

damage or distress has been suffered as a result of the Council wrongly using your personal information.

The leaflet is widely available from Council Offices, by calling the ACCESS line or by logging on to the Council's website (see details above).

For more information about the Act, you can also contact the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (tel: (01625) 545745) or seek independent legal advice.

This leaflet is designed to give Angus Council customers a brief overview of the Data Protection Act 1998. Angus Council cannot be held responsible for any errors in its interpretation of the Act.



The Data Protection Act 1998

An Overview for Customers

What does it mean for you?

The Data Protection Act 1998 came fully into force on 24 October 2001. It sets out rules for processing personal information (“the data protection principles”) and applies to most paper records as well as computer records. These are the data protection principles:

- Personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully
- Personal data must be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purpose and must not be processed in a manner incompatible with that or those purposes
- Personal data must be adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Personal data must be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
- Personal data must not be kept for any longer than is necessary
- Personal data must be processed in accordance with the Act
- Appropriate security measures must be taken against unlawful or unauthorised processing of personal data, and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data
- Personal data must not be transferred to a country outside the European Economic Area unless that country ensures an adequate level of protection for that data.

(“Personal data” simply means personal information about a living individual.)

The Council can only hold information about you if it needs the information. The Council might need the information to provide services to you, to collect Council Tax and rent, or to ensure that you receive the benefits you are entitled to.

If the information we hold is out of date, is wrong or is confused with someone else’s, then it can cause you problems.

As a result, the Act gives you the right to see what personal information is held about you to check that it is correct.

Can the Council share your information with anyone else?

The information we hold is kept securely and confidentially and is only given to those people who need it to provide the services you receive. Unless we are allowed to share the information by law, your personal information will not be given to anyone without your permission.

How long is your information kept?

Normally, your information is only kept for as long as you are receiving service(s), but it may be kept for longer for legal reasons.

How can you find out what information is held about you?

The Act gives you a right to find out what information we hold about you. To do this, if you want to find out what information we hold, you should write to the Council, providing your name, address, date of birth and details of the service or services you are receiving. You should be as specific as possible about what information you want to see. If you received services when you were known by a different name, or live at a different address, you should tell the Council what these were. Your letter should be sent to:

**Head of Law and Administration
Angus Council
Angus House
Orchardbank Business Park
Forfar
DD8 1AN**

Instead of writing a letter, you might find it easier to fill in a form. We have designed a special form (called “Request for Personal Information”) to help you make an application to see your records. If you would like a copy of the form you can get one:

- from most Council Offices
- by calling the Council ACCESSline on 08452 777 778 or
- by logging on to the Council’s website: www.angus.gov.uk.

The “Request for Personal Information” form sets out all of the information the Council needs from you before processing your request. You will probably find it easier - and faster - to complete the form rather than writing a letter to the Council.

The Data Protection Act does not allow the Council to give you information unless you put your request in writing, ie, either by letter or by completing a form.

Where can I get more information?

Another Angus Council leaflet, called “The Data Protection Act 1998 - A Guide for Customers”, will give you more detailed information about your rights under the Act. It sets out the timescales that the Council must comply with and explains your rights to compensation where