

Data Protection Policy

Introduction

Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd needs to gather and use certain information about individuals.

These people can include customers, suppliers, business contacts, employees and other people the organisation has a relationship with or may need to contact.

This policy describes how this personal data must be collected, handled and stored to meet the company's data protection standards, and to comply with the law.

Why this policy exists

This data protection policy ensures Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd:

- Complies with the data protection law and follows good practice.
- Protects the rights of staff, customers and partners.
- Is open about how it stores and processes individuals' data.
- Protects itself from the risk of a data breach.

Data Protection Law

The Data Protection Act 1998 describes how organisations, including Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd, must collect, handle and store personal information. These rules apply regardless of whether data is stored electronically, on paper or on other materials. To comply with the law, personal information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed unlawfully.

The Data Protection Act is underpinned by eight important principles. These state that personal data must:

1. Be processed fairly and lawfully.
2. Be obtained only for specific, lawful purposes.
3. Be adequate, relevant and not excessive.
4. Be accurate and kept up to date.
5. Not be held for longer than necessary.
6. Processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects.
7. Be protected in appropriate ways.
8. Not be transferred outside the European Economic Area (EEA), unless that country or territory also ensures an adequate level of protection.

People, risk, and responsibilities

Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd.
- All staff and volunteers of Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd.
- All contractors, suppliers and other people working on behalf of Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd.

It applies to all data that the company holds relating to identifiable individuals, even if that information technically falls outside the Data Protection Act 1998.

This includes, but not limited to:

- Names of individuals.
- Postal addresses.
- Email addresses.
- Telephone numbers.
- Any other information relating to individuals.

Data protection risks

This policy helps to protect Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd from some very real data security risks, including:

Breaches of confidentiality - for instance information being given out inappropriately.

Failing to offer choice - For instance, all individuals should be free to choose how the company uses data relating to them.

Reputational damage - For instance, the company could suffer if hackers successfully gained access to sensitive data.

Responsibilities

Everyone who works for, or with Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd has some responsibility for ensuring data is collected, stored and handled appropriately.

Each team that handles personal data must ensure that it is handled and processed in line with this policy and data protection principles.

However, these people have key areas of responsibility:

The **Owners** have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd meets its legal obligations.

The **data protection officer, Mr Luke Lambert** is responsible for:

- Keeping the owners updated about data protection responsibilities, risks and issues.
- Reviewing all data protection procedures and related policies, in line with an agreed schedule.
- Arranging data protection training and advice for the people covered by this policy.
- Handling data protection questions from staff and anyone else covered by this policy.
- Dealing with requests from individuals to see the Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd holds about them (also called “subject access requests”).
- Checking and approving any contracts or agreements with third parties that may handle the company’s sensitive data.

The nominated **IT owner, Mr Luke Lambert**, is responsible for:

- Ensuring all systems, services and equipment used for storing data meet acceptable security standards.
- Performing regular checks and scans to ensure security hardware and software is functioning properly.

The nominated **Marketing manager, Mr Luke Lambert**, is responsible for:

- Approving any data protection statements attached to communications such as emails and letters.
- Addressing any data protection queries from journalists or media outlets such as newspapers.
- Where necessary, working with other staff to ensure marketing initiatives abide by data protection principles.

General Staff Guidelines

The only people able to access data covered by this policy should be those who **need it for their work**.

Data **should not be shared informally**. When access to confidential information is required, employees can request it from the owners.

Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd will provide training to all employees to help them understand their responsibilities when handling data.

Employees should keep all data secure, by taking sensible precautions by following the guidelines below.

- **Strong passwords must be used** and never shared.
- Personal data **should not be disclosed** to unauthorised people, either within the company or externally.
- Data should be **regularly reviewed and updated** if it is found to be out of date. If no longer required, it should be deleted or disposed of.

- Employees **should request help** from the owners if they are unsure about any aspect of data protection.

Data Storage

These rules describe how and where data should be safely stored, questions about storing data safely can be directed to the owners:

- When data is **stored on paper**, it should be kept in a secure location where unauthorised people cannot see it.
- These guidelines also apply to data that is usually stored electronically but has been printed out for some reason.
- When not required, the paper or files should be kept **in a locked drawer or filing cabinet**.
- Employees should make sure paper printouts are **not left where unauthorised people could see them**, for example on a printer.
- **Data printouts should be shredded** and disposed of securely when no longer required.
- When data is **stored electronically**, it must be protected from unauthorised access, accidental deletion and malicious hacking attempts.
- Data should be **protected by strong passwords** that are changed regularly and never shared between employees.
- If data is stored on **removable media**, such as a CD or DVD, these should only be uploaded to an **approved cloud computing service**.
- Servers containing personal data should be **situated in a secure location**, away from the general office space.
- Data should be **backed up frequently**. Those backups should be tested regularly, in line with the company's standard backup procedures.
- Data should **never be saved directly** to laptops or other mobile devices such as tablets or smartphones.
- All servers and computers containing data should be protected by **approved security software and a firewall**.

Data Use

Personal data is of no value to Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd unless the business can make use of it. However, it is when personal data is accessed and used that it can be at the greatest risk of loss, corruption or theft:

- When working with personal data, employees should ensure **the screens of their computers are always locked** when left unattended.
- Personal data **should not be shared informally**. It should never be sent by email, as this form of communication is not secure.
- Data must be **encrypted before being transferred electronically**.
- Personal data should **never be transferred outside the European Economic Area**.

- Employees **should not save copies of personal data to their own computers.** Always access and update the central copy of any data.

Data Accuracy

The law required Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd to take responsible steps to ensure data is kept accurate and up to date.

The more important it is that personal data is accurate, the greater the effort Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd should put into ensuring its accuracy.

It is the responsibility of all employees who work with data to take reasonable steps to ensure it is kept as accurate and up to date as possible.

Data will be held in **as few places as necessary.** Staff should not create any unnecessary additional data sets.

Staff should **take every opportunity to ensure data is updated.** For instance, by confirming a customer's details when they call.

Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd will make it **easy for data subjects to update the information Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd holds about them. For instance, via the company website.**

Data should be **updated as inaccuracies are discovered.** For instance, if a customer can no longer be reached on their stored telephone number, it should be removed from the database.

It is the marketing owner's responsibility to ensure **marketing databases are checked against industry suppression files** every six months.

Subject Access Requests

All individuals who are the subject of personal data held by Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd are entitled to:

- Ask **what information** the company holds about them and why.
- Ask **how to gain access** to it.
- Be informed **how to keep it up to date.**
- Be informed how the company is **meeting its data protection obligations.**

If an individual contacts the company requesting information, this is called a subject access request.

Subject access requests from individuals should be made by email, addressed to the owners at info@ldcl.co.uk. The owners can supply a standard request form, although individuals do not have to use this.

Individuals will be charged £10.00 per subject access request. The owners will aim to provide the relevant data within 14 days.

The owners will always verify the identity of anyone making a subject access request before handing over any information.

Disclosing data for other reasons

In certain circumstances, the Data Protection Act allows personal data to be disclosed to law enforcement agencies without the consent of the data subject.

Under these circumstances, Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd will disclose the requested data. However, the owners will ensure the request is legitimate, seeking assistance from the company's legal advisers where necessary.

Providing Information

Land Drainage Consultancy Ltd aims to ensure that individuals are aware that their data is being processed and that they understand:

- How the data is being used.
- How to exercise their rights.

To these ends, the company has a privacy statement, setting out how data relating to individuals is used by the company. This is available on request from info@ldcl.co.uk, or 01377 236010.

Signed:



Luke Lambert

Position: Director