

Our commitment

At Citizens Advice Wandsworth we collect and use your personal information to help solve your problems, improve our services and tackle wider issues in society that affect people's lives.

We only ask for the information we need. We always let you decide what you're comfortable telling us, explain why we need it and treat it as confidential.

When we record and use your personal information we:

- only access it when we have a good reason
- only share what is necessary and relevant
- don't sell it to commercial organisations

At times we might use or share your information without your permission. If we do, we'll always make sure there's a legal basis for it. This could include situations where we have to use or share your information:

- to comply with the law – for example, if a court orders us to share information. This is called 'legal obligation'
- to protect someone's life – for example, sharing information with a paramedic if a client was unwell at our office. This is called 'vital interests'
- to carry out our legitimate aims and goals as a charity – for example, to create statistics for our national research. This is called 'legitimate interests'
- for us to carry out a task where we're meeting the aims of a public body in the public interest – for example, delivering a government or local authority service. This is called 'public task'
- to carry out a contract we have with you – for example, if you're an employee we might need to store your bank details so we can pay you. This is called 'contract'
- to defend our legal rights – for example, sharing information with our legal advisors if there was a complaint that we gave the wrong advice

We handle and store your personal information in line with the law – including the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018.

You can check the main [Citizens Advice policy](#) for how we handle most of your personal information.

This page covers how we, as your local charity, handle your information locally in our offices.

How we collect your data

We'll ask you for information about yourself and your enquiry when you call us, visit us or fill out a form on our web site. We'll get your permission to collect and use this information by asking you to either:

- sign a paper consent form
- tick a box online
- give agreement over the phone if you call our Adviceline

Before we ask for your permission, we'll always explain how we use your information. If you've been referred to us from another service or organisation such as your Housing Association, the council or another local charity, they'll send us your information using an online referral form or by telephoning us. They'll get your permission before sending us your information.

We need your explicit consent to collect some information, including your ethnicity, religion, health conditions, sexual orientation, trade union membership and political opinion.

You don't have to give us permission to collect this information, which is known as 'special category personal data', but if you do we'll only use it to:

- give you advice
- help us gather data to improve our service
- support our research in a way that you can't be identified

We'll make sure all your information is kept safe in our secure case management system.

What information we ask for

We ask for your data in accordance with the [national Citizens Advice privacy policy](#).

How we use your information

We use your information in accordance with the [national Citizens Advice privacy policy](#).

How we store your information

We take care to store your data securely. We store case records electronically on secure systems including Casebook. Electronic documents are stored on our local servers or in the cloud-based Microsoft 365 system.

Working on your behalf

When you give us authority to act on your behalf, for example to help you with a Universal Credit claim, we'll need to share information with that third party.

We commonly share information with the Department for Work and Pensions (Job Centre Plus), L&Q, Wandle and other local housing associations, charities offering grants, Wandsworth Council, banks, building societies and organisations that you may owe money to.

How we share your information

We will not share your information with third parties without your clear consent. We may ask you for permission to share your information with a trusted third party to evaluate the quality of our service. You are free to refuse consent and if you do refuse consent, your refusal will in no way affect the service that we provide to you.

Contact us about your data

If you have any questions about how we use or collect your information, you can [call us or drop into one of our offices](#).

You can contact us to:

- find out what personal information we hold about you
- correct your information if it's wrong, out of date or incomplete
- request we delete your information
- ask us to limit what we do with your data – for example, ask us not to share it if you haven't asked us already

- ask us to give you a copy of the data we hold in a format you can use to transfer it to another service
- ask us to stop using your information

Who's responsible for looking after your personal information

The national Citizens Advice charity and your local Citizens Advice operate a system called Casebook to keep your personal information safe. This means they're a 'joint data controller' for your personal information that's stored on our Casebook system.

Each local Citizens Advice is an independent charity, and a member of the national Citizens Advice charity. The Citizens Advice membership agreement also requires that the use of your information complies with data protection law. Our full [data protection policy](#) is available online. You can find out more about your data rights on [the website of the Information Commissioner's Office](#).

If you want to make a complaint

If you're not happy with how we've handled your data, you can [make a complaint](#).

What this policy covers

This privacy policy only covers this website, cawandsworth.org, and its subdomains; other websites linked from this website are not covered by this policy. Once you have accessed another website via one of our links you will be subject to the security and privacy policy of that site.