aspx

Please note it will still be necessary to print off the completed declaration, provide proof of identity by visiting the Customer Service Centre as detailed above or by posting to Freedom of Information at the address below.

The Council will then respond to you detailing the information held about you within one calendar month either of receipt of the initial request or of the additional information requested.

5. Challenging the information

When you have received your copy of the information, if you are not satisfied that the information is correct or that it is relevant, you may challenge the fact by writing to:

Freedom of Information
Riverside Building
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell St
Bedford MK42 9AP

This Officer will normally, in the first instance refer the complaint to the relevant Head of Service for the Service Area concerned to examine the complaint.

6. Complaints

If you have a complaint regarding any aspect of your treatment while applying for information, you should write to the Freedom of Information at the above address. You may, alternatively, wish to write to the Information Commissioner at the address below who will then investigate the complaint on your behalf.

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF