

**Govan Housing Association &**

**Govan HOME Team**

**Freedom of Information**

**Publication Scheme and Guide to Information**

**November 2019**

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| **Policy Manual Section:** | **Governance** |
| **Policy Number:** |  |
| **Scottish Social Housing Charter Reference:** | 1. Equalities  2. Communication  3. Participation |
| **Regulatory Framework Reference** | AN3/TS2/EH1/OC1 and RG 2.3 |
| **Date Approved by Management Committee:** |  |
| **Next Review Date:** |  |

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| **Govan Housing Association can provide this document on request, in different languages and formats, including Braille and audio formats.** |



**Contents**

1. Terms Used

2. Background

3. Fees Notice

4. Formats other than online and Charging Schedule

5. Information we cannot publish

6. For how long will information be published?

7. Copyright and re-use

8. Contact us

9. Classes of Information

The information that we make available to you

Class 1: About Lochaber Housing Association Group

Class 2: How we deliver our functions and services

Class 3: How we take decisions and what we have decided

Class 4: What we spend and how we spend it

Class 5: How we manage our human, physical and information resources

Class 6: How we procure goods and services from external providers

Class 7: How we are performing

Class 8: Our commercial publications

Class 9: Our open data

**1. Terms used**

A definition of terms and acronyms used throughout the context of this document.

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| **Terms Used** | **Explanation** |
| FOISA | The Freedom of Information (Scotland ) Act 2002  This legislation places a duty on those organisations covered to proactively publish certain types of information; and to respond to requests for information; and to provide advice and assistance to those making requests for information. |
| EIRs | The Environmental Information (Scotland ) Regulations 2004  This legislation places a duty on those organisations covered to proactively respond to requests for environmental information. |
| SIC | The Scottish Information Commissioner  Responsible for ensuring that those bodies covered by FOISA and EIRs comply with the terms of the legislation. |
| Model Publication Scheme (MPS) | A standard framework for authorities to publish information under FOISA approved by the Scottish Information Commissioner |
| Guide to Information | Guide to Information  A guide that all organisations subject to FOISA and adopting the MPS must produce to help people access the information it makes available. |
| Classes of Information | Nine broad categories describing the types of information authorities must publish ( if they hold it) |

2. **Background - The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA)**

2.1 (FOISA) requires that all housing associations/co-operatives in Scotland must produce and maintain a publication scheme. This must detail all of the key information that we publish and how you can access it.

2.2 This Guide to Information is our publication scheme, and contains links to where you can find all of the information listed online. Govan Housing Association has adopted the Scottish Information Commissioner’s (SIC) Model Publication Scheme (MPS), and this Guide has been approved by the SIC.

**3. Fees Notice**

Under both FOI and EIRs we may charge requesters a fee for complying with their requests. However, fees are dealt with differently under each regime.

3.1 Freedom of Information

Fees must be handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Fees Required for Disclosure) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (the “Fees Regulations”).

In accordance with the Fees Regulations we may only charge for locating, retrieving and providing requested information (so for example, staff time spent searching files/computer systems and redacting documents).

When calculating charges we must consider: how many staff members will be required to deal with the request; how long will it take us to carry out the required tasks; and what is the hourly rate (capped at £15.00 per hour). Where it costs us less than £100.00 to comply with a request we will not charge the requester and where our costs amount to between £100.00 - £600.00 we will only charge 10% of your costs.

You should refer to the Fees Regulations and the SIC’s guidance, available here, for more information on how we will deal with [charges](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Law/FOISA-EIRsGuidance/Fees_and_charging/ChargingFOISA.aspx) under FOI.

3.2 Environmental Information Request

As with Freedom of Information (FOI), it is possible to charge a fee for providing environmental information on request, although the specific charging rules are different. In particular, in marked contrast to FOI, there is no upper or lower limit to the fee which may be charged. Instead the Regulations merely state that the fees shall not exceed “a reasonable amount” and must not exceed the actual costs of producing the information requested.

It is possible (as with FOI) to require payment in advance of providing the information, but written notice of this fact (equivalent to an FOI fees notice) must be given to the applicant, who then has 60 working days to pay. The compliance timescale clock is stopped during this time. The Association is obliged to publish a Schedule of Fees and information on circumstances in which a fee may be charged, waived or required to be paid in advance.

We are not permitted to charge for allowing access to registers of environmental information, or for allowing an applicant to examine information at the Association’s offices (as opposed to being given a copy of it).

The following is Govan Housing Association’s Schedule of Fees for purposes of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004:

Costs of locating, retrieving and assembling information: - Chargeable elements will be included in the calculation in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Fees for Required Disclosure) (Scotland) Regulations 2004, but without any disregard for the first £100 and without any discount on the elements above £100; - Staff costs will be charged on the basis of the actual cost to the Association of employing the staff in question for the time spent.

This means the Association will calculate the fee for an environmental information request on the basis of the same elements as can be included in the fees for compliance with FOI requests. However in contrast to mainstream FOI fees, actual staff time is not capped at a maximum of £15 per hour but is charged at the actual cost. The lowest grade member(s) of staff available to carry out the task (being of an appropriate grade to be dealing with the information in question and having the requisite skills and knowledge) will be used.

3.3 Formats other than on-line and charging Schedule

In addition the fee will include any costs associated with putting the information into a particular format, copying and postage costs, as set out below.

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| **FORMAT** | **CHARGE** |
| Online | Free |
| View at our office | Free |
| Print in black and white | 10p per sheet – A4  20p per sheet – A3 |
| Print in colour | 20p per sheet – A4  40p per sheet - A3 |
| CD rom | 50p |
| Posted document | Cost of postage |

Situations requiring payment in advance: - all fees for environmental information requests require to be paid in advance.

This is to maintain consistency with the FOI rules.

3.4 Situations where the fee may be waived

The Association may elect to waive the fee if satisfied that there is a genuine and widespread public interest in the publication of the information in question. This is unlikely to be the case where a request appears to be driven by commercial interests or is highly specific in terms of focus or geographical area.

The Association may elect to waive the fee if satisfied that it would be uneconomical to issue a fees notice and process payment.

The Association may elect to waive the fee where information is requested which consists of a mixture of environmental and non-environmental information, and the non-environmental information would not be subject to a fee in terms of the FOI legislation.

The Association may elect to apply a disregard of the first £100 of any fee and charge only 10% of the marginal costs between £100 and £550 if it has processed environmental information request as a mainstream FOI request. This should not be taken as an indication that the same disregard will be applied to any similar requests in future. A fee may be charged in all other cases based on the full chargeable elements.

We may charge a ‘reasonable amount’ for complying with requests under the EIR – however the charge will not exceed our costs for producing the information requested. We cannot charge for allowing people to access Environmental Information via public registers or at a place where we keep said information available for inspection (for example at our office).

5. Information we cannot publish

We will publish all the information we hold that falls within the classes of information. If a document contains information that is exempt under Scotland’s freedom of information laws, we will remove or redact ( black out) the information before publication and explain why. Whilst we will try to make all of the information we have detailed available, in rare cases there may be some information that we cannot make available. For example, sometimes if we were to publish certain board minutes, it could reveal personal details about an individual. This would be a breach of Data Protection legislation if we were to do so. When this is the case, we will remove any personal details before publication and highlight where and why we have done so.

6. For how long will information be published?

We aim, where possible, to publish information for at least the current and previous two financial years. When we review any document – e.g. our policies – to avoid confusion we will only publish the current version once it has been updated.

7. Copyright and Re-use

Where we hold the copyright on our published information, the information may be copied or reproduced without formal permission, provided that:

● It is copied accurately o It is not used in a misleading context

● The source of the material is identified

8. Contact Us

If you have any queries about anything contained within this Guide to Information, or if there is some information that you cannot find that you would like to access, please contact: Govan Housing Association, 35 McKechnie Street, Glasgow, G51 3AQ.

Email: [general@Govanha.org.uk](mailto:general@Govanha.org.uk)

Telephone: 0141 440 0308

Website: [www.Govanha.org.uk](http://www.Govanha.org.uk)

Repairs and Maintenance: https:xxxxxxxxxxx

9. Classes of Information

**CLASS 1 - About Our Organisation, Govan Housing Association Group**

**Information about who we are, where to find us, how to contact us, how we are managed and our external relations.**

***Descriptions of who we are*** [Govan Housing Association and Govan Home Team](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/about-us/)  
 [Our Mission Statement](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/about-us/)

[Our Vision and Values](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/key-policies-documents/business-plan/)

Corporate Objectives  
 Strategic Objectives

Senior Management Team

Organisational Chart

[Area of operation](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/about-us/)

[Business Plan](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/key-policies-documents/business-plan/)  
 [Customer Charter](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/about-us/customer-charter/)

Contact Details

***About our Governing Body***

Governing Body Details

[How to become a a part of the Governing Body](https://www.lochaberhousing.org.uk/your-lha/get-involved/join-board-management/)

***Contact details*** Contact details and opening hours Govan HA / Govan Hometeam

How to make a complaint and contact details

***Information relating to Freedom of Information***  
 Publication Scheme and Guide to Information  
 Fees Notice for published information   
 Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Policy   
 How to make a FOI request  
 How to make a Subject Access request  
 How to make an Environmental Information request (EIR)  
 Charging Schedule for providing information under an EIR

***Governance Documents and Corporate Policies***  
 Rules  
 Standing Orders  
 Membership Policy  
 Code of Conduct for Staff  
 Code of Conduct for Governing Body Members  
 Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy  
 Equalities Policy  
 Health and Safety Policy  
 Register of Interests – available on request

***Relationship with Regulators***  
 Engagement Plan with Scottish Housing Regulator  
 Assurance Statement  
 Annual Return on Charter  
 Financial Returns to Scottish Housing Regulator  
 Charter Report to Tenants  
 Internal and External Audit Arrangements

**CLASS 2 – How We Deliver Our Functions and Services**

***I*nformation about our work, our strategy and policies for delivering services and information for our service users.**

***How to use our services*** How to Report a Repair

Right to Repair  
 How to apply for a tenancy  
 Tenancy support  
 How to contact Housing Management  
 How to make a complaint  
 How we consult with tenants and other customers to improve and develop new services

***Policies and procedures*** Allocations Policy  
 Anti-Social Behaviour Policy  
 Asbestos Management Policy – on request  
 Asset Management Strategy – currently under review – on request   
 Customer Charter  
 Data Protection Policy

Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Policy – available from 29th November 2019  
 Equality and Diversity Strategy - currently under review – on request  
 Estate Management Policy – currently under review – on request  
 Health and Safety Policy  
 Procurement Policy  
 Risk Management Policy  
 Rent Setting Policy - currently under review – on request  
 Rent Arrears Policy - currently under review – on request

**CLASS 3 – How We take Decisions And What We Have Decided**

**Information about the decisions we take, how we make decisions and how we involve others.**

***Governing Body meetings*** Governing Body agendas – on request  
 Governing Body meeting minutes – GHA/Govan Home Team - on request  
 Governing Body meeting reports – on request

***Consultation and participation*** Tenant participation strategy – on request  
 Tenant consultation reports – on request  
 Tenant scrutiny panel minutes – on request  
 Registered tenant organisations – minutes – on request

**CLASS 4 – What We Spend and How We Spend It**

**Information about our strategy for and management of, financial resources (in sufficient detail to explain how we plan to spend public money and what has actually been spent).**

***Information about our accounts and budgets***  
 Financial Management policies and procedures–available on request  
 Budget policies and procedures – available on request  
 Audited Accounts GHA and GHT – available on request

Annual Report and Financial Statements

***Our programme of work and projects*** Project funding – on request  
 Capital works programme – on request

***Spending relating to Staff and Governing Body***  
 Travel and Subsistence Policy  
 Senior Staff - expenses – on request  
 Board member expenses – on request  
 Pay and grading structure  
 Pension Scheme

**CLASS 5 – How We Manage our Human, Physical and Information Resources**

**Information about how we manage our human, physical and information resources.**

***Human resources*** Staffing structure GHA & GHT

Salary and grading scales  
 Pension Arrangements – available on request

Recruitment Policy  
 Training and Development Policy - available on request – under review  
 Adoption, Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental Leave - Available on Request

Alcohol Drugs & Substance Abuse Policy - Available on Request

Attendance Management Policy - Available on Request

Code of Conduct – Governing Body Members, Staff

Disciplinary Policy - Available on Request

Disclosure Handling Policy - Available on Request

Equal Opportunities Policy

Flexible Working Policy - Available on Request

Entitlement, Payments and Benefits Policy

Redundancy Policy Available on Request

Dignity at Work Policy Available on Request

Smoke Free Policy Available on Request

Social Media Policy Available on Request

Staff Uniform Policy Available on Request

Stress Policy Available on Request

Whistleblowing Policy

Retention Schedule

***Information resources*** Document Retention Schedule – on request  
 Data protection and Privacy Policy

Freedom of Information Policy

**CLASS 6 – How We Procure Goods and Services From External Providers**

**Information about how we procure works, goods and services, and our contracts with external providers.**

***Our procurement*** Procurement Policy  
 Public Contracts Scotland Notices  
 Regulated procurement contracts awarded

***Our contractors and suppliers*** Key service delivery contractors – on request  
 Approved suppliers and contractors used by GHA Group – on request  
 Contracts Register – on request  
 Framework Agreements

**CLASS 7 – How are We Performing**

**Information about how we perform as an organisation and how well we deliver our functions and services.**

Annual Report  
 ARC report to tenants  
 Performance reports  
 Benchmarking information  
 Complaints Policy and guidance  
 Tenant scrutiny reports – on request  
 Newsletters

**CLASS 8 – Our Commercial Publications**

**Information packaged and made available for sale on a commercial basis and sold at market value through a retail outlet e.g. bookshop, museum or research journal.**

This class does not apply to Govan Housing Association Group as we do not produce any publications for sale.

**CLASS 9 – Our Open Data**

**Open data made available by us under Scottish Government’s Open Data Resource Pack and available under open licence.**

This class does not apply to Govan Housing Association Group.