

Data Protection Guidance for WIs

Introduction

WIs collect and hold personal data about individuals in order to provide membership services and to operate efficiently as a WI. Individuals may consist of members of the public (including WI members), customers and suppliers.

Personal data identifies an individual. It may include the individual's name, postal address, telephone number, financial details as well as opinions expressed about the individual. Please note that personal data also includes an identifiable person in a photograph or video material. Personal data is *sensitive* when it includes information about a person's ethnic background, political opinions, religious beliefs, health, sexual health and criminal proceedings or convictions.

The Data Protection Act (1998) requires that any personal data shall:

- *Be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.*
- *Be obtained for a specified and lawful purpose and shall not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose.*
- *Be adequate, relevant and not excessive.*
- *Be accurate and kept up to date.*
- *Not be kept for longer than is necessary.*
- *Be processed in accordance with the data subject's¹ rights.*
- *Be kept safe from unauthorised access, accidental loss or destruction.*
- *Not be transferred to a country outside the European Economic Area unless there is an adequate level of data protection in that country.*

Responsibilities

Personal Data held on the MCS

The NFWI is the data controller of the personal data held on the MCS. In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998), the NFWI is also registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

MCS representatives have access to the MCS in order to administrate the WI membership and WI activities and must comply with the eight principles of Data Protection. The MCS representative should familiarise herself with the document *Data Protection – A Checklist for MCS representatives*, which is available on the Moodle.

Personal Data that is not held on the MCS

If your WI only use the personal data that is not held on the MCS for administrating

¹ A data subject is an individual about whom personal data is held.

membership and activities for WI members, you may be exempt from registering with the ICO. You should read the information on registration exemption to make sure you are eligible which can be found here <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1567/exemption-from-registration-for-not-for-profit-organisations.pdf>

However, even if your WI is exempt from registration the eight principles of Data Protection must still be followed. The ICO's website, www.ico.org.uk, contains very useful information about Data Protection.

Data Protection – what to consider

When personal data is collected

- **information** must be given about who you are, why you are collecting the data and how you will use it.
- **consent** must be given in writing from the individual whose data you are requesting and cannot be assumed.
- the personal data must only be used for specific **purpose(s)** and be **clearly communicated** to the individual.
- the individual must **be informed** if the purpose changes and they must be given the opportunity **restate their consent**.
- Individuals should also be informed that they have the **right to request to view and amend** their data held by your WI.

When personal data is held it

- must be kept **up to date, accurate** and **not excessive**
- **must be kept securely** (e.g. in a password protected computer, with adequate antivirus protection, in a locked drawer).
- **cannot be shared** with those who do not need to view the data. If you do decide to share it, for example amongst the members in your WI, this must be communicated to them **in advance** and they must **give their consent** to the sharing.
- should **not be kept longer than necessary**

An Example

At the committee meeting of Sunshine WI, Laura, a committee member, proposes publishing a list of the members of the WI so that they can get in touch with each other. Diane, the WI President, points out that members might not have realised that this would be one of the member services to be undertaken by the WI, so they cannot be said to have consented to it when they became WI members.

The committee decides to ask members both in principle at the next WI meeting and individually, whether they want their details to be published in this way.

If your WI has Data Protection concerns or queries, please contact the NFWI by emailing dataprotection@nfwl.org.uk