

## National Fraud Initiative and Data Protection Act 1998

Mossbank Homes and Stockport Council must, by law, protect the public funds they administer. One of the things Mossbank Homes may do to protect these funds is to share information with other organisations that are responsible for auditing or administering public funds. This is done to prevent and detect fraud.

The Audit Commission is an independent watchdog responsible for carrying out what are called 'data matching' exercises, which means comparing computer records held by one organisation against other computer records held by either the same or another organisation to see how far they match.

These records usually contain personal information. 'Data matching' allows potential fraud to be identified. Where a match is found, it means that there is an issue which requires more investigation before any further action is taken. That investigation will find out whether the issue is down to fraud, error or another reason.

Stockport Council has asked Mossbank Homes and other local housing organizations to take part in 'data matching' to help in the prevention and detection of fraud. Those organizations will provide limited sets of tenancy data to the Audit Commission for a matching exercise using a secure web site accessed only by a few authorized people. After use all data will be deleted from that site.

Part 2A of the Audit Commission Act 1998 gives the Audit Commission the statutory power to request and use data in data matching exercises. This means that under the Data Protection Act 1998, neither Mossbank Homes nor the Audit Commission needs to obtain the consent of individuals involved to use their personal information in this way.

However, the Data Protection Act 1998 requires Mossbank Homes to inform individuals that their data will be processed and we are doing that by including this article in our newsletter and by posting further information on our website

[www.mossbank.org.uk/default.asp](http://www.mossbank.org.uk/default.asp).

You can find out more about the National Fraud Initiative via the following weblink [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi). When this 'data matching' is carried out by the Audit Commission, they must, by law, follow a set of rules which can be seen at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi/codeofdmp.asp](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi/codeofdmp.asp).

Alternatively, for further information about Mossbank Homes participation in this initiative contact Tola Adesemowo at Mossbank Homes on (0161) 232 5697.