

Knowledge and information management expectations for residents

This document is for residents only. If you are a landlord looking for expectations, please see this link. Although the Ombudsman refers to this as knowledge and information management, it can be broken up into four main areas: creating data such as listening and recording, storing data in systems and databases, using data through knowledge and action and then finally sharing that data.

The following will help residents know what they should expect from their landlords and what they should expect from the Housing Ombudsman in regards to knowledge and information management.

What you should expect from your landlord

When you report an issue or make a complaint to your landlord, they should be making and keeping a record of that in order to help investigate. This should be stored centrally so that your information will not be lost or require you to be asked multiple times for the same information. This is of particular importance when the information is sensitive and personal.

This information should contain key information such as dates, times and what was agreed (if applicable).

When recording and responding to a complaint, the landlord must record and respond to all aspects of that complaint, rather than just one issue.

One of the main aspects in the report is around repairs and missed appointments.

When working with third parties such as contractors or surveyors, the landlord should be providing detailed records to help these parties make the correct resolution first time, this includes details around your availability to help reduce the risk of missed appointments. These contractors and other third parties should also be keeping records to provide to the landlord.

This should include copies of any surveyor reports, as well as any issues around availability recorded and acted on.

Landlords should only keep personal data where necessary and be clear about how information is stored, shared and updated.

There is a requirement for landlords to record information about any vulnerabilities you have in order to make sure they are providing you with any additional support or adaptations you need.

However, we understand you may be reluctant to share this information, especially if it is unclear why you are being asked. Landlords should specify why they are asking, what they need to know, how the information will be used, and who it will be shared with.

Linking to our [Spotlight report on attitudes, respect and rights](#) is the need for respectful communication throughout interactions for both residents and landlords. Residents should expect that information held on them is factual and not opinion based.

Residents have the right to request a Subject Access Request (SAR) at any time to see the information the landlord has stored about them.

Additionally, information should be clearly signposted on a landlord's website for residents to access, including how to make a complaint and the compliant self-assessment it has undertaken against the Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

The overall regulator in data protection is the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). They [created a guide](#) for social housing and how to protect yourself from harm.

What you can expect from the Housing Ombudsman Service

We can make a determination on all the themes above and make orders for landlords to put things right in this regard. This could be in the form of compensation, an apology or rectifying an issue if it has gone wrong. You can see more on Our Orders page.

We also have a Reasonable Adjustments policy and will accommodate your needs wherever possible.