



Baldock Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Association

Data Protection Policy

The Data Protection Act 1998 is a substantial piece of legislation designed to protect the right of people to privacy in the computer age when information about them is being collected and processed.

Registering with the Information Commissioner

Since our Allotment Association processes only information which is relevant to managing our allotment sites and the affairs of our Association we do not need to register with the Information Commissioner. However, we must still obey the requirements of the Act in the processing we do.

Requirements of the Act

These requirements are merely some of the things which the Act demands:

3(36) To comply at all times in relation to personal data (as defined in Section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) with the DPA and any equivalent or associated legislation and not to knowingly allow anything to be done which might lead to a breach of the DPA. Such provisions include but are not limited to

- (i) adopting appropriate security measures to prevent unauthorized or unlawful processing of such personal data and accidental loss or destruction of or damage to it*
- (ii) not retaining such personal data for any longer than is necessary and securely destroying it when no longer required and*
- (iii) not disclosing information to any third party without prior knowledge or consent of an individual who is the subject of such personal data.*

North Herts District Council will be allowed to visit BALGA to inspect the information and check that it is being kept in accordance with this policy, but the Council is not entitled to copy the information or have it sent to them, unless there is a statutory requirement for this.

3(29) To keep and maintain up to date:-

- (a) copies of each of the sub-letting tenancy agreements*
- (b) registers of applicants for sub-lettings together with the date of receipt of each application*
- (c) registers of the individual Allotment Gardens and the names and addresses of the Members to whom they are sublet*
- (d) names and addresses of associate members (leisure gardeners) and allotment co-workers*

and to permit the Council by its officers to inspect items (a) to (c) above at all reasonable times.

Processing Data

To meet requirements of the Data Protection Act BALGA will:

- **Only collect information needed for the business of the Association** – BALGA will ask the question “Does the Association really need to keep this item of information on file?”
- **Keep it secure** – BALGA will not allow members access to each other’s personal data. For example e-mails to all members will use blind copies, so that members do not see everyone else’s e-mail address. Committee members are entitled to access all information held by their

society or its officers acting for the society, but they will not asking for personal data unless they need it to discharge their duty as a committee member.

- **Ensure it is relevant and up to date** –Members will be asked to confirm or correct the information BALGA holds about them when they pay their rent or renew their membership each year. A review may be conducted if felt necessary by the Management Committee.
- **Only hold as much as needed, and only for as long as needed** – There are good reasons for holding ex plot holders’ details for a time in case of further contact. However, information pertaining to rent reduction for age or income and benefits will only be inspected when the reduction is agreed, and will not be retained. Records will not include member’s age or date of birth, but will indicate whether a member is entitled to rent reduction because of age.
- **Allow the subject of the information to see it on request** – This is a legal right, and members will be allowed to inspect the data held on them.

Information Policy

The General Committee will agree what information it will collect and hold about each applicant, member, co-worker and plot holder, how it will store it securely, how it will update it, and when it will be destroyed. BALGA General Committee will decide who will hold and process the information and how often a copy or backup will be made and who will hold that so the data cannot disappear due to computer malfunction or human error.

The BALGA General Committee may decide to collect the following information about members and plot holders:

- **Contact** - Title and full name, address, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. BALGA may also consider asking for an alternative person with their contact details for when a tenant is uncontactable following, for example, the onset of a sudden major illness or an accident.
- **Skills** - The professional and other skills, experiences and knowledge which might be useful to the Association in future
- **Other** - Any other personal information which is relevant to BALGA’s management of the allotments and the Association (see below).
- **History** - BALGA may also keep a record of each plot holder’s plot inspection results, letters, warnings and other history which may be relevant to any future dispute or disciplinary matter. The information retained will be factual, and may be inspected by the person concerned.

Privacy Statement

BALGA will supply a privacy statement to plot holders explaining what information is held about them, why it is held, and what BALGA will do with it. This statement will be supplied when they go onto a waiting list and again when they become a plot holder and/or member of BALGA. The wording will be agreed by the General Committee, but will be along the following lines:

“Members’ and allotment tenants’ contact details, allotment history and other information relevant to their tenancy and membership of the Association will be stored by BALGA and may be kept on computer. This information will be used only for the management and administration of the Association and the allotment sites and will not be disclosed to third parties unless the Association is required to do so by law or in compliance with legal obligations, or under the following circumstances:

- Under the terms of our insurance we must disclose to them details of any member making a claim

- Under the terms of our membership of NSALG we must provide to that organisation annually the names and addresses of every member, committee member and officer.

Whilst this policy is required by NHDC under the terms of site leases and our management agreement the principles established herein shall apply equally to all associate members and any plot holder occupying a plot not managed by BALGA.

The member may inspect the information held by the Association about him or her on request.

SignedChairman

Date.....