

# Top five tips from the Information Commissioner

Here are our top five of data protection tips for small and medium sized charities and third sector organisations:

**1. Tell people what you are doing with their data**

People should know what you are doing with their information and who it will be shared with. This is a legal requirement (as well as established best practice) so it is important you are open and honest with people about how their data will be used.

**2. Make sure your staff are adequately trained**

New employees must receive data protection training to explain how they should store and handle personal information. Refresher training should be provided at regular intervals for existing staff.

**3. Use strong passwords**

There is no point protecting the personal information you hold with a password if that password is easy to guess. All passwords should contain upper and lower case letters, a number and ideally a symbol. This will help to keep your information secure from would-be thieves.

**4. Encrypt all portable devices**

Make sure all portable devices – such as memory sticks and laptops – used to store personal information are encrypted.

**5. Only keep people's information for as long as necessary**

Make sure your organisation has established retention periods in place and set up a process for deleting personal information once it is no longer required.