

Privacy notice – Ealing Council’s Housing Register and Allocation of Social Housing, included services provided through the Locata IT system

The **Local Authority (LA)** : Ealing Council

The Council’s Data Protection Officer information can be found at:
https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201045/data_protection/1420/privacy_statement

Allocations and Accommodation Service

The Council’s Allocations and Accommodation Service is responsible for the administration and assessment of applications made by residents to join the Council’s Housing Register as they wish to be considered for social housing that becomes available either through the Council or through Registered Providers (formerly known as Housing Associations). The service is also responsible for the advertising and letting of social housing through a process called choice based lettings, where applicants bid for available accommodation and properties are offered to those in order of the highest priority and subsequent waiting times.

Applicants and Council Officers input information onto the Locata IT system which hosts the Housing Register facility to advertise available social housing units. Locata is a separate company, which is part owned by Ealing Council along with four other West London Councils and three Register Providers.

The Housing Act 1996 (part vi) requires that Council’s must have a Housing Allocations Policy which sets out how the Council will assess applicants who wish to join the Housing Register, how they will be prioritised and how social housing is let by the Council and partners agencies. Applicants complete the online application form, providing the required information to allow the Council to assess their eligibility and housing circumstances, and the applicants gives consent for the Council to contact other parties to collate and verify information submitted.

The Housing Allocations Policy clearly sets out the eligibility criteria for acceptance onto the Housing Register, which includes certain classes of persons as stipulated by the Home Office in terms of nationality and legal status in the UK, which the Council ensures is included in the Policy.

What kind of information do you collect about me?

Your personal information is collected, for the purpose of delivering the service to you, from:

- Online Housing Register Application form and change of circumstances forms
- Medical forms
- Additional information you provide, including documents relating to proof of identification, proof of income and proof of residency.
- Correspondence you send us, including letters and emails
- Information you or your representatives provide to support your application, which can be provided by but not limited to your GP, Social Worker, Health Visitor, Probation Officer, Police Officer, other family and friends.
- Information collected by our staff on the phone or in face to face interviews
- Third party agencies e.g. DWP, Employer, credit checks

From these, we would collect and process personal and special categories of information such as:

- name, date of birth, address, gender, ethnicity
- health e.g. disabilities, pregnancy, maternity, gender reassignment and special educational needs
- family details lifestyle and social circumstances
- financial details including NI Number, benefit entitlement, salary information, employment contracts, county court judgements, bank accounts, savings, property details
- employment and education details, including qualifications
- housing needs, including household size, current housing needs, landlord details, previous addresses and details about your current home

What do you do with information about me?

The information we collect and collate is only used for the core purposes to process personal data to

- assess the eligibility of applicants to consider whether they qualify to join the housing register
- assess and determine the level of housing need and award a priority band and category
- determine the type and size of property that an applicant is eligible for

How do I know the information about me is kept safely?

All the information we collect is stored securely on our IT systems and manual filing systems. We have strict procedures for the way this is done. All information about you is treated as confidential and with respect. There are also clear rules and guidance about storing, recording and sharing information which staff receive training on.

We take information sharing very seriously. Appropriate council and health staff are Disclosure and Barring Service checked. Any member of staff who is found to be breaking the rules will be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary procedures.

For how long are records held?

Records are kept only for as long as necessary, this is either by law or good practices.

The Housing Register will retain your data as long as you have a live housing register application and you are actively searching for alternative housing. From time to time, the Council will undertake a re-registration exercise to ensure that the register contains applicants who are actively looking for accommodation, and all applicants will be advised of a set of rules regarding removing of applications. For applicants whose applications have been classified as removed, rehoused or not eligible, all personal information will be removed after 7 years in accordance with the rules built into the Locata IT system.

For more information regarding records retention, please see the LA's corporate Privacy Notice at https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201045/data_protection/1420/privacy_statement

Don't you need my permission to keep and share information about me?

We would need your consent if the LA's legal basis for collecting and processing your personal information is Consent.

Although your information is confidential, we may have to share information about you/your family without your permission. Where this is necessary we are required to comply with all aspects of the data protection legislation.

We may need to share your information in the following circumstances:

- To protect you from harm, neglect, abuse or significant threat
- When you may need urgent medical treatment
- To prevent or detect a crime
- To comply with a legal obligation

You can withdraw your consent by contacting the Council, advising them that you no longer wish to maintain your application on the Council's Housing Register, and as such the information will be dealt with in accordance with the time frames set out in the retention rules. Applicants can write by letter to the Council's main offices at Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, London W5 2HL or by email to Locatahelp@ealing.gov.uk clearly stating your name, your address, your application number and reason for withdrawal of your application.

Are there any laws applicable in the processing and protection of my information?

There are a number of laws which allow for the protection, collection and processing of your personal information for this purpose, such as:

- The General Data Protection Regulations and The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Housing Act 1996 (part VI) and subsequent Codes of Guidance relating to social housing allocations
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010

Can I see the information you have collected about me/my family?

Yes, you can request a copy of the information held. This is called a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations which contain certain rights of individuals and their personal data.

For more information regarding your rights, please see the LA's corporate Privacy Notice at https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201045/data_protection/1420/privacy_statement

Who should I contact if I want further information or to complain about the use of my personal information?

Please see the LA's website for more information on how we use your information at https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201045/data_protection/1420/privacy_statement

The Council's Data Protection Officer is Mrs L. Cox, whom you can contact on: dataprotection@ealing.gov.uk or telephone 0208 825 5124 during office hours.