



Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRs) Policy

2026-2029

Prepared by

Document Owner(s)	Organisation Role
Claire Warren	Chief Executive
Racheal Hoult	Executive Support & Communications Coordinator

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1.0	June 2026	Racheal Hoult	First draft – approved at GRC 14/09/2026

Policy Aim

This policy aims to ensure that residents are able to access information from their landlord. The policy sets out how PFH will promote access to information through a formal publication scheme enabling residents and their representatives to access information proactively, and to support residents to make information requests.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how PFH will comply with the government's Policy Statement entitled the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements, or "STAIRs", ensuring transparency, openness and resident empowerment in being able to hold their landlord to account.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of PFH, and third parties contracted to provide social housing management services by PFH. STAIRs covers the publication of information, responding to information requests, reviews and complaints.

3. Regulatory Framework

This policy is based on the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements ("STAIRs") introduced under the amended Transparency, Influence and Accountability ("TISA") Consumer Standard issued by the Regulator of Social Housing ("RSH"). Further to a consultation, the RSH issued an amended TISA Standard under which PFH is required to comply. We are required to have a STAIRs Policy Statement, which sets out the requirements to issue a Publication Scheme (Chapter 1), and secondly to respond to information requests from residents and their representatives (Chapter 2).

4. Policy Principles

STAIRs take a principles-based approach in line with the RSH Consumer Standards. Key principles include transparency, openness, accountability and resident involvement in how their services are delivered.

Under the publication scheme within Chapter 1 of the Policy Statement, PFH must proactively publish information which we hold and which fall within one or more of the classes of information set out in Table 1 of the publication scheme.

The Policy Statement does not provide an exhaustive list as to precisely which documents PFH is required to provide. Instead, PFH will retain flexibility as to what information we may provide as long in line with a proactive approach to publication. The emphasis of the PFH's Policy Statement is in favour of disclosure.

Chapter 2 of STAIRs sets out that residents (or their designated representative) may make a request for relevant information to their provider. Relevant information is defined as information relating to the management of PFH's housing.

We will proactively respond to requests within 30 days, unless there are reasonable grounds to withhold information, such as where the information amounts to a protected class of information under freedom of information or, data protection (or other) laws or where the harm caused by the disclosure would outweigh the benefit of disclosing the information.

PFH will provide information irrespective of the reasons for the request or how the information may be used following disclosure and should disregard any perceived adverse

impact or negative publicity which may be caused by the disclosure. We will take a proactive approach to the publication of documents and consider that information ought to be published unless there is a good reason why information ought not to be.

5. The Requirements

The STAIRs scheme has two key phases: Chapter 1 Publication Scheme; Chapter 2 Information Requests. Key requirements for each phase are set out in sections (A) and (B) below.

Information available under STAIRs is generally available free of charge. Where information is required in a non-electronic format, the Resident or their representative should contact PFH Customer Services team to discuss their requirements. PFH is committed to ensuring that information is made available in a way that is accessible as possible for all our residents.

A. Publication Scheme (Chapter 1)

PFH will maintain a Publication Scheme which identifies the information held by PFH that falls within the STAIRs classes of information, explains where that information can be found, and sets out how residents can request information in another format where needed,

- I. what classes of information will be published or otherwise made available as a matter of routine;
- II. how residents will be made aware of the Publication Scheme and how the information will be published, accessed, reviewed and updated. Further details are set out in Annex 1 to this policy.

B. Information Requests (Chapter 2)

Our process for handling information requests is set out in Annex 2 to this policy. Requests may be made by eligible social housing residents or their authorised representatives and may be submitted in writing, by email, by telephone or through another reasonable communication route. PFH will support residents who need help to make a request. PFH will acknowledge requests, check eligibility and authority where required, clarify the information being requested where necessary, and respond within 30 calendar days unless it is reasonable to withhold or redact the information or an extension is required. Where clarification is needed, PFH will explain what additional information is required before the request can be progressed.

Where information is withheld or redacted, PFH will provide a clear explanation of the reason for its decision, unless doing so would itself disclose protected information.

Decisions will be documented in the information request log.

PFH will maintain a log of all information requests and timelines for responding to requests for reporting and accountability purposes.

6. Out of scope / Withheld information

PFH is not required to create new information to comply with either the publication scheme or information requests. When considering whether the information should be published, PFH will consider if the information comes within the classes of information set out in Table 1 of the RSH Policy Statement. It may be necessary to redact documents prior to publication.

We have also included in Annex 1 some suggested categories of information which may be out of scope of STAIRs – please note this is not an exhaustive list.

When considering an information request under Chapter 2 PFH will consider whether any information may need to be withheld or redacted in response to your request. Any withholding or redaction of information must be reasonable and in line with the principles set out in paragraphs 14 – 16 of the Policy Statement.

This policy sets out how we will respond to requests for information and how we will consider “reasonableness” when assessing whether information should be withheld or redacted.

If, on receipt of any response in relation to a request, the resident or their representative considers that information has been redacted or withheld without a reasonable basis for doing so, we will refer to our review process set out in section 7.

7. Review and Complaints Process

If a resident or their representative considers that PFH has not published information or responded to your request for information appropriately or are otherwise dissatisfied with the handling of the request, then they are able to request a review. A request for a review should generally be made within 3 months of receipt of the original decision. The purpose of any review will be to assess:

- I. how we have responded to the request for information (for example, where we may not have provided information in an accessible format);
- II. where we have not published relevant information that we may hold and which they believe they may be entitled to;
- III. Where we have not complied with timelines for responding to a request and there is no good reason for us to have applied an extension;
- IV. where we have either withheld or redacted relevant information from disclosure and the resident or their representative disagree with our decision and reasons for this.

We will carry out a review of how we have handled the request (an “internal review”) and aim to respond to the complaint within 30 calendar days of receipt.

It may be necessary in exceptional circumstances to extend the timeline for a response – if this is necessary, we will let the resident or their representative know at the earliest opportunity. Any extension issued will be reasonable and kept to a minimum.

If the resident or their representative is not happy with our response to the review request, they are able to escalate directly to the Housing Ombudsman under the terms of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme. The Housing Ombudsman’s STAIRs information and complaints guidance is available on the Housing Ombudsman website. Any complaint to the Ombudsman should generally be made within 3 months of the outcome of the review.

Only matters relating to STAIRs (i.e. the publication of information under Chapter 1 or information requests under Chapter 2) can be addressed as part of a STAIRs review process and then by complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. Please note that if the concern relates to an alleged breach of data protection legislation this should be dealt with via our usual complaints process for data protection matters.

8. Data Protection and Security

Data protection laws are directly applicable to housing providers. This means that where any information requested amounts to personal data or may not be identifiable personal data in isolation but could amount to identifiable personal data when combined with other information, this information may be withheld from disclosure in compliance with data protection laws.

Any requested information which amounts to personally identifiable data will not be disclosable under STAIRs but may be disclosed under data protection laws as a subject access request, where information is sought by the resident about themselves.

Where we consider that any request amounts to request for personal data, we will process the request in line with our subject access requests policy which is available upon request from our Customer Services Team.

For further information as to how we handle personal data, please see our privacy policy at <https://www.pfh.org.uk/document/applicant-and-resident-privacy-notice/>.

9. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Chief Executive; day to day implementation of this policy lies with the Executive Support and Communications Coordinator. All staff are required to familiarise themselves with the wording and obligations listed under this policy.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years to ensure accuracy and compliance. Audits of the publication scheme will be carried out on an annual basis.

11. Equality and Diversity

This policy promotes equality by giving all residents equal access to social housing information.

Annex 1

Publication Scheme

This Annex sets out the basis on which PFH will proactively publish information relating to the management of its social housing function. We are committed to being open and transparent about the way we work, the services we provide and the decisions we make.

The information covered by this scheme is included in the classes of information set out in Table 1 below, where this information is held by us. The table sets out a non-exhaustive list of classes of information we routinely publish. PFH will make residents aware of the Publication Scheme through its website, resident communications and staff signposting, so that information can be easily identified and accessed. Information is freely available on our website or can be requested in other formats from our Customer Services Team.

PFH will publish information within each class that is up to date and correct at the date of publication. Where historic information is published, PFH will identify the period covered and will apply its data retention requirements when deciding what information remains available.

Table 1

Class of Information	Relevant PFH Information
Governance and Decision Making	You can learn more about PFH in the About Us section of our website, including: • Our Board of Directors and details of our organisational structure and how decisions are made. • Our Executive Team. • Our decision-making policies are available on our Policies page. • Our Get Involved section details all the ways we engage with our residents and gather feedback to deliver service improvements, including our Resident Led Scrutiny Panel. • We also annually publish our Engagement Report. • Our Customer Strategy details how we will help our residents to live independently within their homes, be happy and contribute positively to their communities, own lifestyle and PFH. • Our Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions section explains how we value feedback to help us to improve our services.
Finance and Spending	We publish details about our spending and use of service charge income in our financial statements. We also publish a more accessible resident annual report which explains our performance and how we aim to achieve value for money. Our procurement strategy details our approach to procuring goods and services for the organisation. Our service charge policy details how we estimate and charge for resident's service charges.

Housing Stock Management	Our current Corporate Plan sets out what we want to achieve and how we will do this. Related information is also available through our Homes Strategy, renewals programme and policy, Repairs and Maintenance Policy, Asset Management and Surveying Policy and other Property Services policies.
Performance	PFH was graded the highest Regulator of Social Housings ratings in June 2025, G1/V1/C1. Information on our performance (including handling of complaints) is available in our How We Are Performing website section, the resident Annual Report, performance scorecard, and Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Details of how to make a complaint and our Complaints & Customer Feedback policy are also published on our Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions webpage. For further information on how we ensure our homes are safe for residents (including meeting the legal standards required through Awaab's Law) please see our Health and Safety webpage. The outcome of our annual External Audit is always included in our annual financial statements.
Housing Services and Tenant Liaison	Our website's residents section brings together information about our housing services, support and advice, including repairs, safety, wellbeing, paying rent and getting involved. This includes documents such as our Resident Handbook and Service Standards. Residents can also use the Contact Us section (or call us on 01482 223 783) if they need help accessing information in another format. Information about resident engagement is available in our Get Involved website section, including resident scrutiny and feedback opportunities.
Lists and Registers	PFH is a registered provider of Social Housing, a registered Charity and listed on Companies House. Our safety and property compliance information is already reflected across our resident information, publications and policy pages, including our Assets and Liabilities Register. To understand our housing application process, please see the Apply for a Home webpage and our Allocations policy.

Social Housing Management	Many of the policies and strategies that support the management of PFH homes are available on our policies and publications website sections. These include key documents such as the Service Charge Policy. Related strategy content is also available through our Corporate Plan and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion pages.
---------------------------	---

Table 2 below details the types of information which may be out of scope of Table 1 and not subject to inclusion in the publication scheme.

Table 2

Categories of information out of scope	Examples of types of information (not an exhaustive list)
Internal business or commercial activities	• Contracts or agreements unrelated to the provision of housing management services (e.g. payroll services). • HR policies unrelated to social housing management (e.g. disciplinary policy). • Finance policies governing day to day business operations unrelated to the provision of housing management services. • Information which relates to internal discussions and the development of internal policy and strategy before board approval (“pipeline” information).
Matters decided by local authorities	• Housing allocations. • Homelessness assessments. • Housing benefit or council tax-related decisions. • Planning applications and planning enforcement actions.
Non-social housing management function	• Service charges for non-social housing. • Commercial lease management. • Repairs or safety data for market rent homes. • Private rented sector portfolios managed for profit.
Property that is not social housing	PFH Offices
Wider activities unconnected with social housing	Commercial investment or treasury activities.

How will relevant information under STAIRs be published?

Information will be available on our website through the STAIRs Publication Scheme webpage and will be regularly reviewed and updated. PFH will ensure the webpage is clear, accessible and easy for residents to navigate.

Formats other than online

We are committed to making information listed in our Publication Scheme available free of charge online. If information is required to be provided in an accessible alternative format, we also commit to providing a single copy of this information free of charge.

We will also provide one translated copy of any information you request free of charge. However, where an individual requests additional copies of information, we may apply charges strictly to cover the actual costs incurred in providing additional copies.

No Charge for Inspection

Information may be inspected at our offices by appointment free of charge. Please contact us to arrange an appointment.

Resident Feedback on this Publication Scheme

Residents can provide suggestions for improvements to this Scheme via:

- Email to info@pfh.org.uk or a message via your PFH Connect device
- Calling us on 01482 223 783
- Speaking to a member of staff

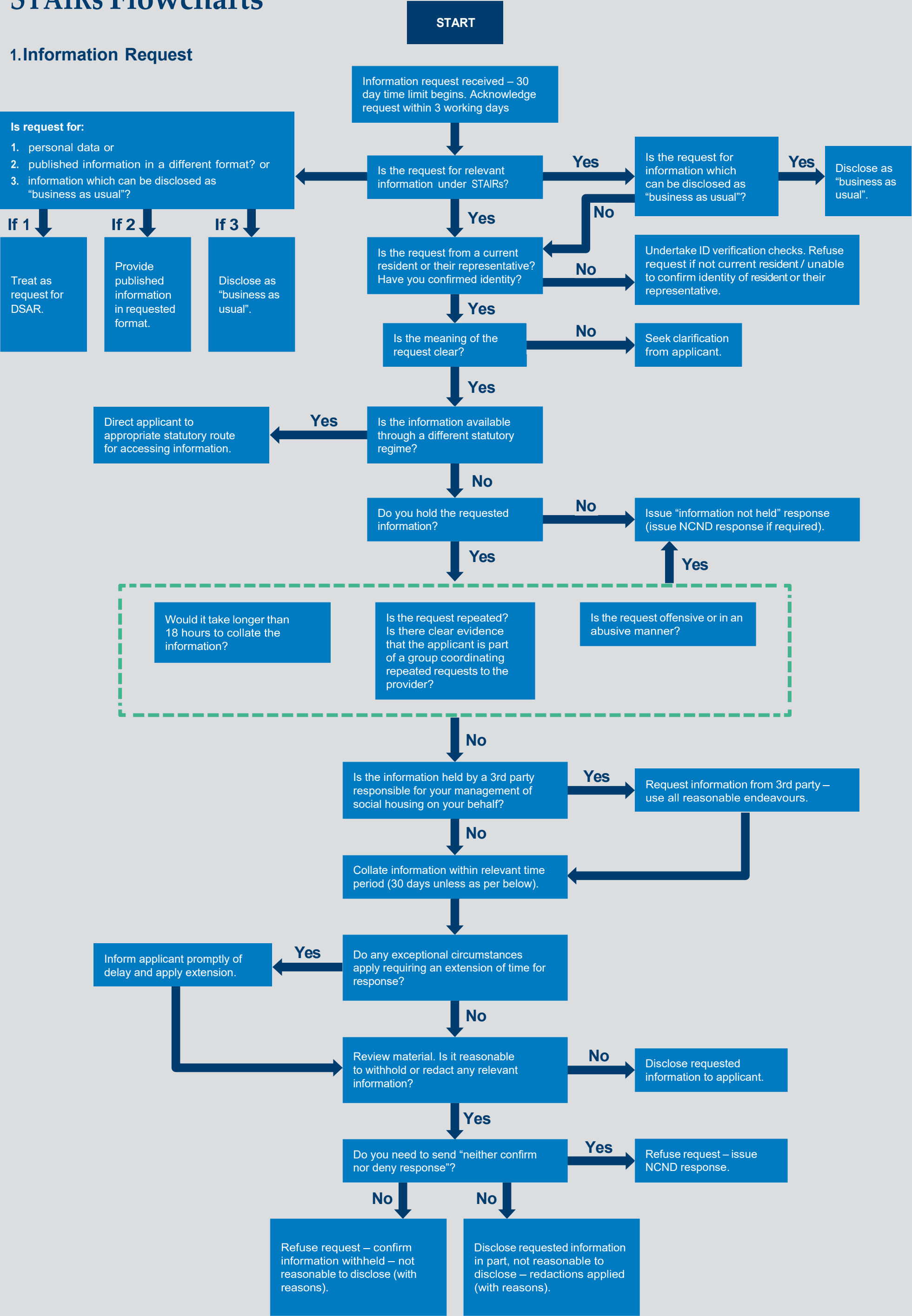
Reviews

Should you consider that we have not included information in our publication scheme, or that we have unduly redacted information which you consider ought not to be redacted, please contact us to request a review. We will normally complete a review within 30 days.

Annex 2

STAIRs Flowcharts

1.Information Request



2. STAIRs Review Process Flowchart

