



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

**PUBLICATION SCHEME
FOR
NORTHWARDS HOUSING LTD**

NORTHWARDS HOUSING PUBLICATION SCHEME

Company Details:

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In implementing the Freedom of Information Act 2000 **Northwards Housing** promotes an understanding of the work undertaken within the organisation to foster a spirit of trust with the public and other organisations. We achieve this by promoting transparency in the way we make our decisions and by providing clear information about our policies and processes through our publication scheme. We deal with individual requests for information courteously and promptly and provide advice and assistance if necessary.

WHAT IS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. It lists exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

The Act came into force in two stages: -

- The first stage was in 2004 when Manchester City Council (who were managing the homes that **Northwards Housing** now manage) adopted a Publication Scheme.
- The second stage came into force in January 2005. Any person now making a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and supplied with that information. This is subject to a number of exemptions listed in the Act.

WHAT IS A PUBLICATION SCHEME?

A Publication Scheme is a guide to the classes of information that **Northwards Housing** publishes or intends to publish routinely. The term “published” is broad and is not limited to information produced in paper forms. As far as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is concerned, information made publicly available has been published. Therefore, information on the **Northwards Housing** website is as much part of the Publication Scheme as printed documents.

WHAT ARE CLASSES OF INFORMATION?

A requirement of the Act is to specify “classes” of information that **Northwards Housing** will publish within its Publication Scheme.

The Information Commissioner has issued a ‘**Model Publication Scheme**’ and from 1ST January 2009 **Northwards Housing** has adopted the ‘Model Scheme’.

The Model Scheme contains 7 classes of information and these are as follows: -

- **Who we are and what we do**
- **What we spend and how we spend it**
- **What our priorities are and how we are doing**
- **How we make decisions**
- **Our policies and procedures**
- **The services we offer**

Examples of the type of information available are given below under the **Guide to Information**.

By adopting the Information Commissioner’s ‘Model Scheme’ **Northwards Housing** is committed to the following: -

- To proactively publish information.
- To provide a means by which Northwards can ensure the public are aware of the sorts of the information the organisation has committed to make readily available, how they can access and whether they will have to pay for it.

- To review and update the information on a regular basis and in accordance with The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Publication Scheme Review Guidance.

HOW WILL I REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT COVERED BY THIS SCHEME?

Northwards Housing includes as much information in the Publication Scheme as it can, however, if you cannot find what you are looking for you can make a request for the information.

The Act is retrospective and information requests can be for information created before the Act came fully in to force in 2005. However, where any of the information comes within an exempt category either under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or other relevant legislation, it will be published with the exempt material deleted.

WILL I BE CHARGED FOR INFORMATION?

Material which is published and accessed on the website can be downloaded free of charge. Some information may only be available in hard copy and some information will only be available for inspection. Charges may be made for information subject to a legal charging regime. Charges under the publication scheme may be made for actual disbursements such as: -

- Photocopying
- Printing
- Postage and packaging
- The cost directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Any charges will be in accordance with **Northwards Housing** policy.

WHO DO I CONTACT?

For information concerning the scheme or if you wish to make a request for other information you can contact the following:

Steve Finegan, Head of Business Improvement

The information can be found under the **Northwards Housing** website at the following:

[Northwards' Publication Scheme](#)

MAKING A COMPLAINT, SUGGESTION OR COMPLIMENT

If you are not satisfied with **Northwards Housing's** response to a request for information you may make a complaint to the address below: -

Northwards Housing
Hexagon Tower
Crumpsall Vale
M9 8ZS

If after going through the **Northwards Housing** formal complaint and appeals system you are still not satisfied then the Freedom of Information Act 2000 makes provision for you to complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office: -

Wycliffe House,
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

<http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

If you have any suggestions or compliments, we need to know so that we can improve our service to you. Feedback forms are available by contacting:

Yvette Newton, Customer Services Officer, 0161 227 3035, Northwards Housing, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, M9 8ZS.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

If you need help to make a request for information you may contact the following: -

Yvette Newton, Customer Services Officer, 0161 227 3035, Northwards Housing, Hexagon Tower, Crumpsall Vale, M9 8ZS.

REVIEWING AND MAINTAINING THE SCHEME

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a publication scheme should be reviewed from time to time. Northwards is responsible for reviewing and maintaining this guide to information and the data it contains. Material will be updated and any outdated information will be removed. This guide and operation of the scheme will be reviewed annually in accordance with The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Publication Scheme Review Guidance.

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Northwards Housing's GUIDE TO INFORMATION

The Northwards Housing's site map on Northwards' website provide a guide to the information available and there is also a search facility to assist you to find other information that may not be included in the A-Z.

The guidance below is intended to assist you by giving some examples of the type of information that Northwards Housing routinely makes available.

Where a document is indicated within this guidance it will be the current version.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts. In this section you can expect to find:

- Articles of association: company rules;
- Memorandum of association;
- Standing orders
- Details on Northwards' Board;
- Organisational structure for the officers and Board, sub-committees and area panals;
- Details on how Baord members are chosen;
- Code of conduct for Board members;
- Management agreement with Manchester City Council;
- Business and delivery plan;
- Terms of reference for the sub-committees;
- Area panal constitution;
- Area panal code of conduct;
- Office opening times and contact details;

WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit. In this section you can expect to find:

- Annual budget;
- Financial statements;
- Capital programme information;
- Financial regulations;
- List of service level agreements;
- Business and delivery plan;
- Value for money strategy;
- Annual efficiency statement;
- Risk management strategy;

WHAT OUR PRIORITIES ARE AND HOW WE ARE DOING

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews. In this section you can expect to find:

- Community regeneration strategy;
- Procurement strategy;
- Procurement guidelines and rules;
- Equality policy: fair and accessible services;
- Health and safety policy and procedures;
- Asbestos management plan;
- Hate incident policy and procedure;
- Asset management: managing property;
- Resident involvement agreement;
- Manchester City Council policy: rehousing;
- Manchester City Council policy: anti-social behaviour;
- Manchester City Council policy: domestic violence;
- Manchester City Council policy: mediation;
- Mission statement, values and objectives;
- Rent collection and arrears recovery;
- Freedom of information;
- Publication scheme;
- Manchester City Council community strategy;
- Community regeneration strategy;
- Interpretation and translation policy and procedure;
- Performance statistics;
- Service improvement plan;
- Board improvement plan;
- Audit commission: self assessment report, inspection report and action plan;

- Service standards;
- Annual report.

HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

Decision making processes and records of decisions. In this section you can expect to find:

- Timetable of Northwards' meetings;
- Board meetings: minutes and agendas;
- Sub-committees: minutes and agendas;
- Area panels: minutes and agendas.

OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities. In this section you can expect to find:

- Our complaints procedure;
- Data protection policy;
- Staff policy: computer and system security;
- Staff policy: disciplinary;
- Staff policy: drug and alcohol abuse;
- Staff policy: equality and diversity;
- Staff policy: forced marriage and honour violence;
- Staff policy: grievance;
- Staff policy: harassment and bullying;
- Staff policy: internet and email;
- Staff policy: managing attendance;
- Staff policy: special leave;
- Staff policy: violence at work;
- Staff policy: work-related stress;
- Staff policy: dealing with the media.

THE SERVICES WE OFFER

Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters. In this section you can expect to find:

- Services for your home and estate;
- Improvement and regeneration;
- Services for tenants wishing to move;
- Publications: newsletters, handbook, leaflets.