

Preston City Council – Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) Department Privacy Notice

As billing authority for the Preston District, Preston City Council collects processes and stores personal information about you in order to administer and enforce Business Rates. We also use the data in our Business Rates database for other purposes, including the performance of our statutory enforcement duties and the prevention and detection of fraud.

We are committed to protecting your privacy, and this notice is made in light of the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 in order to advise you how we use your personal information.

When do we collect personal information?

We collect information from you when you fill in one of our forms, or contact us about your property, either in writing, over the phone or face-to-face in one of our customer contact centres.

We may also obtain information about you from third parties (including previous owners/occupiers, landlords, estate agents and rating agents) where this is necessary in order to administer and enforce the collection of Business Rates.

What personal information do we collect?

We usually only collect basic personal data about you, including your name, address, and contact details. However, if you apply for a discount or exemption, or there is a dispute about the Business Rates liability for your property, we may need to collect additional information.

If you choose to pay by Direct Debit, or we have obtained a liability order from the Court, we will also collect some financial information from you.

How do we use your personal information?

We use your personal information in order to administer and enforce Business Rates under the Local Government Finance Act 1988. The processing of your information is necessary for compliance with the legal obligations contained in this Act.

We may also share your information with other Council services in order to ensure our records are accurate and up-to-date, to improve the standard of the services we deliver, and to perform any of our statutory duties, including enforcement duties. We may also

share your information with the Preston BID company to administer and enforce BID levies under The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004.

We are required by law to protect the public funds we administer, and may use your information for the prevention and detection of crime (including fraud and money laundering).

We will only keep your information for as long as it is required by us or other regulatory bodies in order to comply with legal and regulatory requirements or for other operational reasons. In most cases, this will be a minimum of six years, and we are required to keep some data indefinitely.

Do we share your information with anyone else?

If you owe us money, we will always try to contact you first to make an informal arrangement to pay off any debt. However, where this is unsuccessful, or if you have a history of late payments, we may pass your information onto Enforcement Agents or instructed Solicitors to recover any money owed.

The legislation also allows us to share your information (where appropriate) with other Billing Authorities, the Courts, HMRC, the Insolvency Service, the Valuation Office and the Valuation Tribunal Service.

We also pass your information to third party printing services in order to produce paper bills and letters, and external software suppliers for internal management reporting purposes. These suppliers only use your data on our instructions. They won't use it for any other reason, will look after it in the same way, and will destroy any personal data they hold as soon as it is no longer required.

We are a pilot site in the Cabinet Office's National Fraud Initiative for Small Business Rate Relief, a data matching exercise to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud. We are required to provide particular sets of data to the Minister for the Cabinet Office for matching for each exercise. This data may then be passed on to other public bodies to investigate any matches. For more information on the National Fraud Initiative please see [here](#)

We will not share your information with any other organisations unless required to do so by law.

Your rights and how to find out more

You have a number of rights under data protection law, including the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold about you, and the right to object to our use of your information in certain circumstances.

For further information about your rights, how the Council uses your information, and how to get in touch if you have a query or complaint, please see the Council's [main privacy notice](#).

We reserve the right to amend this privacy notice at any time. However, we take your privacy very seriously and will never change our policies or practices to make them less protective of your personal information.

If we make any changes to this policy that significantly affect you, we will aim to notify you directly if we hold contact details for you. You will always be able to find the most up-to-date version of this policy on our website at this address: <https://www.preston.gov.uk/thecouncil/data-protection-and-freedom-of-information/privacy-notice/>

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