

Confidentiality Policy



1 Policy Statement

Staff will generally have access to the information they need to know to carry out their work and have a duty to respect the confidentiality of personal information held by Bron Afon.

2 Handling personal information

We will apply the following guidelines when handling personal information:

- Personal information provided to us will be treated in the strictest of confidence and will be stored in secure filing systems and computer systems, with procedures in place to prevent unauthorised access.
- Unwanted confidential information will be shredded before disposal.
- Individuals have the right to talk to us in private. We will publicise this in our reception areas. Private interview rooms are available so that conversations about personal and confidential matters can be carried out in private.

3 Contractors, consultants and other agents

Contractors, consultants and other agents are required to conform to our Code of Conduct which includes a specific requirement to keep personal information about individuals confidential.

4 Requests for information from other organisations

We believe that individuals have a right to privacy and that personal information is handled sensitively and not passed on within the organisation. With the exception of those organisations listed below, we will only give information to any other organisation with the agreement of the individual:

Torfaen County Borough Council's Social Care & Housing Service, Police, Probation Service and Health Service: a senior manager will decide whether to pass on information depending on the type of information requested and the reason for the request.

Torfaen County Borough Council's Revenues and Benefits (Council Tax): we will only give information on the property, for example, if it is occupied, squatted or empty. We will not give information on individuals and their households.

Torfaen County Borough Council's Revenue and Benefits (Housing Benefit) and the Benefits Agency: we will only give information relevant to processing a claim for housing benefit.

Gas, electricity and water companies: we will only give information on new addresses or the whereabouts of former tenants with outstanding bills.

In some cases, we may share information about individuals with another organisation, or a number of organisations, without the individual knowing it. This might be the case where telling the individual about the sharing of information would be likely to prejudice a criminal investigation, or prevent a child or vulnerable person receiving proper protection.

5 Right to request a copy of the information

Details of how individuals can access personal information we hold about them can be found in the 'Access to Personal Records' Policy.

6 Breaches of confidentiality

All staff have a duty of care to ensure that personal information remains confidential. We will view any breach of the Confidentiality Policy as a serious issue. If individuals feel their confidentiality has been breached, they should let us know by using our complaints procedure.