

Sutton Housing Partnership Limited

## Confidential Information Policy

Company Registration Number: 05589014

### *OUR VISION*

“By listening to and involving our residents and others, Sutton Housing Partnership will create and maintain **neighbourhoods where people feel at home**”



## Confidential Information Policy

<b>Policy statement</b>	<p>Sutton Housing Partnership recognises and supports the right of all service users to be assured of complete confidentiality in respect of all services received from Sutton Housing Partnership staff.</p> <p>Sutton Housing Partnership also recognises and supports the right of service users to privacy.</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>The objective of the policy is to ensure that Sutton Housing Partnership adopts a consistent, fair and transparent approach in the way it deals with the rights of service users to confidentiality and privacy.</p>
<b>Scope</b>	<p>This document explains how Sutton Housing Partnership will manage the rights of service users to confidentiality and privacy.</p> <p>These rights will be maintained in all circumstances excepting where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In maintaining the confidentiality or privacy of the service user, they would be at immediate risk of injury or harm or would cause immediate risk or harm to others</li><li>• Where a criminal act has occurred or is likely to occur</li><li>• Where to not disclose information, Sutton Housing Partnership would be colluding with fraudulent actions</li><li>• Where permission has been given by the service user to share information</li><li>• Where statutory authorities have the right to, and request that information be disclosed</li></ul>
<b>Service User Rights to Confidentiality and Privacy</b>	<p>As a service user of Sutton Housing Partnership, service users agree to the provision of confidential information to Sutton Housing Partnership to access services and to enable staff to provide ongoing services.</p> <p>Sutton Housing Partnership will inform service users at the point of providing this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why they are seeking this information</li><li>• How and when they will use this information in meeting the needs of the service user</li><li>• How this information is stored to ensure it's security</li><li>• Who has access to the information provided and with whom (with the written permission of the service user), this information may be shared (e.g. social workers, health professionals etc.)</li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That service users may see, on request, this information and attach their views if they do not agree with the content</li><li>• That this information will not be shared with a third party without the service user's consent excepting in exceptional circumstances where non-disclosure of particular information poses a serious threat to the service user or others</li></ul> <p>All service users have a right to privacy, and this will be respected by Sutton Housing Partnership.</p> <p>Where accommodation is accessible to Sutton Housing Partnership staff, they will not enter the service users' property without the permission of the service user unless there is reasonable concern of serious risk to the service user or others or unless they have the legal right to do so following an application to the Courts (eg. to enable Gas appliance testing etc.).</p> <p>All service users for whom accommodation is provided have access to their own front door, and all service users have the right to come and go as they please.</p> <p>All service users for whom accommodation is provided will have their own letterbox to receive mail. Sutton Housing Partnership staff will not open any mail addressed to any service user without their prior permission.</p>
<b>Responsibilities of Staff</b>	<p>Staff will have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read and ensure that they are aware of the procedures as set out in the procedure guides in respect of confidentiality and privacy</li><li>• Attend all training provided in respect of confidentiality and privacy</li><li>• Not gossiping or sharing confidential information about service users with other staff, service users or other members of the wider community. Where staff wish to share information to seek advice, or to share good practice, they will not identify individuals without the permission of the service user</li><li>• Ensuring that service user's personal and confidential information is held securely (paper records are kept locked up with limited and recorded access, and computer records are protected in line with security and data protection protocols)</li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wherever possible involving service users in the recording process (support plans etc.), so that they are aware of the information recorded</li> <li>• Recording information in a clear manner, avoiding the use of jargon</li> <li>• Recording only facts and not conjectures, where information is an opinion of the staff member, this will also be recorded</li> <li>• Stating the source of the information, and indicate how and when it was obtained within all records</li> <li>• Encouraging service users to hold copies of records held</li> <li>• Not enter the accommodation of service users without prior permission, excepting where not to do so there is reasonable concern that the service user or others would be at serious risk (in these circumstances if the service user is subsequently found to not be in the property, a visiting card will be left to inform them of the entry of staff)</li> <li>• Not tamper with or open the correspondence of any service user without their permission</li> </ul>
<p><b>Responsibilities of Sutton Housing Partnership</b></p>	<p>Sutton Housing Partnership as an employer and provider of services, has a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide induction and on-going training to implement the above policy and procedures</li> <li>• Review the effective implementation of the confidentiality and privacy policy</li> <li>• Offer service users the opportunity to comment and be involved in reviewing of confidentiality and privacy policy and its implementation</li> <li>• Ensure that all service users have access to the confidentiality and privacy policy</li> <li>• Ensure that the practices operated in relation to the confidentiality and privacy policy comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and Human Rights Act 1998</li> </ul> <p>Sutton Housing Partnership have a responsibility to disclose confidential information where this is requested by statutory authorities or where not to do so would place the safety or security of the service user or others at serious risk.</p>
<p><b>Breaches of Confidentiality or Privacy</b></p>	<p>Service users have the right to complain in the event that they believe that their confidentiality or privacy has been breached. In this event they should invoke the complaints procedure.</p>
<p><b>Equality and</b></p>	<p>This policy and associated procedures will apply to all.</p>

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<b>Diversity</b>	SHP is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to eliminating unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, class, financial status and any other difference that can lead to discrimination or unfair treatment.
<b>Related Documents</b>	The following documents are available to support this Policy: <ul data-bbox="526 527 899 590" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Protection Policy</li><li>• Welcome Packs</li></ul>