Data Protection Privacy Statement – The prevention and relief of homelessness.

To deliver services to the citizens and communities in Bedford Borough, it is necessary for the Council to collect, gather, and process personal data about residents, staff, and other individuals. Bedford Borough Council is committed to protecting your personal data when you use its services and/or correspond with it.

The Council has registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioner's Office. This registration can be viewed on the ICO website (opens in a new window) Registration Number Z5916725.

As a Data Controller, the Council sets out the purposes and methods for processing information and ensures safeguards over any personal and special category information it processes.

The sections below explain what data we are collecting and storing and the arrangements we have in place to protect the information entrusted to the Council.

In relation to data provided to prevent and relieve homelessness, Bedford Borough Council will process your personal data for the following processing purposes:

- providing homelessness advice, prevention and relief services;
- assessing requests for help from people who are homeless, threatened with homelessness or otherwise facing housing difficulties;
- assessing any homelessness application, including eligibility, housing circumstances, support needs and whether any statutory duties are owed;
- preparing and managing personalised housing plans and arranging appropriate advice, support, referrals, temporary accommodation or other assistance where required;
- checking and verifying information provided as part of an application or enquiry;
- preventing and detecting fraud, protecting public funds and ensuring statutory duties are carried out properly and fairly;
- safeguarding children, adults at risk and other individuals where information indicates that someone may be at risk of harm;
- managing reviews, appeals, complaints, enquiries, correspondence and case records
- undertaking statutory reporting, service planning, monitoring, audit and service improvement.
- meeting the Council's legal obligations under homelessness and housing legislation

The personal data that will be collected:

- name, date of birth, contact details and address history;
- household composition, family details and information about people included in, or relevant to, the housing or homelessness application;

- identification documents, proof of address and other evidence needed to verify identity or circumstances;
- housing history, tenancy details, landlord information, eviction notices, accommodation status and reasons for homelessness or threatened homelessness;
- information about income, employment, benefits, debts, rent arrears, financial circumstances and affordability;
- National Insurance numbers, reference numbers, case numbers and other identifiers used to manage the application or case;
- immigration status and eligibility information, where relevant;
- correspondence, contact records, notes of interviews, decisions, reviews and case actions;
- information about support needs, risks, vulnerabilities and referrals to other services;
- information provided by, or obtained from, relevant third parties where this is necessary and lawful;
- technical information generated when using online systems, such as online identifiers or system audit records, where applicable.

Bedford Borough Council is processing this personal data by virtue of the following Lawful Basis:

- Article 6(1)(c) UK GDPR - processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the Council is subject, including its housing and homelessness duties.

- Article 6(1)(e) UK GDPR - processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Council.

- Article 6(1)(d) UK GDPR - processing is necessary to protect the vital interests of the data subject or another person, where this is relevant in urgent safeguarding or emergency situations.

The Council will not usually rely on consent as the lawful basis for processing personal data for homelessness and housing functions, because the Council is carrying out statutory duties and applicants may not have a genuine choice about whether the information is needed to assess or provide the service.

The special category data that will be collected:

- physical or mental health information;
- disability, vulnerability, care, support or accommodation needs;
- safeguarding information relating to children, adults at risk or other individuals;
- racial or ethnic origin;

- religious or philosophical beliefs where relevant to accommodation or support needs;
- information about sex life or sexual orientation where relevant to safety, support or accommodation needs;
- other sensitive information provided by the applicant or obtained from relevant organisations where necessary to assess or provide homelessness assistance.

The service may also process information relating to criminal convictions, offences, allegations, proceedings or risk where this is relevant to safeguarding, accommodation suitability, prevention or detection of crime or fraud, or the proper exercise of the Council's statutory functions.

Bedford Borough Council is processing this special category data by virtue of the following Lawful Basis:

- Article 9(2)(g) UK GDPR - processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest, based on law. The relevant Data Protection Act 2018 Schedule 1 condition is Part 2, paragraph 6 - statutory and government purposes.

- Article 9(2)(h) UK GDPR - where processing health or social care information is necessary for the provision of health or social care, social care treatment or the management of health or social care systems and services. The relevant Data Protection Act 2018 Schedule 1 condition is Part 1, paragraph 2 - health or social care purposes.

- Where safeguarding information is processed, the relevant Data Protection Act 2018 Schedule 1 condition may also be Part 2, paragraph 18 - safeguarding of children and individuals at risk.

Where criminal offence data is processed, this will be processed under Article 10 UK GDPR and a relevant condition under Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018, such as statutory and government purposes and/or safeguarding of children and individuals at risk, where applicable. The Council will also ensure that any required appropriate policy document is in place.

Personal data provided to prevent and relieve homelessness may be shared with, or obtained from the following organisations (in addition to any other disclosure required by a Court of Law or in response to a valid request by, normally, a law enforcement agency:

- housing providers, registered providers, landlords, property agents and temporary accommodation providers;
- companies or organisations appointed to carry out services on behalf of the Council, including support providers, third-sector organisations, application review services, medical assessment services, software providers and commissioned partners;
- other Bedford Borough Council departments, including Housing, Revenues and Benefits, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Finance, Customer

Services and Legal Services (data provided by the Department for Work and Pensions will not be shared)
- other local authorities and public authorities;
- government departments and agencies, including the Department for Work and Pensions and the government department responsible for homelessness data and policy returns;
- courts, tribunals, the police and other law enforcement agencies;
- health organisations, hospitals, GPs and other health or care professionals where relevant;
- schools, education providers and safeguarding partners where relevant;
- voluntary sector bodies, advice agencies, debt advice agencies and support organisations;
- utility providers and communications providers where relevant to verifying circumstances or resolving housing issues;
- credit reference agencies, where checks are necessary and lawful;
- any other organisation or individual where disclosure is necessary, proportionate and lawful for the purposes set out in this notice.

Where a child is placed in interim or temporary accommodation, we are required to seek parental (or, in specified cases, the young person's) agreement before notifying their GP, health-visiting service and educational institution. Where agreement is given, we will take reasonable steps to make the notification within 14 days.

The processing of your personal data will be restricted in time to six years from closure of the application or case, unless there is a legal reason to keep it for a longer or shorter period.

Your personal data will be held by/for the Council within the UK or the EU. Where service providers store or access information from outside the UK, the Council will ensure appropriate safeguards are in place in accordance with UK GDPR.

The information you provide is a statutory requirement because it is needed to enable the Council to consider and carry out its housing and homelessness duties. If you do not provide the information requested, or if the Council cannot verify relevant information, this may limit or delay the Council's ability to assess your circumstances, determine whether any duty is owed, provide advice or assistance, arrange accommodation, make referrals or prevent and relieve homelessness.

The processing of your information does **not** involve automated decision-making.

Please see the details below in respect of any other reason we will be using your information:

Your information may also be used for statutory reporting, audit, service planning, research, monitoring and service improvement. Where information is used for reporting or research, the Council will only use or share the information where it is

lawful to do so, and published outputs will not identify individuals unless there is a lawful reason to do so

The Council has appropriate technical and organisational measures in place to protect your personal data against unauthorised or unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction or damage.

Bedford Borough Council is the Data Controller processing your information, who can be contacted as follows:

Information Governance
Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford MK42 9AP
Email: dpo@bedford.gov.uk
Telephone: 01234 267422

If you wish to enquire about your rights as a data subject, whether you wish to request a copy of your information that Bedford Borough Council holds, request for data portability; rectification or erasure of your data for any reason or objection to any processing, please get in touch with the Council's GDPR Data Protection Officer by emailing dpo@bedford.gov.uk or writing to the above address. Some individual rights may be limited where processing is necessary to comply with a legal obligation or to perform a task carried out in the public interest.

Alternatively, in the event that you remain dissatisfied with the way Bedford Borough Council has handled the processing of your information (i.e. after liaising with the Council to find a satisfactory solution), you have the right to contact the UK's Statutory Authority: The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who can be contacted by using the details displayed at the bottom of the page entitled Personal information and your rights | Bedford Borough Council on our website under the "Challenging the response" heading.

We keep this Privacy Notice under regular review, and we will place any updates on its Internet site. This Notice was last updated in August 2026.