

## **Homelessness service privacy notice**

**Data Protection legislation sets out when we are lawfully allowed to process (collect, use, and keep) your data. This notice tells you about how your information will be stored, collected, and shared when you contact our homelessness service, and especially when you make an application for help as a homeless person.**

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## **The Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679, and the Data Protection (Charges and Information) Regulations 2018**

The laws we work to give us powers to do certain things and Data Protection legislation sets out when we are lawfully allowed to process (collect, use, and keep) your personal data (information about you) to do this. This notice tells you about how your information will be stored, collected, and shared when you contact Bedford Borough Council's homelessness service, and especially when you make an application for help as a homeless person.

## **When you contact the service for advice and/or assistance as a person who is homeless, threatened with homelessness, or otherwise facing housing difficulties**

Bedford Borough Council (BBC) (We) need to make enquiries and obtain, hold, and share information in order to complete our statutory homeless duties to you. Even if no statutory application is made, we will sometimes assist with advice and referrals for support or accommodation.

### **Activity we may undertake, as proportionate and appropriate, when you contact us**

**1. Carrying out enquiries to any individuals, agencies statutory and non-statutory bodies both now and in the future (and hold this data on file, and share this data where appropriate) for the purpose of:**

- Helping to resolve your housing problem/s (including referrals to Support services or temporary accommodation providers. This may be a Council team, or an external organisation commissioned by, or in partnership with, the Council.)

- Helping to resolve your housing-related problem/s which may mean you are at risk of becoming/remaining homeless.
- Assessing any application for housing and any possible application for homeless assistance under the Housing Act 1996 and any support needs (including your health, financial and employment needs).
- Assessing any possible duty under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 where a decision might be reached on any application that a housing accommodation duty is not owed or has been owed but has come to an end, or if you are a single person any assessment under adult social care legislation.
- To protect the public funds administered by the Council for the prevention and detection of fraud.
- To safeguard if the information received indicates any matters that may indicate you, or a member of your family, are at risk of harm.

Information may be obtained and also shared. This could be with landlords; individuals; with any Council Department (including Benefit Services and Social Services); Government Department or Agency; Police; Hospital; Doctor; School and also suppliers of Gas, Water, Electricity, Digital Communications, Satellite TVs, Mobile telephones and landlines; voluntary sector bodies including bodies providing debt advice and support. This list is not exhaustive but that we will only seek or share information when it is appropriate and lawful.

We have a responsibility to ensure that information held about individuals is obtained fairly and lawfully and that the information held is accurate. Therefore, one purpose of us undertaking enquiries will be to verify the information you have provided as part of your homeless application, to prevent fraud and ensure our statutory duties are undertaken properly and fairly.

We will hold information for a standard 6-year period starting at closure of your application. We will only hold information for longer or shorter than this if there is a legal reason for doing so.

## **Credit checks**

We have advised you that we may undertake a credit search. This may leave an enquiry footprint with the credit reference agency we search. These are for your protection so that you can see who has been searching your credit report. These footprints are not the same as those recorded by lenders when you apply for credit and do not affect your credit score.

The agency we use is Transunion and their search results are the combination of several pieces of data from many sources, such as the County Courts, the local Electoral Register, and in some cases lenders themselves. These agencies are responsible for the accuracy of the information they have submitted about you.

Transunion's address is: One Park Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS3 1EP

- Website: [www.transunion.co.uk](http://www.transunion.co.uk)
- Telephone number: 0113 388 4300

## **Legal bases we process data**

We have the following legal bases for processing the above mentioned, but evidence of your understanding of this will be useful when approaching other agencies to make it clear to them that you know about what is occurring with your personal data:

## **Article 6 GDPR**

- processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation (duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and provisions under the Children Act 1989 outlined above) to which the controller is subject;
- processing is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject or of another natural person;
- processing is necessary to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law as outlined above.

## **Article 9 GDPR**

- processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, on the basis of Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject as outlined above.

## **Article 10 GDPR**

- The DPA 2018 will provide a lawful basis to process criminal offence data.

### **2. Contacting you by designated mobile phone number/address/e-mail address**

You have provided us with contact information that we will use to stay in touch with you throughout. You must inform the Council immediately if there is a change to your email contact address or mobile phone number. You must also inform the Council immediately if there is a change to your address.

### **3. Data may be shared with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - DLUHC (previously known as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) as part of the help we provide to you.**

#### **Sharing with DLUHC - Why is your information being shared?**

#### **How is your information being used? Will it affect you?**

The sharing of data is for research purposes only and aims to provide central government departments, local public services and delivery partners with valuable information about the cycle of homelessness and its impact on outcomes, as well as the impact and cost benefit of interventions and services targeted at reducing homelessness. The information should be useful to inform future service reform and investment decisions.

The data will include personal identifiers, but it will not affect your benefits, services or any treatment that you get. Your information will be anonymised in published research findings and handled with care in accordance with the law.

Data sharing is necessary to observe the effectiveness of Homelessness Programmes and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 on a wide range of different outcomes that it aims to affect, spanning the remit of different Government Departments; and to control for household and individual characteristics.

This data-share will improve the evidence base for homelessness and be used to inform policy and investment decisions across government and local public services. In particular, it will aid and improve understanding of how households and individuals cycle in and out of homelessness over time and across the country; how homelessness impacts on a range of outcomes for individuals and household members, in particular young people; whether Homelessness Programmes and the 2017 Act improve outcomes for households and individuals; and the long term outcomes for those accommodated in response to covid-19. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Local Government will use the data gathered to provide local areas and other government departments with aggregate-level findings on the following:

- the characteristics of individuals and households who are homeless;
- historic problems (e.g. health problems, levels of offending over previous years, whether members have experienced entrenched worklessness); the fiscal costs associated with these;
- individuals/households before and after intervention; and assessments of effectiveness, covering a range of outcomes

### **When you contact the service for advice and/or assistance as a landlord or letting agent representing a landlord, taking advantage of the services offered related to tenancy relations and sustainment**

Bedford Borough Council (BBC) (We) need to make enquiries, obtain and hold information in order to provide the service for which you are seeking.

BBC have a responsibility to ensure that information held about individuals is obtained fairly and lawfully and that the information held is accurate. Therefore, one purpose of us undertaking enquiries will be to verify the information you have provided, to protect public funds from fraud.

BBC will hold this information for a 6-year period starting at creation of the case file. We will only hold information for longer or shorter than this if there is a legal reason for doing so.

BBC will not share your information with anyone else without seeking and noting your permission to do so.

BBC have the following legal basis for processing the above mentioned:

#### **Article 6 GDPR**

- processing is necessary to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law.

#### **Article 9 GDPR**

- processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, on the basis of Union or Member State law which shall be proportionate to the aim pursued, respect the essence of the right to data protection and provide for suitable and specific measures to safeguard the fundamental rights and the interests of the data subject as outlined above.

To exercise your data protection rights and to request a copy of the information the Council holds about you, please write to:

- Write to us at: Information Governance, 6th Floor Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP
- Email us at: [dpo@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:dpo@bedford.gov.uk)