



Interest Link Borders Confidentiality Policy

Introduction & Relationship to Data Protection Policy

Interest Link Borders has a Data Protection Policy which gives an overview of how we collect, process and use personal data about members, carers, volunteers, staff and directors. It also sets out procedures in the event of a data breach (which would almost certainly involve a breach of confidentiality).

In contrast, this Policy set out how confidentiality and information-sharing are managed on a day-to-day basis and clarifies potential grey areas.

As a general rule Interest Link treats all personal information as confidential, and sharing is only allowed to ensure the befriending service can be provided safely and effectively or where specific consent has been given by the person involved (for example to talk to health & care professionals or issue publicity photos).

Information and Training. All volunteers, directors & staff members are provided with this policy, and volunteer & staff members receive training on confidentiality. Members and Carers are also made aware of the policy.

Member, volunteer and staff files are confidential and access is limited to the relevant Branch Co-ordinator and Assistant and the Project Co-ordinator. Physical files are kept in locked filing cabinets and computer files are encrypted on password-protected computers.

Procedure When Confidentiality Is Broken

Inappropriate disclosures by volunteers or staff members will be treated as a disciplinary matter and dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedures.

When disclosure of personal information is allowed or required

Protection of children or adults at risk of harm may require information to be shared, as set down in our Child Protection Policy or Adult Protection Policy.

The Project Co-ordinator or relevant Branch Co-ordinator will inform anyone possibly affected about a contagious or notifiable disease suffered by anyone involved in the organisation that they may have had contact with.

Volunteers and staff members have the option of discussing personal issues adversely affecting their work in confidence with their Branch Co-ordinator or the Project Co-ordinator. With their agreement, the Co-ordinator can then take appropriate measures to address these issues without breaking confidentiality.

In the event of a serious issue arising of a line management nature, volunteers or staff members may raise it with the Project Co-ordinator and it will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Procedure.

There is a legal requirement to disclose information in the event of a police enquiry.

Confidential post and emails.

Any mail addressed to a specific staff member and marked Private and/or Confidential will not be opened by another member of staff. In particular:

- PVG Scheme records may only be opened by the Project Co-ordinator or Project Administrator.
- When sickness leave is taken by a staff member, a self-certification note will be sent to the Project Co-ordinator. Information on the nature of the illness will not be made known to other staff members. To ensure this, self-certification notes should be submitted in a sealed envelope and marked confidential.