

**SOCIAL TENANT
ACCESS TO
INFORMATION
REQUIREMENTS
POLICY**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1** Eastlight Community Homes (hereafter ‘Eastlight’) is committed to being open, transparent and accountable to its residents and their designated representatives.
- 1.2** We recognise that access to clear and meaningful information is essential for residents to understand how their homes are managed and how key decisions are made.
- 1.3** The Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) are set out in a Government Policy Statement, published on 30 September 2025, and is overseen by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH).
- 1.4** This Policy sets out how Eastlight will meet the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs). These requirements strengthen residents’ rights to access information relating to the management of social housing and place clear expectations on private registered providers such as Eastlight.
- 1.5** This Policy supports the RSH Consumer Standards, Eastlight’s values, and our commitment to putting residents at the heart of what we do.

2. Scope

- 2.1** This Policy covers the information held by Eastlight in relation to its social housing services and functions. It includes information in both paper and electronic formats, across all Eastlight systems, as well as any information held by third parties on Eastlight’s behalf.
- 2.2** The Policy applies to all Eastlight employees, Board and Committee Members, volunteers, and temporary staff engaged in carrying out Eastlight’s duties on our behalf and by our instructions.
- 2.3** This Policy applies to requests for information made by Eastlight residents or by a designated representative acting on a resident’s behalf. It does not apply to requests from members of the public or to information that is not related to Eastlight’s social housing functions and services.
- 2.4** This Policy sets out Eastlight’s approach to meeting the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements, including the proactive publication of information and the handling of individual information requests. The Policy applies to information that Eastlight already holds and does not require new information or records to be created.

- 2.5** As a private registered provider, Eastlight must:
- Proactively publish specified types of information we already hold (see Appendix 1: Publication Scheme)
 - Provide relevant information in response to residents' requests within required timescales
 - Demonstrate transparency, accountability and resident involvement.
- 2.6** The requirements:
- Do not require Eastlight to create new information
 - Do not override other legal obligations, including data protection, safeguarding or commercial confidentiality
 - Allow information to be withheld or redacted where disclosure would be unreasonable or unlawful.
- 2.7** The Housing Ombudsman is the dispute resolution body for complaints about access to information under STAIRs.

3. Statutory & Regulatory Requirements

- 3.1** This Policy is designed to ensure Eastlight meets its obligations under the following statutory and regulatory requirements:
- Social Housing Act 2023
 - UK General Data Protection Regulation
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Housing Ombudsman requirements
 - STAIRs statutory framework.

4. Think Customer

- 4.1** At Eastlight, we exist to provide the best possible homes and services for residents.
- 4.2** Our 'Think Customer' approach aims to guide and support colleagues whenever they make decisions that affect residents, directly or indirectly.
- 4.3** 'Think Customer' ensures our people fully consider how residents will experience and be impacted by the service we provide. Before acting, our people must think about:
- The short and long-term effects of their actions
 - The residents' individual needs and preferences
 - Whether their communication is clear, respectful and appropriate

- If they can draw on any past insights or experiences to help them when making tough decisions
- Whether they, themselves, would be happy with the service being provided.

4.4 The ‘Think Customer’ model is designed to complement and work alongside all Eastlight policies and procedures, including this STAIRs Policy.

5. Aims & Outcomes

- 5.1** The aim of this Policy is to ensure that Eastlight meets the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements in a way that is open, fair and practical for both residents and colleagues.
- 5.2** The Policy intends to support a consistent approach to sharing information about the management of social housing, so that residents can better understand how decisions are made and how services are delivered. By doing so, Eastlight seeks to strengthen trust, improve transparency and demonstrate accountability to residents.
- 5.3** This Policy aims to ensure that access to information is considered part of service delivery, unless there is a clear and lawful reason not to do so.
- 5.4** The intended outcomes of this Policy are to ensure that residents are better informed, more engaged in Eastlight’s services, and empowered to hold Eastlight to account. This should, over time, contribute to improved Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), particularly in relation to residents’ feeling informed and listened to.
- 5.5** It is expected that clearer access to information will help reduce misunderstandings, prevent avoidable complaints and support earlier resolutions. For Eastlight, this will improve compliance with regulatory requirements, introduce clearer decision-making processes, and provide stronger assurance that transparency obligations are being met in a consistent and resident-focused way.

6. Phase 1: Publication Scheme

- 6.1** From 01 October 2026, Eastlight will operate a publication scheme on its website that clearly sets out the information it routinely makes available to its residents.
- 6.2** The publication scheme will cover information that Eastlight already holds, relating to:
- Governance and decision-making (e.g. Board structures, decision processes)
 - Spending and Value for Money
 - Housing stock management
 - Performance and service outcomes

- Housing services
- Lists and registers
- Social housing management.

6.3 Eastlight will:

- Identify and collate relevant information across teams
- Publish information in accessible formats where possible, primarily online
- Make residents aware of the publication scheme and how to use it
- Review and update published information regularly to ensure it remains accurate, relevant and useful to residents
- Seek feedback from residents when reviewing the publication scheme and will consider opportunities for resident involvement in identifying information that residents would find valuable to access.

6.4 Eastlight will not create new documents solely for the purpose of publication.

6.5 Where required, information may be redacted to protect personal data, special category data or other sensitive business information.

7. Phase 2: Information Requests

7.1 From 01 April 2027, Eastlight must respond to written requests for information from its residents or from a designated representative acting on a resident's behalf, only where the request relates to the management of Eastlight's social housing functions and services.

7.2 Information requests must be made in writing and must describe the information being requested clearly enough to allow Eastlight to identify and locate the requested information. Requests must be submitted using Eastlight's published channels for making information requests, such as through Eastlight's website, by email, or via our Customer Services Team.

7.3 Eastlight will acknowledge and respond to information requests within the required **30 calendar days** and will provide access to information that it holds, or that is held on behalf of contractors, unless it is unreasonable and not lawful to do so.

7.4 Eastlight will not create new information or records in response to an information request and will not delete or alter information to avoid disclosure.

7.5 Information may be withheld, or documents redacted, where disclosure would conflict with legal obligations, including data protection legislation, safeguarding requirements, commercial confidentiality or other statutory restrictions. Decisions to withhold information will be made fairly and consistently by Eastlight's Data

Protection Officer (DPO).

- 7.6** Where Eastlight withholds information in full or in part, it will clearly explain the reason for doing so and will set out the residents' right to complain if they are dissatisfied with the response.
- 7.7** Eastlight is committed to ensuring all residents can access information in a way that meets their individual needs. Residents who require support to make an information request or who need information in an alternative format should contact us.
- 7.8** Where reasonable and possible, Eastlight will provide information in alternative formats, which may include:
- Large print
 - Easy read
 - Audio format
 - Braille
 - Translation services
 - Telephone support.
- 7.9** Eastlight will take account of residents' communication preferences and any accessibility requirements when responding to requests for information.

8. Complaints

- 8.1** Eastlight recognises that residents may be dissatisfied with how requests for information have been handled or with the information provided under the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs).
- 8.2** Where a resident is unhappy with Eastlight's response to an information request, including where information has been refused or redacted, they have the right to raise a complaint.
- 8.3** Complaints relating to access information will be managed in line with Eastlight's Complaints & Resolutions Policy and will be handled fairly, consistently and within published timescales.
- 8.4** Eastlight will clearly explain the outcome of any complaints and the reasons for its decision, including where we consider information to have been lawfully withheld.
- 8.5** If a resident remains dissatisfied after exhausting Eastlight's complaints process, they may refer the complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service, which is the designated dispute resolution body for complaints relating to the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs).

- 8.6** Eastlight will use learning from complaints about information access to improve transparency, strengthen processes and support continuous improvement in how information is shared with residents.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

- 9.1** An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for this Policy was conducted. As a result, actions have been put in place to mitigate any negative impacts.

10. Glossary

Designated Representative	A person authorised by a resident to act on their behalf, such as a support worker, advocate, family member, friend, solicitor or journalist.
Housing Ombudsman	An independent body that investigates complaints about social landlords, including complaints about access to information.
Publication Scheme	A structured list of information that Eastlight makes routinely available to residents. This is made available via the Eastlight website.
Private Registered Provider	An organisation registered with the Regulator of Social Housing to provide social housing.
Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs)	Government requirements that give social housing residents the right to access information about how their homes and housing services are managed.
Information Request	A written request made by a resident or their designated representative asking for access to information relating to the management of Eastlight's social housing and services.

APPENDIX 1 – PUBLICATION SCHEME

This Publication Scheme explains the type of information Eastlight will make available to residents. It is designed to help residents understand how Eastlight works, how decisions are made and how well Eastlight is performing.

Publication scheme classification of information is as follows:

Class of information	What this means in practice
Governance and decision making	Information about how Eastlight is run and who is responsible for decisions. This includes details of our senior leadership team, our Board, and how we are structured. It also covers how decisions are made, how we prioritise things like complaints, and how we involve residents in shaping services (for example, consultations, surveys, and resident meetings, including agendas and minutes).
Spending	Information about how we use our money. This includes what we spend on services, how service charges are used, and any funding or grants we receive. This helps residents understand how their rent and service charges contribute to delivering services.
Housing stock management	Information about how we manage and maintain our homes. This includes planned maintenance programmes, repairs and investment work, and progress towards improving the energy efficiency of homes (for example, work linked to net zero targets). It may also include information about changes to our homes, such as buying, selling or transferring properties.
Performance	Information about how well we are doing. This includes inspection results, regulatory ratings, performance reports and how we are improving services. It also includes Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), complaint performance, health and safety outcomes, and key operational data, such as repairs performance and, where applicable, the number of evictions. This helps residents hold us to account.
Housing services	Information about the services we provide to residents and how to access them. This includes guidance and advice on things like repairs, tenancy management, rent and support services, helping residents understand what to expect and how to get help when needed.

Class of information	What this means in practice
Lists and registers	Certain information we are legally required to keep and make available. This may include registers or records relating to housing management or compliance.
Social housing management	The policies and rules we follow when managing homes and delivering services. This includes documents such as resident facing policies and other guidance that explains how we make decisions and deliver services consistently.

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