

Highcross Law Solicitors Privacy Notice

Introduction

We take your privacy very seriously and request that you take some time to familiarise yourself with this document as it contains important information in line with the new General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') which came into force from 25 May 2018. This notice sets out (for the purposes of GDPR):

- who we are;
- how and why we collect personal information
- how and why we use personal information
- how and why we share personal information
- your rights under the GDPR
- how to contact us and supervisory authorities in the event you have a complaint

About us

Highcross Law (Leicester) Ltd trading as Highcross Law Solicitors ('we') are regulated under the GDPR whenever we use your personal data. The GDPR applies in the UK and across the rest of the European Union. We are responsible as a controller of that personal data for the purposes of the GDPR. Our use of your personal data is governed and subject to one or more of the following:

- instructions you provide
- GDPR
- Relevant legal requirements under UK and European law
- Duty of confidentiality

We have not appointed a Data Protection Officer to oversee our compliance with the GDPR as we are not required to do so. Our Data Protection Compliance Manager has overall responsibility for compliance with GDPR and can be contacted at enquiries@highcrosslaw.co.uk.

Personal Data – the information we collect and use

We collect the following personal data about you:

- name, address, telephone number, date of birth; national insurance and certain tax details
- bank/building society details/statement; (e.g. checking proof of funding, immigration applications, remitting funds on completion of matters such as a sale)
- immigration history (e.g. for nationality, immigration related instructions)
- information relating to the matter you are seeking advice/representation
- your use of our website, communication/IT systems
- surveys on completion of instructions (e.g. to evaluate our own performance)

- your family and dependent details (e.g. for instructions on family, matrimonial or will/probate related work).
- Your previous record (if any) on a criminal law based instructions
- Cookies and other tracking technologies e.g. information collected when you visit our website; when you open a communication from (such as a read receipt in an email).

Personal Data – how we collect your personal data

We collect our information from a variety of sources but mostly from you. Your personal data is collected from any one or more of the following sources:

- information you give us in person, by telephone, in writing and or electronic form/media (along with any attachments), completion of any forms on our website etc.
- information available on the public domain (e.g. Land Registry, Companies House, search engines)
- information from third parties such as credit reference providers/agencies, government sanction lists, due diligence providers
- information when you access our IT systems such as our website including internet protocol (IP) address, your login information, browser type and version, time zone setting, browser plug-in types and versions, operating system and platform.
- information from others (with your consent) including, for example, financial institutions, your professional advisors (such as accountants, doctors/health professionals, mortgage advisors, estate agents, banks/building societies, employers, consultants)
- via our case and document management systems, appointment/meeting and reception diary logs, messages left on our answering machine system

Personal Data – how we use your personal data and why

Under the GDPR (and of course our professional rules and regulations), we will only use your personal data if we have proper and legitimate reasons to do so. These may include:

- to carry out our work in accordance with your instructions (such as for example, steps taken in a conveyancing transaction to buy/sell a property).
- to comply with legal and professionals obligations
- making use and disclosing data with your consent
- to provide, operate and maintain our services
- to improve and personalise our services to you
- to communicate with you in respect of the work you instruct us to carry out for you.
- preventing unauthorised use and access of our legal systems (as part of our legal obligations to prevent unlawful activity through our services)
- to carry out internal file audits to ensure we deliver a competent and efficient service and for staff training/development.

We only collect and use your data for legitimate reason(s) and to act in your interests. This includes all steps and stages from our initial contact to conclusion of your matter/instructions

We will not collect and or use your personal data if doing so overrides your rights under the data protection laws.

Personal Data – sharing your information

We may share relevant personal data about you with:

- government organisations (e.g. the court service, HM Land Registry, Companies House, HM Revenue & Customs) as part of carrying out your legal work.
- Third parties such as your mortgage provider, financial advisor, accountants, our insurers/broker, estate agents etc.
- Professional advisers and consultants who are instructed to act on your behalf e.g. medical professionals, barristers, tax advisers, search/tracing companies.
- in compliance with our professional and legal obligations
- our bankers
- our accounts management systems
- persons for whom you have given written consent and authority to do so.

We will not share information if we are not satisfied that the party we are sharing with will not respect and protect your privacy rights. The party receiving your personal data will be bound by duty of confidentiality.

We will never sell your personal data to anyone. We will only send you marketing information if you specifically consent to receiving this.

Where we store your personal data and keeping your information secure

We will store your information within the European Economic Area (“EEA”). However, as files and documents are also stored on cloud-based computing systems, the data that we collect from you may be transferred to, and stored at, a destination outside the EEA. It may also be processed by staff operating outside the EEA who work for us or for one of our suppliers. Such staff may be engaged in, among other things, the fulfilment of your order, the processing of your payment details and the provision of support services. By submitting your personal data, you agree to this transfer, storing or processing. We will take all steps reasonably necessary to ensure that your data is treated securely and in accordance with the requirements of data protection laws. All information you provide to us is stored on our secure servers.

Unfortunately, the transmission of information via the internet is not completely secure. Although we will do our best to protect your personal data, we cannot guarantee the security of your data transmitted to us via use of information technologies such as email or equivalent means.

We request you do not share sensitive information via email system. If you still choose to do so, any transmission is at your own risk. We would expect you to follow safety guidelines when using the information technologies as a means of communicating with us.

Once we have received your information, we will use strict procedures and security features to try to prevent unauthorised access.

Personal Data – how long this will be kept

We will only keep your personal data for so long as it is legally required and in accordance with our professional obligations. You should know that the period of time we are required to keep your file (including your personal data) may vary depending on the type of work and area of law you sought our advice/assistance. This period will extend beyond the closing of your file following an enquiry or instruction for one or more of the following reasons:

- required by law and our professional rules
- to respond and deal with any complaints or claims made by you or on your behalf
- held at your request e.g. original documents for safe keeping

We will safely delete or destroy your personal data when we have no further legitimate reason to hold your information.

Your rights under the GDPR

You have the following rights under the data protection laws. These rights are exercisable free of charge.

- Right to Access

You have the right to be provided with a copy of your personal data. You can usually access this directly from us.

- Right to Rectification

You have the right to request that personal data is corrected if it's inaccurate.

- Right to Erasure (Right to be Forgotten)

You have the right to request that your personal data is removed; depending on the circumstances, we may or may not be obliged to action this request.

- Right to Object

You have the right to object to the processing of personal data; depending on the circumstances, we may or may not be obliged to action this request.

- Right to Restriction of Processing

You have the right to request that we restrict the extent of our processing activities; depending on the circumstances, we may or may not be obliged to action this request. This includes a right not to be subject to automatic individual decision making.

- Right to Data Portability

You have the right to receive the personal data which you have provided to us in a structured, commonly used and machine readable format suitable for transferring to another controller.

- Right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority

We hope that we would be able to resolve any complaint you may have. However, if this is not possible, you can lodge a complaint with the relevant supervisory authority. You can lodge your complaint in particular in the country where you live, your place of work or place where you believe we infringed your right(s). For UK based, this would be Information Commissioner Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns> or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Changes to this notice

This notice was first published on 22nd May 2018 (revised on 4th March 2023) and in compliance with the GDPR. We may be required to make changes to this Privacy Notice to reflect best practice and any revisions in the data protection laws. We would request you to check our website for our recent version.

Contacting us

We can be contacted by any of the following means in the event that you have any questions or queries relating to this policy or the information we hold about you:

- By letter

Highcross Law Solicitors, 26 Allandale Road Leicester LE2 2DA

- By email

enquiries@highcrosslaw.co.uk

- By telephone

0116 262 0001