



# SIX TOWN HOUSING

Freedom of Information Act 2000

## **Publication Scheme**

April 2005

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## **Six Town Housing: Committed to Openness**

Six Town Housing embraces a spirit of openness when making decisions and delivering services. Therefore, we are pleased to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We will inform you about the information we publish and say where it is available through our Publication Scheme.

If the information you want is not on the Publication Scheme, you can contact us to find out if it is available. Sometimes we cannot give you the information you have requested, and when we cannot, we will say why.

Normally information will be made available through our website so it is free. When we charge fees for photocopying and sending large amounts of information, they will be reasonable.

Six Town Housing is committed to the principled management of personal information and, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, we handle the data we keep about you responsibly and securely, always safeguarding the legal conditions that protect your privacy. If you would like to access your personal data, have a look at our procedure on data protection, which can be found on the website, [www.sixtownhousing.org](http://www.sixtownhousing.org) or at our office at Point Blue.

We hope you find this Publication Scheme easy to understand and use, if you have any questions about it feel free to contact our Board Governance and Quality Manager using the contact details below.

### **About Six Town Housing**

In April 2005 responsibility for managing council homes in Bury and its five neighbouring towns moved from the Metropolitan Council to Six Town Housing.

Six Town Housing is an arms length management organisation or ALMO, created by Bury Metropolitan Council to manage, maintain and improve its council houses and estates. Six Town Housing started on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

As an ALMO, we are a not-for-profit housing management company that is 100% owned by Bury Metropolitan Council.

Six Town Housing is run by a board made up of 17 members – five council nominees, seven tenants, and five independent people with professional skills to help run the service. The Board Members serve as volunteers and only receive out of pocket expenses.

You can find more information about Six Town Housing and the services we provide on our website [www.sixtownhousing.org](http://www.sixtownhousing.org).

## **Responsibility and Contact Details**

If you have a query about the Publication Scheme please contact the Board Governance and Quality Manager. This officer can also ensure that assistance is given to provide the scheme in a different language or format such as Braille or on audiocassette:

The Manager responsible for the Publication Scheme is

Victoria Haslam  
Board Governance & Quality Manager  
Six Town Housing  
Point Blue  
Moor Street  
Bury  
BL9 5AQ

Telephone number: 0161 686 8000  
Facsimile number: 0161 764 5078  
Email: [v.haslam@sixtownhousing.org](mailto:v.haslam@sixtownhousing.org)

## **What is a Publication Scheme?**

A Publication Scheme is a complete guide to the information routinely published by an organisation. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that Six Town Housing's Publication Scheme must:

- state what information we publish or intend to publish on a routine basis;
- group this into types or 'classes' of information;
- explain how and when this information will be published;
- and say whether the information is available free-of-charge or not.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 aims to ensure that a significant and growing amount of information is made available, without the need for specific requests, and to encourage a culture of openness.

## **What are Classes of Information?**

A "class" is the information available on any particular subject. For example a class could refer to general advice and guidance in a certain area and it might consist of a variety of documents, such as leaflets, reports, photographs and so forth.

## **Categories on the Publication Scheme**

Six Town Housing's Publication Scheme is divided into nine categories:

- 1 Information about Six Town Housing, including Board Members
- 2 Contact Information about Six Town Housing's services
- 3 Information about Six Town Housing's strategies and policies
- 4 Information about Six Town Housing's resources and financial arrangements
- 5 Information about decisions of Six Town Housing
- 6 Information about improving the work of Six Town Housing
- 7 Decent Homes and tenant services
- 8 Tenant empowerment & Communication with the general public
- 9 Employment

## **Making Information Easy to Access**

Much of the information included in the Publication Scheme is available free of charge, as we endeavour to make it available through the website where it can be downloaded at no cost.

Some of the information on the Publication Scheme may also be freely available at our office in a paper form such as leaflets or newsletters.

We have indicated on the Publication Scheme if the information is available at our office in a paper or electronic form, or if it can be downloaded from the website.

Requests for information can be made by letter or email.

Please advise if you require a different format, such as Braille, tape, enlarged writing, or another language.

## **Charges for Information**

If the photocopying and postage costs of providing the information you have requested exceed £10.00, a charge will be made. We have identified information which has a fee on the Publication Scheme below with one \* [asterisk]. If your request is more substantial, the fee will rise accordingly. Our fees are set in accordance with the Fees Regulation of the Act and our Fees Policy.

## **Free Internet Access at Local Libraries**

Accessing our website is a great way to get information about Six Town Housing. There are plenty of computers at local libraries which have free internet access.

If you would like to learn how to use the internet, Bury Central Library offers a one hour course called 'Get You Started'. Contact 0161 253 7089 for more information.

## **Is all Information Available?**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you the right to access information produced in the course of our work. There are some exceptions to this right.

Data about living identifiable people ("personal data") is covered by the Data Protection Act 1998.

Commercially sensitive information may be excluded, when publishing such information could harm Six Town Housing's or another party's interests. For example, we would not wish to publish information that might prejudice contract negotiations.

Information might also be excluded where the health, welfare and safety of our staff or security of Six Town Housing might be harmed were we to disclose it.

If information within a class on the Publication Scheme is exempt we have included two \*\*[asterix]. Being an open and accountable organisation, the reasons for such exclusions will be clearly stated.

## **Accessing Information not on the Publication Scheme**

We will do our best to include relevant, important information on the Publication Scheme, but if you cannot find what you are looking for, you can request information from our Board Governance and Quality Manager using the contact details given above or from [enquiries@sixtownhousing.org](mailto:enquiries@sixtownhousing.org).

## **What Happens to Old Information?**

A lot of information we produce is only needed for a limited period. Keeping information longer than it's needed is expensive so we destroy old information in accordance with our Retention and Disposal Schedule.

## **Your Comments**

We welcome your comments about the scheme. If you feel there are areas we have not covered or if we can make the scheme easier to use please contact the Board Governance and Quality Manager using the contact details above.

## **Complaints**

Six Town Housing takes complaints very seriously. We have an effective complaints procedure which enables you to bring problems to our attention. Senior staff will deal with your complaint fairly, promptly, and in confidence.

If you feel that we have not complied with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you can contact:

Julie Heywood  
Customer Contact Manager  
Six Town Housing  
Point Blue  
Moor Street  
Bury  
BL9 5AQ

Telephone: 0161 686 8000

Fax : 0161 764 5078

If you have followed our complaints procedure and are still unhappy you can contact:

### **The Information Commissioner**

Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545700

## **Definition of Terms**

<b>Adverts and Announcements</b>	That the Six Town Housing publishes directly in the press or in other venues
<b>Advice and Guidance</b>	Guidance notes prepared for staff and or the public on a wide variety of subjects
<b>Agendas</b>	List of subjects to be considered at Six Town Housing
<b>ALMO</b>	“Arms Length Management Organisation”
<b>Application Forms</b>	Forms submitted to Six Town Housing
<b>Contact details</b>	Names addresses and telephone numbers
<b>Job Details</b>	Details of all jobs within Six Town Housing that are currently advertised together with a job recruitment pack
<b>Minutes</b>	Records of decisions made at Six Town Housing
<b>Organisations and Structure</b>	Documents showing how the services and decision making bodies are organised
<b>Performance Information</b>	Information about management and planning, targets and performance
<b>Policies and Strategies</b>	The policy framework of Six Town Housing, together with all other policies, plans and strategies as Six Town Housing may from time to time be required by statute to adopt
<b>Press Releases and Newsletters</b>	News and events information intended for staff or the public
<b>Publicity and Promotional Material</b>	Information on special events and projects organised by Six Town Housing
<b>Reports and Accounts</b>	Statutory Reports and Accounts that Six Town Housing must prepare under the Companies Act.
<b>Service Guide</b>	Description of Six Town Housing services.
<b>Statutory Register</b>	Certain registers that Six Town Housing must maintain under the Companies Act.

## **Symbols on the Publication Scheme**

### **\* Information with charges**

Some information within this class may incur a charge. If a charge is applicable, we will let you know when you make the request. This has to be paid in advance of the document being provided.

### **\*\* Exempt Information**

Where any of the information comes within "an exempt category" under the Freedom of Information Act or other relevant legislation we may not publish it or we may publish it with the exempt material deleted. Within the Scheme there are some classes which contain exemptions, indicated with two\*\* (asterisks).

### **+ Will be available via the web in the future**

## Six Town Housing Publication Scheme

	Class	Format			
		Paper	Electronic	Web	Cost
<b>1 Information about Six Town Housing, including Board Members</b>					
	Memorandum & Articles of Association	✓	✓	+	
	Organisation and Structure	✓	✓	+	
	Scheme of Delegation	✓	✓	+	
	Names of current Members of the Board	✓	✓	✓	
	How to become a Member of the Board	✓	✓	+	
	Options Appraisal	✓	✓	+	
	Bid	✓	✓	+	
	Management Agreement**	✓	✓	+	*
** Personal data within the Data Protection Act 1998 is excluded.					
<b>2 Contact Information about Six Town Housing's services</b>					
	Contact Details	✓	✓	✓	
	Complaints Procedure, Guidance and Monitoring.	✓	✓	✓	
<b>3 Information about Six Town Housing's strategies and policies</b>					
	Business Plan for Bury Metropolitan Council	✓	✓	+	
	Delivery Plan	✓	✓	+	
	Policies and Strategies	✓	✓	+	
	Race Equality Policy	✓	✓	+	

<b>4 Information about Six Town Housing's resources and financial arrangements</b>					
	Reports and Accounts  These will not be available until after one year of operation.				
	Balance of Stock Statistics	✓	✓	+	
	Service Level Agreements ** Currently under review	✓	✓	+	
	**Some items are excluded which are commercially sensitive and might harm Six Town Housing's or another party's interests.				
<b>5 Information about decisions of Six Town Housing</b>					
	Board Agendas	✓	✓	✓	
	Reports **	✓	✓	✓	
	Minutes **	✓	✓	✓	
	**Some items are excluded which are commercially sensitive and might harm Six Town Housing's or another party's interests. Personal data within the Data Protection Act 1998 is excluded.				
<b>6 Information about improving the work of Six Town Housing</b>					
	Audit Reports	✓	✓	+	
	Performance Framework and Monitoring	✓	✓	✓	
	Service Improvement Plans **	✓	✓		
	**Some items are excluded which are commercially sensitive and might harm Six Town Housing's or another party's interests.				
<b>7 Decent Homes and tenant services</b>					
	The Improvement Programme: (addresses and work to be done without specific dates)	✓	✓	✓	

	Service Standard Leaflets To be published by September 2005	✓	✓	+	
	Anti-social Behaviour Policy, Procedure and Summary	✓	✓	✓	
	Tenancy Agreement	✓	✓	✓	
	Tenants' Hand Book To be published by October 2005				
	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's advice on Right to Buy	✓	✓	✓	
	Advice and Guidance	✓	✓	✓	
<b>8 Tenant empowerment &amp; Communication with the general public</b>					
	Tenant Agreement Currently under discussion.				
	Press Releases and Newsletters	✓	✓	✓	
	Adverts and Announcements	✓	✓	✓	
	Consultation **	✓	✓		
	**Some items may be excluded because the information was provided in confidence.				
<b>9 Employment</b>					
	Application Forms	✓	✓	✓	
	Recruitment Advice and Guidance	✓	✓	✓	
	Job Details**	✓	✓	✓	
	** Personal data within the Data Protection Act 1998 is excluded.				