



Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) Policy

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Policy Owner Role Title	Head of Governance and Compliance
Responsible Director	Executive Director - Finance
Key Strategy	Strong Governance and Financial Resilience; Customer Voice and Accountability

Policy Checklist

Is Customer engagement required?	Yes
Does this policy require input or validation from external or legal experts?	Build using NHF and Anthony Collins model policy from guidance document
Is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	Yes
Is a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Required?	No
Is the Policy compliant with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements?	Yes
Sign off by Policy Officer	September 2026
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1.0 Introduction and scope

This STAIRs policy has been developed in line with Wandle's values, which are:

- Think customer
- Build relationships
- Work together
- Aim high
- Own it

It will ensure that actions we undertake will be underpinned by our vision of:

"Homes to be proud of and services you can trust"

The Policy has also been developed in line with Wandle's Corporate strategy and specifically supports the enabling objective of *Strong governance and Financial Resilience*.

Wandle is committed to being open, transparent and accountable. We recognise that access to information helps tenants understand how decisions are made, how services are delivered and how resources are used. This policy sets out how Wandle will comply with the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs).

1.1 Scope

This policy applies to all Wandle employees and any organisations or contractors providing social housing management services on our behalf.

It covers the publication of information through our Publication Scheme, how tenants can request information, how we respond to information requests and reviews and complaints relating to information requests. For the purpose of this policy, references to tenants include shared owners where STAIRs apply.

1.2 Objectives and Performance Measurements

This policy aims to provide tenants with clear, accessible and timely access to information about their homes and services. We will maintain and review our Publication Scheme, make it easy to request information, and ensure requests are handled lawfully, consistently and within the required timescales.

We welcome feedback on the information we publish. Where customers identify information that would improve transparency and be of wider benefit to residents, we will consider including it within our Publication Scheme.

Our performance will be monitored against the following measures:

Measure	Target	Reported Where and When
% of tenant information requests completed within required timescales.	100%	Executive Team – Monthly

% of information requests acknowledged within 3 working days.	100%	Executive Team – Monthly
% of information updates completed.	100%	Executive Team – Annually

1.3 Our approach

We are committed to being open, transparent and accountable. We will make as much information available as we reasonably can and will respond to information requests within 30 days.

Our approach follows the principles of the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Consumer Standards and STAIRs. These principles include:

- transparency,
- openness,
- accountability and
- tenant involvement in how services are delivered.

Under the STAIRs publication requirements, we will publish information about our services and operations wherever possible.

Tenants, or someone acting on their behalf, can request information about the management of our social housing services. We will normally provide this information within 30 days, unless there are lawful reasons for withholding it, such as where it's protected under data protection, freedom of information, or other legal requirements, or where the potential harm of disclosure outweighs the benefits.

We will consider all requests fairly and will not take into account the reason for the request or any potential negative publicity that may result from sharing the information.

Our commitment is to be proactive, open and transparent, and to make information available unless there is a legitimate reason for it not to be disclosed.

1.4 Requirements

The STAIRs has 2 main parts:

- **Publication Scheme (Chapter 1)** : information we publish proactively with effect from 1 October 2026.
- **Information requests (Chapter 2)** : information you can ask us to provide with effect from 1 April 2027.

Information available through STAIRs will usually be provided free of charge unless specified in section 2.3.

If you need information in a format other than electronic, please contact DPO@wandle.com and we will discuss how we can meet your needs. We are committed to making information as accessible as possible for all our tenants.

We want tenants to have easy access to information about the services we provide. We will make information available wherever possible and aim to respond to requests promptly, openly, and fairly.

2.0 Publication scheme (Chapter 1)

2.1 Proactive publication of information

To help tenants access information easily, we maintain a Publication Scheme which sets out the information we routinely make available.

This includes information about:

- Our governance and decision-making arrangements.
- Financial information and how we spend money.
- Our performance and service standards.
- Policies and procedures.
- Housing management services.
- Tenant engagement and involvement.
- Complaints and learning from complaints.
- Any other information required under the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs).

We will make information easy to find and access and will review and update it regularly to ensure it remains accurate and relevant.

Where it is in the interests of our tenants to do so, we may also publish information that is not specifically required under STAIRs.

2.2 Out of Scope information

We aim to provide as much information as possible. However, there are circumstances where we may not be able to disclose information or where some information will need to be removed before publication.

We will not create new information in response to a request. We can only provide information that we already hold.

We will usually remove or withhold information where disclosure would:

- Breach data protection legislation.
- Reveal personal information about an individual.
- Create a risk to safety, security or service delivery.
- Breach legal, regulatory or commercial confidentiality obligations.
- Cause harm that outweighs the benefits of disclosure.

We may refuse a request where:

- The information requested is not covered by STAIRs
- We do not hold the information requested
- We can't reasonably verify your identity or authority to act on behalf of someone else
- The request is unclear and we haven't been able to obtain clarification

- The request would require a disproportionate amount of work to fulfil (if it would exceed 18 hours of employee time)
- The request is vexatious, offensive or intended to disrupt our services

Where only part of a document can be disclosed, we may provide a copy with certain information redacted. If we do this, we will explain the reason wherever possible.

2.3 Accessing information in the Publication Scheme

Our Publication Scheme covers information about:

- Our organisation
- Finance and spending
- Maintaining homes and neighbourhoods
- Performance
- Services we provide
- Policies

This information is available on our website through a dedicated STAIRs page.

Alternative formats

If you need information in a different format, we will work with you to provide it where reasonable, including:

- Large print
- Audio
- Braille
- Translations
- Other accessible formats

We will normally provide one copy free of charge.

Charges

Information on our website is free. If you request additional printed copies, we may charge the reasonable cost of printing and postage, which will be explained in advance.

Information can also be viewed free of charge in digital or accessible formats at our offices by appointment. Please contact us to arrange this.

2.4 Reviews

If you believe information that should have been included within the Publication Scheme is missing, or that information has been unnecessarily withheld or redacted, you can request a review. Requests should be sent to DPO@Wandle.com, we will acknowledge your request and complete the review within 30 calendar days. If we decide not to provide the information requested, we'll explain our reasoning.

2.5 Keeping information up to date

We are committed to ensuring the information published through our Publication Scheme is accurate and up to date. Unless stated otherwise, published information will relate to the current financial year and the previous two financial years.

We will review the Publication Scheme at least annually and update it whenever there are significant changes to information, services or legal requirements.

3.0 Information requests (Chapter 2)

3.1 Making an information request

Responding to tenant requests

If you cannot find the information you need in our Publication Scheme, you can ask us for information about the management of your home or our housing services.

We will respond to requests for recorded information we hold, or that is held on our behalf, where the request falls within the scope of the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs).

When we receive a request, we will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the request.
- Contact you if we need clarification.
- Assess whether the request falls within the scope of STAIRs.
- Provide the requested information where appropriate.
- Explain if we are unable to provide some or all of the information requested.

If the information is already available through our Publication Scheme, website, or another published source, we will direct you to it.

Where a request would be more appropriately dealt with through another process, such as a service request, complaint, Subject Access Request (for personal information), or Environmental Information Request, we will explain this and help direct it to the relevant team.

Who can make information requests

Information requests can be made by current Wandle tenants, shared owners, or someone acting on behalf of a current tenant, where they have authority to do so. STAIRs does not apply to former tenants, prospective tenants or members of the general public.

To protect your information, we may ask for proof of identity or evidence that a representative is authorised to act on your behalf.

3.2 How to make a request

Requests can be made via any channel. You don't need to mention "STAIRs" or refer to the policy for your request to be considered under the scheme.

As long as we can identify you and understand what information you're requesting, we'll consider your request under this policy where appropriate.

We are committed to making information accessible to all tenants. If you need support to make a request, require information in an alternative format, or have any communication needs, please let us know. We will take reasonable steps to support you in accessing information and exercising your rights under STAIRs.

3.3 How quickly we'll respond

We will acknowledge your request within 3 working days and aim to provide a full response within 30 calendar days. If we need clarification, the 30-day timescale will start once we receive the information needed to progress your request, and we will help you identify the information you are seeking where possible.

If we are unable to respond within 30 days, we will explain the reason for the delay, keep you updated on progress, and provide a revised response date. We will always aim to respond as quickly as possible.

Third Party Information

Sometimes information may be held by an organisation that provides services on Wandle's behalf. Where this happens, we will take reasonable steps to obtain the information so that we can respond to your request. We will also maintain records of any enquiries made to third parties as part of handling your request.

3.4 When we may not be able to provide information

We may refuse to respond to an information request where:

- The information requested is not covered by STAIRs
- It's reasonable to withhold the information from the disclosure
- We can't reasonably verify your identity or authority to act on behalf of someone else
- The request is unclear and we haven't been able to obtain clarification
- The request would require a disproportionate amount of work to fulfil (if it would exceed 18 hours of employee time)
- The request is vexatious, offensive or intended to disrupt our services

Where only part of the information can be disclosed, we may provide a copy with certain details removed (redacted). If this happens, we will explain the reason wherever possible.

4.0 Review and Complaints

We are committed to being open, transparent and fair when handling information requests. If you are unhappy with how we have handled your request, or believe information should have been published or provided, you can ask us to review our decision. To request a review, please contact DPO@wandle.com.

We would normally expect requests for a review to be made within three months of our original response.

What can be reviewed?

You can request a review if you believe:

- We should have provided information but did not.
- Information was not provided in an accessible format.
- Information that should be in our Publication Scheme has not been published.
- We did not respond within the required timescales without a valid reason.
- Information was withheld or redacted and you disagree with our decision.

Our review process

We will carry out an independent review of how your request was handled and normally respond within 30 calendar days. If we need more time, we will let you know, explain the reason, and provide a revised timescale. Any extension will be kept to a minimum.

If you are still dissatisfied

If you remain unhappy following the review, you can refer the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service, which can consider complaints about:

- Information published under the STAIRs Publication Scheme (Chapter 1).
- Requests for information made under STAIRs (Chapter 2).

Further information is available at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk.

The STAIRs review process is separate from Wandle's Complaints Policy, and you do not need to complete the complaints process before contacting the Housing Ombudsman once the review has concluded. We would normally expect referrals to be made within three months of the review outcome.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Governance and Compliance

The Policy Owner is responsible for maintaining this policy, ensuring supporting procedures are in place, monitoring compliance, and coordinating reviews in response to changes in legislation, regulation, guidance or operational learning.

Information Governance and Data Protection

The Information Governance and Data Protection functions will support lawful disclosure, redaction, data protection compliance, record keeping, staff guidance and escalation of complex requests.

All colleagues

All colleagues are responsible for recognising potential STAIRs requests, following the agreed process, maintaining accurate records, protecting personal and confidential information, and supporting timely responses.

6.0 Related Documents

This policy should be read alongside the internal and external documents listed below.

6.1 Internal

Strategies	Corporate Strategy; Customer Experience Strategy; Asset Management Strategy
Policies	Data Protection Policy; Complaints Policy; Information Security Policy
Procedures	Publication scheme procedure; information request procedure and guidance
Other internal documents	Privacy notices; retention schedule; customer communications standards; governance reporting arrangements

6.2 External

Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements policy statement; NHF and Anthony Collins STAIRs operational guidance; Regulator of Social Housing Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard; UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.

7.0 Relevant Legislation

The main legislation and regulatory requirements relevant to this policy are set out below. Wandle will review this policy when legislation, regulation or official guidance changes. Wandle will ensure that disclosure under STAIRs does not conflict with statutory obligations, including data protection, confidentiality, safeguarding, security and legal privilege requirements. Relevant legislation and regulation will be checked as part of each policy review and where complex disclosure issues arise.

Legislation	Main powers and relevance to the policy subject	How we use or comply with legislation
Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements	Requires private registered providers to publish certain information and respond to tenant requests for information about the management of social housing.	Wandle will maintain a publication scheme, respond to tenant information requests, record decisions, and withhold or redact information only where lawful and reasonable.

Legislation	Main powers and relevance to the policy subject	How we use or comply with legislation
UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018	Sets requirements for processing personal data and protecting individuals' privacy rights.	Wandle will assess requests for personal data, apply redactions where needed, and route subject access requests through the appropriate data protection process.
Regulator of Social Housing consumer standards	Requires registered providers to be transparent, accountable and responsive to tenants.	Wandle will use this policy to support openness, tenant influence, accessible information and effective complaint handling.

8.0 Equality & Diversity

Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to our business and the services we provide. We are committed to ensuring fair and equal access to information and will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation.

We will take reasonable steps to meet the diverse needs of our customers, avoid unjustified barriers to accessing information, and ensure tenants receive a consistent and high-quality service.

Equality Considerations

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we assess whether this policy could have a disproportionate impact on customers or staff with protected characteristics. The table below sets out any identified impacts, mitigations and opportunities to promote equality through this policy.

Special Characteristic	Any impact? (Yes or No)
Age	No
Disability	Yes
gender reassignment	No
marriage and civil partnership	No
pregnancy and maternity	No
Race	No
religion or belief	No
Sex	No
sexual orientation	No

This policy promotes equality by giving all tenants equal access to social housing information. No adverse impact was identified for protected groups.