**Northern Ireland House Condition Survey (NIHCS)**

**Privacy statement for survey participants**

Updated 05 April 2023

1. **What personal data do we collect and why?**

When we refer to personal data, we mean any information about a living identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified from that information.

The NIHCS comprises a physical survey of the dwelling and a household interview. We collect personal data, where participants choose to provide it, during the household interview. We keep the collection of personal data to the minimum and ask only for personal data which are necessary in order to examine the relationship between housing conditions and the social and economic circumstance of households. All the findings we publish are anonymised; no-one looking at the findings will be able to identify participants in any way.

The interviewer collects, with the participant’s permission, special category personal data such as ethnicity, nationality, religion and health.

At the end of the interview, participants are asked if they would be willing to be contacted again, either for quality assurance purposes or to take part in further research. If they agree they are asked to provide the following personal information:

* name
* email address
* phone number

Participants can choose not to provide the personal/special category personal information.

When we use the information provided by participants for research, we “pseudonymise” them, which means we use only identifiers which do not reveal people’s “real world” identity. All the findings we publish are anonymised; no-one looking at the findings will be able to identify participants in any way.

1. **Who is the data controller?**

In research terms, the data controller is the body that determines the purposes and means of processing personal data.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is the data controller of the information participants provide as part of the NIHCS. The Housing Executive uses the information from the NIHCS to: compile analysis datasets; produce statistics from those datasets; carry out further research; and share the data with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) so it can carry out further analysis.

1. **The lawful basis for using your personal information**

Data Protection legislation sets out when we are lawfully allowed to process your personal data. The following applies to the NIHCS:

The lawful basis for carrying out the survey and processing the personal information gathered in it is Article 6(1) (e) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.

The Housing (NI) Order 1981: 6 (1) states that The Housing Executive shall regularly examine housing conditions and need.

Our research is essential to government and organisations, including charities, who want to improve housing, house conditions, fuel poverty and energy efficiency.

* In relation to using special category data, this is done under Article 9(2) (g) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest), and under the Data Protection Act 2018 Schedule 1 Part 1 (4) - use for research purposes.
* The information collected for the NIHCS is shared with the UK Data Archive under UK GDPR 6 (1) (e) - Public Task. The purpose of sharing with the Essex database is to promote the HE’s research through re-use of data, see Housing (NI) Order 1981: 6 (5) The Executive may, with the consent of the Department, conduct or promote research into any matter relating to any of its functions. In relation to special category data, this is done under UK GDPR 9 (2) (j) – archiving, research and statistics.

**4. Who are the data processors?**

In research terms, the data processor processes personal information on behalf of the data controller. For the NIHCS the Northern Ireland Housing Executive is both the data controller and a data processor. Building Research Establishment is also a data processor, and requires the permission of the Housing Executive to use the data for any other purposes.

**Who has access to your personal data?**

The following organisations will have access to your personal data:

1. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive will have access to the data as the data controller, in order to carry out analysis and produce the findings of the research.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Research Unit

2 Adelaide Street

Belfast

BT2 8PB

2. Building Research Establishment will have access to the data in order to carry out quality assurance and data modelling on behalf of the Housing Executive.

BRE

Bucknalls Lane

Watford

WD25 9XX

3. A subset of the data will be deposited with the UK Data Archive to enable researchers to carry out further analysis. It will not be possible for any participant to be identified form the data.

UK Data Archive

University of Essex  
Wivenhoe Park  
Colchester  
CO4 3SQ

1. **How do we use your information?**

The information you give us will be treated as confidential as directed by the [Code of Practice for Statistics](https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/).

We collect personal data for two purposes: to ensure that we carry out the survey correctly; and to help us make full use of the data.

In order to ensure that the survey has been carried out correctly, as part of our quality assurance processes, we contact a percentage of the participants afterwards to confirm some details and to ask about the survey process. At the end of the survey, you will be asked whether you would like to be contacted again for that purpose. If you agree to be contacted, the interviewer will ask you to provide your name, a phone number and/or an e-mail address.

At the end of the survey, the interviewer will ask you whether you would like to be contacted again for follow-up research by the Housing Executive or by a third party. If you agree to be contacted for this purpose, then you will be asked to provide a phone number and/or an email address. In this instance the data from the HCS may be linked with the data from the follow-up research.

The NIHCS is used by researchers outside of the Housing Executive. The version of the data used by researchers outside the Housing Executive is deposited in the UK Data Archive. It does not contain any identifiable information. Your contact or personal details will **not** be used for marketing activities.

1. **Data security, storage and access**

Your personal data will be stored by the organisations detailed in the ‘Who has access to your personal data’ section according to their own protocols. The Housing Executive has rigorously evaluated the agencies’ protocols for security.

The information collected by surveyors is uploaded to a secure BRE website. Secure data transfer processes are in place.

Access to the personal data within all the organisations is restricted to a small number of employees and researchers working on the survey or using it for research.

1. **Data retention**

The NIHCS is carried out approximately every 5 years. In order to complete longitudinal analysis, monitoring changes to housing over time, data are retained indefinitely. Access to data are strictly limited.

1. **Details of data transfer**

Data will be stored within the UK.

1. **Your rights**

Participation in the research is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research. We hope that you will choose to take part, as we rely on the voluntary cooperation of people invited to take part to get a clear picture of people’s housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of their homes. This will help to shape the future of housing in Northern Ireland.

You have the following rights:

1. The right to be informed – this means individuals have the right to be informed about the collection and use of their personal data.
2. The right of access – this means individuals have the right to access their personal data.
3. The right to rectification – this means individuals have the right to have inaccurate personal data rectified, or completed if it is incomplete.
4. The right to restrict processing – this means individuals have the right to request the restriction or suppression of their personal data.
5. The right to object – this means individuals have the right to object to the processing of their personal data in certain circumstances.

If you are interested in learning more about your privacy rights, you can find more information on the [Information Commissioner’s Office website](https://ico.org.uk/).

During the Northern Ireland House Condition Survey fieldwork period you may request that your data are deleted or, if they are not accurate, you have the right to have inaccurate personal data amended. If you wish to do this, or if you wish to lodge a complaint, contact the House Condition Survey team in the Housing Executive, by e-mailing [nihcs@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:nihcs@nihe.gov.uk) or calling 02895 982548

Once the fieldwork period has ended, if you have any queries please contact the team on the above e-mail address or phone number.

1. **How to contact us**

This privacy notice covers all the main ways that we use the various types of personal data we may hold about you, to make sure that we are as transparent as possible.

We have a Data Protection Officer who makes sure we respect your rights and follow the law. If you have any concerns or questions about how we look after your personal information, please contact us by emailing [dataprotection@nihe.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@nihe.gov.uk) or by writing to:

Data Protection Officer,

Housing Executive,

2 Adelaide Street, Belfast,

BT2 8PB.