



Service User Charter

Our promise

Our aim is to be the advice centre that best understands and serves the needs of local people. To improve lives and communities, and provide high quality, independent advice services that are trusted, in an environment where people feel welcome.

We will strive to ensure that all those who use our service are treated with fairness and equality and that the organisation and its services are accessible to all.

We want you to be satisfied with the service you receive from us. So whenever and however you contact us you are entitled to our high standards of service.

Our Quality Standards

As a Service User of St Pauls Advice Centre, you can expect that we will:

- Provide a professional service delivered by staff that have appropriate skills and training.
- Treat you fairly and with respect.
- Provide you with a copy of any advice given or support/care plans and actions agreed.
- Keep you informed throughout your involvement with us.
- Protect your confidentiality by handling your information sensitively and securely.
- Store any information we hold about you securely for a minimum of 6 years, after which all information will be safely destroyed. (Service users have the right to see any information we hold about you – see our Data Protection Statement).
- Ensure the person you contact takes ownership of your enquiry/support.
- Offer you the chance to make suggestions on how we can improve our services.
- Provide an easy and effective system for you to make comments and raise concerns.

St Pauls Advice Centre would like to ask you as a user of its services to:

- Co-operate and participate in the service we offer you.
- Attend appointments on time, and keep us informed if you are unable to attend appointments.
- Keep us informed about any information relevant to your support.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of other service users and staff.
- Respect the premises and facilities provided.
- Help keep our workers safe when at our premises or in the community.
- Not use abusive language or act in an abusive manner.
- Whilst St Pauls Advice Centre does not expect its service users to be free from drug and alcohol use, service users are expected to be able to engage in support sessions in an appropriate manner.



Data Protection Statement

Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act 1998 came in to force in March 2000 and replaces the Data Protection Act of 1984. Under this Act, every person has a right of access to personal data about themselves and where access is refused there is a right of appeal to the Courts or the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This Act underpins and guides practice held within the St Pauls Advice Centre (SPAC) Confidentiality Policy.

Data Protection Principles

Anyone processing personal data must comply with the eight enforceable principles of good practice, which state that data must be:

- fairly and lawfully processed;
- processed for limited purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate, and where necessary, up to date;
- not kept longer than necessary;
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights;
- kept secure;
- not transferred outside the EEA without adequate protection.

Communication with Relatives, Carers or others

It is recognised that relatives, carers or others are involved in, and often an integral part of, some service users lives and support systems. It is not possible for us to share service user information with them unless you have authorised us to do so. If you allow a relative or friend to help interpret the advice we provide, we cannot be responsible for any miscommunication.

Access to service user information by external agencies

We will not share service user information with external agencies without your authority; however, by continuing to use SPAC services you agree that auditors of the Advice Quality Standard and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner, the Money Advice Service (MAS) and other funders of our services may have access to your information only for the following purposes: to ensure work has been carried out satisfactorily and in accordance with quality standards and for statistics, performance reports and evaluations to take place. **You must let us know immediately if you do not wish SPAC to allow access to your information in this way.**

If there is a safeguarding issue, such as child protection or those of a vulnerable adult, the relevant agencies may need to be informed. Further information can be found in our full Confidentiality Policy which is available on request.

Timescales and Charges

St Pauls Advice Centre may make a reasonable charge for copying information requested. The cost will not exceed £10. Any requests for information must be made in writing and will be responded to within 40 days of receipt of the agreed fee and the information request.

St Pauls Advice Centre is registered with the ICO Data Protection Register No: ZA041611