

DATA PROTECTION – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Looking after information about your group members and volunteers

Running an Active Living Group will involve looking after information (data) about your group members and volunteers. It's likely to be people's names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. You'll be holding this information so you can get in touch with people about stuff your group is doing. It's important you look after this data properly; your members and users are trusting you. As a constituted organisation¹ there is UK law that you must abide by. For groups that are informal, the following guidance is good practice. The information covered by data protection law is anything that identifies a person, so it covers a really wide range of different data.

Here are 6 steps to looking after people's data:

- **Know what information you are keeping about people.**
List what information you are holding about people. If it's more than just contact information, you should think about whether you actually need the information and you will probably need some more detailed advice on complying with the data protection law. Some information is classed as "sensitive personal data" and must be looked after carefully. ANY health information is automatically "sensitive personal data".
- **Be clear about why you are keeping the data.**
What are you using it for? You need to have a clear purpose for holding and using it, and you need to let people know what that purpose is. Everybody has rights when it comes to their own personal information, and a right to be informed. You should tell people how long you are keeping it for too.
- **Keep records accurate.**
You should make sure that any records you keep are accurate and up to date. From time to time, check with people that you have the right information for them.

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- **How are you looking after the information?**

It should be kept in a way that means that only people who need the information have access to it. You should protect it from being used by others, being lost or destroyed. Is data stored securely? For example, if it's on a computer it should be password protected. If you keep paper records, then they should be locked away. Put simply you should be using systems that keep data safe, including anything on paper.

- **Have clear privacy notices on any forms you use to gather information about people.**

The type of data you are using and why you are using it means you are unlikely to need explicit consent from people. You'll be using "Legitimate Interest" as your lawful purpose. Any forms that you use to collect personal information from people will need to have a clear privacy notice. There is a template privacy notice for forms below.

- **Know about people's rights.**

There are some important rights that people have around their data. The relevant ones for small organisations are listed here:

- **Right to be informed** – people should be told how their information is collected and stored
- **Right of access** – anyone can ask to see what information you have about them; you should provide it free of charge
- **Right to rectification** – if someone's information is inaccurate or incomplete, you should correct it
- **Right to erasure** – people can ask to have their information removed. You would need an extremely good reason not to.

Here to help!

Remember Spark Somerset is able to advise and support you to put any systems you need into place or redesign any forms you use. Give us a call if we can help.

Sample Privacy Notice

We look after your information carefully. We are collecting your information so that we can let you know about how to attend our events and activities [you can give some examples here], either because you have expressed an interest or you have already come along to something.

We will hold your information for a year after you stop coming to our events and activities. [It's up to you to decide how long you need to keep information, you should be able to explain why]

If you want to update your information at any time, please contact...

We do not share your information with anyone, unless required to do so by law, or with your explicit consent.

You have rights over your data under UK and EU law. The Information Commissioner's Office has some [great resources](#) to help you understand these rights and how you can apply them.

¹ A constituted organisation is a group set up as an organisation in its own right with a management committee, has a set of rules usually called a constitution, and its own bank account.