

NORTH EAST ABINGDON GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME (NEAGNS)

Confidentiality and data protection policy

1. General principles

- 1.1. Within the terms of this policy volunteers are able to share information with a volunteer co-ordinator, and one co-ordinator with another in order to discuss issues and seek advice.
- 1.2. Everyone in NEAGNS must avoid exchanging personal information or comments (gossip) about individuals with whom the Scheme is working. It is not appropriate, for example, to discuss a person's sexuality or personal circumstances without their prior consent.
- 1.3. Everyone in NEAGNS must avoid disclosing information about individuals in social settings.
- 1.4. Volunteers must not disclose to anyone other than a volunteer co-ordinator any information considered sensitive, personal, financial or private without the knowledge or consent of the individual.
- 1.5. Where there is a legal duty on NEAGNS to disclose information (for example, where abuse is suspected), the individual will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.

2. Why information is held

- 2.1. Information held by the NEAGNS relates to volunteers, neighbours and other services which support or fund them.
- 2.2. Information is kept to enable NEAGNS to offer an appropriate service to its neighbours.
- 2.3. Anonymous aggregated data about age, gender, ethnicity, disability and employment status of users may be kept for the purposes of monitoring our equal opportunities policy and also for reporting back to funders.
- 2.4. NEAGNS volunteers and neighbours are informed that we intend to hold information about them on the computer which is shared between co-ordinators.

3. Access to information

- 3.1. Information about a volunteer or neighbour should only be shared with a volunteer or volunteer co-ordinator who is working directly with that neighbour.
- 3.2. Neighbours and volunteers may have sight of records held in their name.
- 3.3. Access to the NEAGNS computer is password protected. The password is confidential to the volunteer co-ordinators.

4. Storing information

- 4.1 All confidential information must be kept in a locked filing cabinet or lockable box file. The computer and any memory stick holding personal data must be kept in a safe place, preferably a locked room or cabinet.

4. Duty to disclose information

- 4.1. There is a legal duty to disclose some information including:
- Abuse of Vulnerable Adults, which will be reported to the Social Services Department
 - Drug trafficking, money laundering, acts of terrorism or treason, which will be disclosed to the police.

5. CRB Disclosures

- 5.1 As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of volunteers for positions of trust, NEAGNS complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information.
- 5.2 Disclosure information is kept securely, in lockable storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.
- 5.3 In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties.
- 5.4 Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.
- 5.5 Once a recruitment decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints.
- 5.6 Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, we will keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

6. Data Protection Act

- 6.1. Information about individuals, whether on computer or on paper, falls within the scope of the Data Protection Act and must comply with the data protection principles. These are that personal data must be:
- Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
 - Held only for specified purposes.
 - Adequate, relevant and not excessive.
 - Accurate and up to date.
 - Not kept longer than necessary.
 - Processed in accordance with the Act.
 - Kept secure and protected.
 - Not transferred out of Europe.
- NEAGNS undertakes to comply with the data protection principles

7. Breach of confidentiality

- 7.1. Any volunteer, volunteer co-ordinator or management committee members who breach any of the conditions within this policy will be dismissed from NEAGNS.

May 2012