

Planning a GDPR process for your open homes event

GDPR is being transparent with people about what data you're collecting from them and what you're going to do with it.

When organising a green open homes event, you'll need to collect data from your hosts, volunteers and visitors. This can include contact details, home addresses, demographic details, photos and more. Use the following advice and templates to make sure you're doing the right thing with people's data.

This is one of a series of information sheets for community groups organising green open homes events. Find the rest at www.greenopenhomes.net

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What is GDPR?

GDPR stands for General Data Protection Regulation, which was implemented in the EU in 2018 and adopted by the UK. The main aim is to give individuals more control over their personal data and to set guidelines for how organisations handle and process that data.

Personal data is any information which identifies someone. It can include names and email addresses, phone numbers, postcodes, photographs, videos, and demographic data (e.g. gender, ethnicity, age).

Key parts of GDPR include:

Agreement

Organisations must get clear and explicit consent (agreement) from individuals before collecting and processing their personal data.

Data Rights

Individuals have certain rights about their data, such as the right to access, change, and delete their personal information.

Data Breach Notification

Organisations are required to promptly notify authorities and affected individuals in the event of a data breach. A data breach would mean unauthorised people gain access to sensitive and confidential data, exposing it to potential misuse.

Why is it important?

Protecting Privacy

GDPR aims to protect individuals' privacy rights by making sure their personal data is collected, processed, and stored securely.

Building Trust

Following GDPR regulations helps organisations build trust with individuals by showing they're committed to responsible and ethical data handling practices.

Avoiding Penalties

Non-compliance can result in significant fines.

This document is intended as a guide only, not legal advice. You can find out more specific information about GDPR at the official website of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (www.gdpr.eu) or at the Information Commissioner's Office (www.ico.org.uk).

Checklist for collecting information

Make sure you've covered everything when you're asking for people's personal information. See sample text in the section below.

- Explain why you're asking for their personal details. For example, to upload their home details to your Green Open Homes web page, or to be added to a WhatsApp chat.
- Explain how you're going to store their data. This must be secure, for example on a password protected spreadsheet.
- Explain how long you're going to keep the data. Don't choose a far-off date just in case you *might* need their data in future – you need to justify how long you're using their information, and stick to it. And make sure you do delete the data!
- Explain who you're going to share the data with.
- Link to relevant privacy policy, e.g. a statement on your organisation's website about how you protect people's data.
- Consent box for people to tick to agree to share their data with you.

If you don't already have a privacy statement or notice, you can use the guide and template at www.ico.org.uk/for-organisations.

Template text

This template follows the checklist above. Simply edit to make it applicable to your group and purpose.

Thank you for your interest in *[Insert event name]*. Firstly, we'll need some contact information from you. The information you provide will be used for *[e.g. event registration and communication about the event]*. We will send you *[e.g. updates, event details, relevant information for you to take part in the event]*.

Your data will be securely stored and accessible only to *[authorised person/s, your organisation name]*. Your data will be shared with *[other organisation, if relevant]* who is working with us on organising this event.

We will not share your information with other third parties without your explicit consent.

We will retain your information for *[number]* years after the project ends. It will be deleted on *[date]*.

You have the right to access, change, or erase your personal data held by us. Please contact us at *[your contact email/phone]* to do this.

By clicking the "Submit" button, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided in this notice, and you consent to the processing of your personal data provided in the form by *[Organisation/s]*.

Taking photos

It's a good idea to get photos from your events but be aware that photos where individuals are identifiable are also considered personal data. To take photos in a GDPR-compliant way, you could have large signs at your event which follow the GDPR checklist. The signs should plainly state why you are taking photos, how they will be used, how long they'll be stored, who visitors should speak to if they don't want to be photographed, and who to contact to view their photos or have their images deleted.

The Resource Centre has comprehensive online advice for community groups on data protection and photography at events, including templates. See www.resourcecentre.org.uk.

Tips for storing and processing data

Once you've collected the data, you need to make sure you store and process it in secure way. Here are some suggestions:

- At minimum, password protect documents with any data that can be used to individually identify someone, even lists of email addresses. Share the password separately to the document (e.g. not in the same email) when working with others.
- Have a central list of contacts rather than keep them on different phones or address books. Nominate someone to be the keeper of the list and delete other records once you've added to the central list. Keep track of who has access to the list at all times and remove anyone who does not have a genuine need to access it.
- If you're emailing a large group of people put all the addresses in the 'BCC' field so they're not visible to everyone getting the email.
- If you are storing personal data online (e.g. email attachments, Microsoft Forms, in DropBox) make sure the platform you use complies with GDPR law. Note that Google Drive is *not* GDPR compliant.
- If you collect data that identifies people (e.g. postcode, gender or ethnicity) in the same form as anything where they have expressed an opinion (e.g. event feedback), make it clear that their personal information will be separated from the expressed opinion.

GDPR is necessary and worth the effort. Your hosts will appreciate your attention to detail. Your group will look reputable and trustworthy to your community as well as funders. Your organising group can also have peace of mind that you are legally compliant.

This information sheet was produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy. We're committed to supporting low carbon retrofit by promoting open homes events and helping you get going with resources, practical support and funding.

You can find more advice at www.greenopenhomes.net.

www.cse.org.uk

communities@cse.org.uk

Charity 298740

St James Court, St James Parade, Bristol BS1 3LH