

Privacy Notice

Data Protection – How we use your Personal Information

Watson Woodhouse Limited is a firm of solicitors authorised and regulated by the SRA. Our sister company, Macks Solicitors Limited is also authorised and regulated by the SRA. Both companies operate under a shared ownership structure, however we have safeguards in place to prevent your information being shared between the companies without your express consent.

We may refer you to Macks Solicitors Limited if you have a legal problem which falls within their area of expertise, however it will be your choice whether to take up this referral.

We are registered with the Information Commissioners Office under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). We attach a document outlining the rights this legislation grants you in relation to your personal data, how they relate to the way we handle your data and how you can exercise those rights with us.

What information we collect about you

We collect personal data about you in relation to the matter(s) where you have instructed us to act on your behalf. This information will be obtained either directly from you or under your specific authority and will consist of the information needed for us to conduct your case and correspond with you about your case.

We also request your consent to hold and process your personal data for marketing purposes. This marketing data will be limited to your contact details and matters which you have informed us that have an interest in.

Why we need your personal data

In order for us to carry out the work which you have instructed us, we need to be able to correspond with you and to obtain any information relevant to the matter. We will only seek to obtain the personal data that is necessary for your matter.

We are also required to carry out certain regulatory checks which require your personal data; these checks are dependent upon the type of matter you have instructed us in relation to and we will provide you with full details of the checks relevant to your matter.

As such, we will be processing your personal data on the basis of the contract you are entering into with us. Without access to your personal data we will be unable to act in relation to your matter.

It is important to us that all your information is accurate and up to date. Please contact us immediately if you believe any information we hold about you is inaccurate and we will correct or remove that information accordingly.

How we will use your personal information

We will use your personal data to conduct legal work on your behalf and in relation to the retainer which you have agreed with us.

We will keep your personal information confidential except where we are required to disclose it by law or to comply with a regulatory or legal process or in furtherance of your instructions.

We do not carry out any automated decision making or profiling using your personal data.

Who we may share your personal information with

In carrying out your instructions we may need to discuss your case with third party professionals, such as experts, barristers or other professional advisers. We will provide you with details of this at any point where it becomes necessary in conducting your matter.

In addition, where you have instructed us in relation to a conveyancing matter and we act for you and your lender, we have a duty to fully reveal all relevant facts about that matter to your lender and/or HMRC.

We may, from time to time, utilise external service providers (for example IT specialists) who may have access to some of your personal data to provide their services. These providers are required to provide a confidentiality agreement.

We are subject to periodic checks by Law Society approved consultants and/or assessors. These will have provided the firm with confidentiality agreements and may select your file for checking. If you have any objection to your file being checked, please notify us immediately and your file will be marked accordingly. This will not affect the way your case is handled in any way.

We do not transfer any personal information outside of the EU.

How long will we keep your data for?

We retain personal data for different periods of time depending upon the type of data. This is in order that we have the ability to deal with any queries or issues which may arise following the completion of your matter. These periods have been decided on the basis of the periods when an issue may arise and/or be capable of resolution.

In the case of matter files, the period starts from the end of the matter, unless the matter was conducted on behalf of a client under the age of 18 in which case the retention period will start from their 18th birthday. The standard period of retention for our matter files is 7 years, however certain file types are retained for a longer period as shown in the table below:-

<u>Type of Data</u>	<u>Retention Period</u>
ID documents	Retained with the matter file
Conveyancing purchase matter file	12 years
Matrimonial matter file	15 years
Family Law children matter files	7 years from 21 st birthday of youngest child
Wills, probate & trust matter files	100 years

In accordance with our client care documentation, if you have provided us with copies of ID documents, we will retain them with the matter file unless you instruct us otherwise at the outset of your matter.

Marketing

From time to time we would like to send you information about our services and changes in the law which we believe may affect or interest you from both ourselves and our sister firm Macks Solicitors Ltd. We do not share information with any third party for marketing purposes.

If you are happy for us to contact you with updates and offers please complete the attached form and also indicate to us how you would prefer to be contacted. If you change your mind at any point in the future, please let us know and we will update our records.

If we do not receive this confirmation from you we will assume you do not wish to receive offers and updates and will remove you from our marketing database.

If you do not wish us to contact you for marketing purposes, this will not affect the way in which we handle your matter.

Complaints

If you believe that we have not complied with our professional obligations, including in relation to data protection, then you are entitled to report the matter to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (the SRA). They can be contacted by post at SRA Report, The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN, by telephone on 0370 606 2555 or by email at report@sra.org.uk.

You are also able to report any concerns you have in relation to data protection to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) by telephoning 0303 123 1113.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about our privacy policy or any information which we hold about you, please email us at info@watsonwoodhouse.co.uk or write our head office at Watson Woodhouse, 102-108 Borough Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 2HJ

Data Protection – Your Rights

Right to be Informed

You have the right to know about how we use your data. We attach a document outlining how we intend to use your data, however if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Right of Access

You have the right to request a copy of any information which we hold about you. We are required to deal with your request within one month, although this can be extended by a further two months if the request is complex.

You have the right to receive this information free of charge, unless the request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, for example if repeated requests are made for the same information.

We will need to verify your identity when you make any request for your personal data to ensure that we do not release this to a fraudster.

Right to Rectification

You have the right to have any of your personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete. This is required to be done within one month of you making the request.

We will advise you as soon as possible if there is any issue in rectifying your personal data.

If you believe that any of your personal data is incorrect, in the first instance please contact the person dealing with your matter.

Right to Erasure

You have the right to have your personal data erased under the following circumstances:-

- The data is no longer necessary in relation to the purpose for which it was collected
- You withdraw your consent to the processing of your data
- You object to the processing and there is no overriding legitimate interest for continuing the processing
- The personal data was unlawfully processed
- The personal data has to be erased to comply with a legal obligation
- The personal data was processed in relation to the offer of information society services to a child.

We are however entitled to refuse the request for erasure under certain situations as follows:-

- To exercise the right of freedom of expression and information
- To comply with a legal obligation
- For public health purposes
- For archiving, scientific or historical research or statistical purposes in the public interest
- For the exercise or defence of legal claims.

Right to Restrict Processing

You have the right to prevent us from further processing your personal data. In this case, we will retain the data itself but will not do anything further with it.

If we are under a legal obligation in relation to any processing of your data, then this will take precedence over your right to restrict processing in that respect.

Right to Data Portability

You have the right to move, copy or transfer personal data easily from one IT environment to another in safe and secure way.

This right, however, only applies where your personal data is processed by automated means. **We confirm that we do not use automated means to process your data.**

Right to Object

You have the right to object to your personal data being processed where it is processed for the following:-

- Our legitimate interests or the performance of a task in the public interest/exercise of official authority
- Direct marketing
- Purposes of scientific/historical research and statistics.

Where your objection relates to the processing of your data for direct marketing, we will immediately stop processing that data upon receipt of your objection.

Where your objection relates to the processing of your data for our legitimate interests, we will be able to continue processing your data if it is necessary for a legal claim or where the grounds for processing are sufficiently compelling to overrule your right to object. On receipt of an objection, we will investigate the processing and will advise you within one month whether or not we are able to stop the processing of your personal data.

We do not process personal data for research purposes.

Rights relating to automated decision making including profiling

We do not carry out any profiling or automated decision making using personal data.

Where any organisation does carry out profiling or automated decision making using your personal data, then you have the right to be given information about this and to challenge a decision or request human intervention in the decision. They are also only able to do this on restricted grounds.

If you wish to exercise any of your rights in relation to your personal data, then please contact our Data Protection Officer, Alison Halford, at compliance@watsonwoodhouse.co.uk or write to our head office at Watson Woodhouse, 96-98 Borough Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 2HJ.

