



Policy Name:	Social Tenants Access to Information Policy
Lead Directorate:	Corporate Services
Authors:	Naz Ahmed, Director of Corporate Services
Reason for change:	Implementation of Social Tenants Access to Information Requirements
Date:	September 2026

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR CURRENT VERSION

Presented to:	Services Committee
Date:	September 2026
Decision:	Approved

1. Introduction

This policy sets out how Poplar HARCA will meet the Social Tenants Access to Information Requirements by making information about the management of social housing easier for tenants to find and request.

The policy supports openness, accountability and resident scrutiny. It covers Poplar HARCA's publication scheme from 1 October 2026 and arrangements for responding to information requests from 1 April 2027.

2. Scope

This policy supports Poplar HARCA's wider commitments under:

- the Consumer Standards issued by the Regulator of Social Housing;
- the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code;
- the Data Protection Act 2018; UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010; and
- associated information governance and records management obligations.

3. Regulatory context

The Social Tenants Access to Information Requirements give tenants of private registered providers greater access to information about how their homes and services are managed.

The requirements are implemented in two phases: a publication scheme from 1 October 2026 and a request-based access to information scheme from 1 April 2027. This policy should be read alongside data protection, confidentiality, complaints and records management requirements.

This policy applies to:

- social housing tenants of Poplar HARCA
- designated representatives acting on behalf of tenants
- information held by Poplar HARCA about the management of its social housing
- all employees, contractors and third parties managing housing services on behalf of Poplar HARCA.

4. Classification of information

- **Phase 1 – publication scheme:** information Poplar HARCA holds which falls within the published classifications for governance and decision-making, spending, housing stock management, performance, housing services, lists and registers, and other social housing management information that tenants would reasonably expect to be routinely available.
- **Phase 2 – information request:** recorded information relating to the management of Poplar HARCA's social housing that is not already routinely available, where a tenant or designated representative makes a valid written request from 1 April 2027.

5. Publication scheme

Poplar HARCA will maintain a publication scheme to help tenants easily identify and access information we hold about the management of social housing. This covers

- governance and decision-making, spending, housing services, performance, housing stock management, and relevant lists and registers
- information about social housing management that tenants would reasonably expect to find routinely available
- clear routes for tenants to find information online and request it in other accessible formats where needed

We will review and update published information regularly. We are not required to create new records solely to meet these requirements, but we will make existing information easier to find and understand.

6. Requests for information

From 1 April 2027, tenants and their designated representatives may request recorded information about the management of Poplar HARCA's social housing.

Requests must be made in writing and should describe the information being sought clearly enough for us to identify it. Requests may be submitted online, by email, telephone or in person.

Residents will not be required to specifically reference 'STAIRs' for a request to be treated under this policy.

- we will acknowledge requests and clarify scope where necessary
- we will normally respond within 30 calendar days of receipt

- where information is held on our behalf, we will use reasonable endeavours to obtain it
- we will provide the information, explain any refusal, or direct the tenant to information already published where appropriate
- we will support reasonable adjustments and accessible formats where needed
- we will not alter, delete or conceal information to prevent disclosure

7. Withholding and redaction

Poplar HARCA may withhold or redact information where it is reasonable and lawful to do so. This may include circumstances where disclosure would:

- breach data protection law or another statutory restriction
- prejudice personal privacy, confidentiality, security, health and safety, or legal proceedings
- disclose commercially sensitive or legally privileged information where an exemption applies
- relate to matters outside the management of Poplar HARCA's social housing

Where we withhold information, we will explain the reason unless doing so would itself be inappropriate.

- We will disclose the remainder of a document where only part of it must be withheld.
- Redactions will be limited to what is necessary and proportionate.
- Decisions will be recorded

8. Review and complaints

Residents dissatisfied with the handling of an information request may:

- seek an internal review;
- use the Poplar HARCA complaints process; and/or
- escalate concerns to the Housing Ombudsman Service where appropriate.

Our review process will:

- normally be completed within 30 calendar days
- confirm the outcome and reasons in writing

If the tenant remains dissatisfied after the review, they may escalate the matter through the relevant external route, including the Housing Ombudsman where applicable.

9. Implementation and monitoring

Poplar HARCA will implement this policy through phased preparation, clear procedures, staff guidance and oversight arrangements.

- Publication scheme readiness will be monitored ahead of 1 October 2026.
- Request handling, review arrangements and training will be in place ahead of 1 April 2027.
- Performance information, complaints and review outcomes will be used to improve transparency and consistency.
- Assurance will be reported through appropriate governance routes.

10. Roles & responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Poplar Board	Receives assurance on compliance with the Social Tenants Access to Information Requirements.
Services Committee	Approves policy and receives assurance on compliance with the Social Tenants Access to Information Requirements.
Chief Operating Officer	Executive lead for implementation and organisational compliance.
Director of Corporate Services	Accountable for policy implementation, governance oversight and review arrangements.
Heads of Service	Ensure information in their service areas is accurate, up to date, retrievable and disclosed lawfully.
All staff and contractors	Follow this policy, maintain good records, and support timely and lawful responses.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if legislation, regulatory guidance, case law, or operational learning requires a change.

Appendix A - Impact assessment

How does the policy contribute to Poplar HARCA's aims?	The policy supports Poplar HARCA's commitment to transparency, accountability and resident influence by making information about the management of social housing more accessible.
Which group(s) of people will benefit from the policy? If any group could be disadvantaged, what is the mitigation or justification?	Social housing tenants and their representatives will benefit from clearer access to information about how homes and services are managed. Any risk of disadvantage will be mitigated through accessible formats, reasonable adjustments, and lawful redaction where disclosure could affect privacy, safety or confidentiality.
How have residents been involved in developing the policy? If they have not been involved, why not?	Residents have helped shape Poplar HARCA's wider approach to transparency and accountability through consultation, scrutiny and feedback arrangements, including resident panels and complaints learning. Feedback on what information tenants want to access, and how they want to access it, will continue to inform implementation of the publication scheme and request process.
How will the policy be monitored and measured? (e.g. performance indicators?)	Through governance oversight, publication scheme reviews, request and complaint data, response timeliness, and internal assurance activity.
If any, what are the Value for Money implications?	Value for money is supported by using existing records and governance arrangements, publishing information proactively, and reducing avoidable repeat enquiries where information is routinely available.
Will personal data be collected, stored, used, or shared? If yes, has a privacy impact assessment been carried out.	Yes. Personal data may be processed when handling requests, publishing information, carrying out reviews, and applying redactions. This processing will be managed in line with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and Poplar HARCA's privacy and records management arrangements. Privacy impacts will be considered as implementation progresses.