



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Privacy Notice Benefits

This notice, in conjunction with Wokingham Borough Councils overarching privacy statement, explains when as a service we collect personal information, what we use your data for, who has access, who we share it with, and what your rights are.

Who are we?

Benefits
Wokingham Borough Council,
Shute End,
Wokingham,
Berkshire,
RG40 1BN

What is the lawful basis for processing the information?

The lawful basis for processing your information is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation, as specified by the following legislation governing Housing Benefits, Council Tax Reduction and Universal Credit:

- The Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992
- The Social Security Administration Act 1992
- The Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000
- The Welfare Reform Act 2012
- The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016
- The Local Government Finance Act 2012
- The Council Tax Reduction Schemes Regulations 2013
- Local Authorities (Contracting Out of Tax Billing, Collection and Enforcement Functions) Order 2013
- Valuation Tribunal for England Regulations 2013
- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 as amended
- Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement)(Local Lists) Regulation 1989 as amended

How do we collect information from you?

Information is collected from you as the service user via online web forms, hard copy documents, e-mail, by telephone or through face-to-face discussion. This information will be collected from either you directly as the data subject, or from a representative acting on your behalf, e.g. a solicitor.

Information may also be collected from data that you supplied to The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) or Tell Us Once death notifications. Information to help us assess your entitlement could come from Tenant Services, Council Tax, Tenant Support Officers, the Valuation office, Fraud teams, Children Services, Housing Needs or Financial Assessments. Information may also be shared with other councils that you have lived in or are moving to.

With the right permissions in place, information may be shared with Transform Housing and Support, Landlords, Citizens Advice Bureau, Family members and friends.

What type of information is collected from you?

The service collects and processes a range of information about you. The information is provided to enable the Benefits team to carry out its duty and functions, provide you with a service, and continue to make service improvements.

We will collect the following information: Surname, Forename, Title, Date of Birth, Address, Postcode, Previous address, Previous postcode, E-mail, Phone number, Marital status, National Insurance numbers, whether you've previously owned the property you are residing in, your nationality, whether you've lived in the UK for the whole of the last 2 years, and Financial details including the name of the company you work for.

Other information that is collected include whether you are a Student or have a Disability, Landlord's details including if you are related to them. We also require to know about Other people who live in your household, their Genders and Relationships to you and your partner, and Proof of their personal circumstances.

Information about where you live is required this includes your tenancy start date, how much rent charged and the type of property you live in including the number of bedrooms it has, proof of your bank details are required for Housing Benefit payments to be paid into.

Whether you give us permission to discuss your claim with your landlord in terms of if you've claimed Housing Benefit, whether a decision has been made on your claim, whether a payment has been made.

Documents that are photocopied include 2 forms of identity, proof of National Insurance number, evidence of capital, savings and investments, evidence of income, proof of residency and the liability to pay rent and evidence of monies paid out.

You will be informed of any other data we collect, that is not listed above, orally or through email at the time of collection of the data.

How do we use the information you have provided?

All information provided is used by Wokingham Borough Council to calculate your entitlement to Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction, Discretionary Housing Payment, Local Welfare Provision, and for the detection and prevention of fraud; Responding to enquiries and other matters; Providing you with updates about our services; and Analysing statistical data for service development purposes (anonymised).

Who has access to the information about you?

Your information is managed by staff employed in the Benefits team. Your information may also be shared with officers from other service areas for assistance with these matters. All personal data is stored securely; we have in place security which are intended to ensure, as far as possible, the security and integrity of all personally identifiable information.

Your data is stored securely on our systems and accessed only by authorised officers of Wokingham Borough Council by using their own Username and Password all created in-line with pre-defined user credentials. Personal data is also held in electronic files on the Councils network drives. These are only accessible through personal logon credentials and access privileges to specific drives.

Unfortunately, the transmission of information via the internet is not completely secure. Although we will do our best to protect your personal data, we cannot guarantee the security of your data transmitted to our sites, any transmission is at your own risk. Once we have received your information, we will use strict procedures and security features to try to prevent unauthorised access, and any exchanges of information carried out once we are in receipt of your data will be done securely.

Any personal data held in paper format is held in lockable filing storage, and accessed only by authorised officers, as is data held on audio or CD/DVD media. Data may be stored in paper form and is always secured in lockable cabinets when not in use. Access to Council sites is also secure requiring a person electronic pass (lanyard) to access staff only areas.

Who we may share your information with?

When contacting the Benefit team, your information will be shared with other Council staff to the extent required to provide you with the service you have requested. The Council shares your information with Central government, Government agencies and departments including Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC), Home office, Law enforcement agencies, Fraud, Courts/tribunals, Care organisations, External auditors, Other councils, and with your permission; Transform Housing, Landlords, Private and housing associations, Citizens Advice Bureau, Family members and friends.

Where the Council engages third parties to process personal data on its behalf, they do so on the basis of written instructions, are under a duty of confidentiality, and are obliged to implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure the security of data.

To ensure that information is held continued to be held securely and that accuracy is maintained, there will also be instances where our system suppliers will need to access individuals personal information. This will be on a strict need to know basis and all contracts have confidentiality clauses built in.

The Council will not transfer your information to countries outside the European Economic Area (EEA) unless this is necessary, and only to countries which have sufficient safeguards in place to protect information.

Information will be shared internally if required for better performance and efficiency of Council services and the welfare of individuals.

Wokingham Borough Council may also share personal information with the police and other local authorities under Article 23 of the General Data Protection Regulations in order to prevent or detect crime.

How long do we store your information?

The duration that the Council will hold information, and what happens at the end of that period, are as described within the Councils corporate retention schedule available on our website: www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/information-and-data-protection/privacy-statement

Does the service utilise automated decision-making?

The Benefits service does not utilise automated decision-making in the services that it provides.