

Hounds Estate Agents - Online Privacy Policy

As a business dealing with your personal data, we aim to provide you, our valuable customers and clients with a safe and secure service. We vow to remain 100% committed to both respecting and protecting your privacy and any of your data that is entrusted to us at all times.

This Privacy Policy sets out the data processing practices carried out through the use of the Internet and any other electronic communications networks by Hounds Estate Agents Limited, the "Data Controller". You should note that all data captured in these ways will be used and held in accordance with the requirements of the UK-General Data Protection Regulation, 2020 and the Data Protection Act, 2018.

If you have any requests concerning your personal information or any queries with regard to these practices, then please contact us using one of the following methods:

- **Post:** Data Protection Officer, Hounds Estate Agents Limited, C/O Kensington Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, United Kingdom, DL14 6HX.
- **Email:** info@houndsestateagents.co.uk
- **Telephone:** 0191 454 0321

1. Personal Data that we collect

We collect information from visitors to this website through the use of online forms, including, but not limited to, our contact us page. In addition, we will collect your details when you email us.

Any information that you freely provide is collected for direct communication and market research purposes only. The Company is the sole owner of the information collected on this site. We will not sell, rent to or share this information with others.

Information collected is used for the following reasons and in the following ways:

- Registration for property alerts on our Website, booking valuations and viewing appointments and performing functions when using the Website e.g. saving properties and specifying property criteria; Information collected automatically including but not limited to Cookies (see the Use of Cookies section below).
- Information collected when completing forms on our Website, third party websites and portals that send information to us.
- Information collected during telephone calls (which are recorded for training and monitoring and to protect both parties during contractual discussions. We will pause call recording if you do not consent. Additionally, we will also make call recordings available to you if requested. We will also delete individual calls (if required to do so under GDPR.) emails, and social media;
- Information collected may include, but is not limited to, personal information (name, address, email address and telephone number), financial or employment status that you disclose when registering as an applicant with us or entering into a transactional relationship;
- Information required about you to help ensure that our staff are safe when attending external appointments such as market appraisals and viewings. Examples of this would be the contact details of the client or customer, including a UK residential address and proof of Identification;
- Information collected in order to comply with various legislations such as the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (information on the

payer) Regulations 2017 (more commonly referred to as The Money Laundering Regulations 2017) if you are buying or selling a property through us.

- Information will be collected about you in order to assist us in tailoring our marketing and communication with you, based on your preferences, such as the type of service you require, the location of your search area, your spend budget (hereafter "Requirements")
- We may also ask you to complete surveys. This may be on our own website or through a third-party provider and we will utilise the results for research purposes. We must emphasise that you are not obliged to respond to these.

By using our website, you are deemed to have accepted our terms of use; and you should read through this policy thoroughly. However, if at any point you think our policy falls short of your expectations or that we are failing to abide by our policy, do please tell us or leave our website immediately.

2. Use of your personal information

We process personal information collected via this website for the legitimate reasons of: -

- providing information about our products and services
- providing customer support in dealing with your enquiries and requests in order to provide you with the best customer service.
- providing and personalising our services
- dealing with your enquiries and requests
- conducting market research
- Processing and completing your transactions: such as buying, selling or renting a property through us. This information may require to be passed onto third parties including solicitors, surveyors, financial advisors etc.
- Marketing: when you sign up to receive our newsletters, register as an applicant, enter into a transaction with us, provide feedback or use our website, we will use your personal information to create a profile based on the information we hold. This is necessary for the purposes of our legitimate interest to ensure that we are holding accurate information about you in one place.
- Creating your profile in accordance with your preferences in order to provide you with the best personalised experience to send you personalised marketing messages and newsletters and for opinion research purposes.
- To analyse and improve the services offered by our website.
- Preventing Fraud: to assess your creditworthiness (in the case of buying a property) and to prevent fraud. For this purpose, we may need to share your personal information with our referencing providers and/or solicitors.

3. The legal bases we rely upon to offer these services to you are:

- Your explicit consent
- Where we have a legitimate interest
- To comply with any legal obligation that we may have
- To fulfil a contractual obligation that we have with you

4. Retention of your personal data

The Company will retain your personal data only for as long as is necessary for the purpose we collect it. Different laws may also require us to keep different data for different periods of time.

Data supplied with explicit consent, such as when a client or customer registers an interest to buy, sell, let or rent a property through us will be held for a period of two years. However, if it is deemed dormant, we may delete the record and all personal

information held against it. We will consider an account dormant if it has not been accessed for more than 6 months, if you have not responded to any correspondence or in the event we receive email delivery failure notifications.

Where a transaction has been entered into and there is a contractual necessity to do so, or there is a requirement to comply with legal obligations (for example in order to comply with the requirement of the TPO Code of Practice for Sales, to maintain clear and full written records of transactions for a period of 6 years and to comply with the Money Laundering Regulations 2017 to hold records for a period of 7 years).

5. Your rights

Please be aware that you have the following data protection rights:

- The right to be informed about the personal data the Company processes on you;
- The right of access to the personal data the Company processes on you;
- The right to rectification of your personal data;
- The right to erasure of your personal data in certain circumstances;
- The right to restrict processing of your personal data;
- The right to data portability in certain circumstances;
- The right to object to the processing of your personal data that was based on a public or legitimate interest;
- The right not to be subjected to automated decision making and profiling; and
- The right to withdraw consent at any time.

Where you have consented to the Company processing your personal data you have the right to withdraw that consent at any time by contacting the Data Protection Officer at Hounds Estate Agent Limited, C/O Kensington Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, United Kingdom, DL14 6HX; call us on 0191 454 0321; or email info@houndsestateagents.co.uk

6. Third-Party Providers – Sharing your Personal Data

We may share personal information you provide when you register or enter into a transaction with us, as necessary and only for the purposes and on the lawful grounds described above with third parties who process your personal information on our behalf such as:

Sales – including but not limited to solicitors, conveyancers, surveyors, financial advisors, contractors, property maintenance services, software and system providers.

We might use a third-party mailing broadcasting service in order to send you marketing emails if you have agreed to receive them;

We might use a printing company to produce and send personalised direct mail;

Our database of personal data may be held by third parties on our behalf.

Our website is managed by Cloud Heros who manage our property alert system and may view your information for troubleshooting purposes only. Their privacy policy can be viewed on their own website.

These service providers will not be allowed to use your information for their own purposes or on behalf of other organisations.

We will ONLY use third-party providers who indicate that they are fully compliant with UK-GDPR, 2020 and the Data Protection Act, 2018 and will pass on any instruction from when you exercise any of your rights such as deletion or rectification etc.

We will never pass your information to third parties without your express consent.

7. Data Capture Information

We will send you information according to the preferences, if any, that you have submitted via our online form or when you email us. If you would like to change these preferences at any point, please contact the Data Protection Officer at Hounds Estate Agent Limited, C/O Kensington Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, United Kingdom, DL14 6HX; call us on 0191 454 0321; or email info@houndsestateagents.co.uk

We will never pass your information to third parties without your express consent.

8. Disclosures

Other than to other companies within our group of companies, business partners, suppliers we engage to process data on our behalf and successors in title, we will only disclose data when obliged to do so by law, or the disclosure is 'necessary' for purposes of national security, taxation, and criminal investigation, or when we have your express consent to disclose it to another third party.

9. Other websites

Our website may contain links to other websites that are outside our control and are not covered by this Privacy Policy. If you access other sites using the links provided, the operators of these sites may collect information from you that will be used by them in accordance with their privacy policy, which may differ from ours.

10. Subject access requests

You have the right to see what personal data we hold about you. To obtain a copy of the personal information we hold about you, please contact the Data Protection Officer at Hounds Estate Agent Limited, C/O Kensington Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, United Kingdom, DL14 6HX; call us on 0191 454 0321; or email info@houndsestateagents.co.uk to obtain a Subject Access Request Form.

We will not charge a fee for any such request unless the request is deemed manifestly unfounded or excessive.

11. Security

The Company takes every precaution to protect our users' information. In order to prevent disclosure or unauthorised access, we have suitable electronic and physical procedures to safeguard and secure the information we collect.

Only employees who need the information to perform a specific job (for example, our accounts clerk or a marketing assistant) are granted access to your information.

The Company uses all reasonable efforts to safeguard your personal information. However, you should be aware that the use of the Internet is not entirely secure and for this reason the Company cannot guarantee the security or integrity of any personal information which is transferred from you or to you via the Internet.

If you have any questions about the security at our website, you can contact

12. Correction/Updating Personal Information

If your personally identifiable information changes (such as office address), we will endeavour to provide a way to correct, update or remove the personal data provided to us. This can usually be done by emailing

13. Personal information of another person

Before you disclose personal information of another person you must obtain that persons consent to both the disclosure and the processing of that personal information in accordance with the terms of this privacy policy.

14. Legal and law enforcement

Personal data will be disclosed where required by law or legal process, for the administration of justice, to protect your vital interest, for investigations by law enforcement or regulatory bodies, to protect and defend Hounds Estate Agents property and legal rights, to protect the personal safety of our website users or by order of a valid injunction for a court or law enforcement agency.

15. Business interests

In the event that we sell or buy any business or assets, we may disclose your personal data to the prospective seller or buyer of such business or assets. If Hounds Estate Agent is or all of its assets are acquired by a third party, personal data held by us about our customers will be one of the transferred assets.

16. Use of Cookies

A cookie is a small piece of information sent by a web server to a web browser, which enables the server to collect information from the browser and you can find out more about cookies on www.allaboutcookies.org.

We may collect information about your computer, including your IP address, operating system, and browser type for system administration and in order to create reports. This is statistical data about our users' browsing actions and patterns and does not identify any individual.

The only cookies in use locally are for Google Analytics being a web analytics tool that helps website owners understand how visitors engage with their website. Google Analytics customers can view a variety of reports about how visitors interact with their website so that they can improve it.

Like many services, Google Analytics uses first-party cookies to track visitor interactions, where they are used to collect information about how visitors use our site. We use the information to compile reports and to help us improve our site.

Cookies contain information that is transferred to your computer's hard drive, and are used to store information, such as the time that the current visit occurred, whether the visitor has been to the site before and what site referred the visitor to the web page.

Google Analytics collects information anonymously and it reports website trends without identifying individual visitors. You can opt out of Google Analytics without affecting how you visit our site – for more information on opting out of being tracked by Google Analytics across all websites you use, visit this [Google page](#).

Most browsers will allow you to turn off cookies. If you want to know how to do this please look at the menu on your browser or look at the instruction on www.allaboutcookies.org. Please note however that turning off cookies may restrict your use of our website.

17. Who to Direct your Complaints or Queries to

The Company tries to meet the highest standards when collecting and using personal information. We take any complaints we receive about this very seriously. We encourage people to bring it to our attention if they think that our collection or use of information is unfair, misleading or inappropriate. We would also welcome any suggestions for improving our procedures.

If you wish to complain about this policy or any of the procedures set out in it please contact us in the first instance using one of the following methods:

- Post: Data Protection Officer, Hounds Estate Agents Limited, C/O Kensington Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham, United Kingdom, DL14 6HX.
Email: info@houndsestateagents.co.uk
- Telephone: 0191 454 0321

You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which is the body that regulates the handling of personal data in the United Kingdom and enforces the UK-GDPR. You can do this online through the ICO's website at: www.ico.org.uk, by telephone on 0303 123 1113, or by writing to them at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK8 5AF.

Amendments

Please note that this privacy policy is subject to change from time to time and according to existing legislation. It was last updated in July 2024.