

## What if you change your mind?

If you wish to withdraw your permission at any point in the future, please write to:

FREEPOST RRXX-KEKJ-JGKS  
Understanding Society  
University of Essex  
Wivenhoe Park  
Colchester, CO4 3SQ

stating: "I <your name>, currently living at <your address and postcode> am a participant on Understanding Society and I wish to withdraw my permission for administrative energy use and energy efficiency records to be added to my survey data."

Please sign and date your letter.

## What if you have concerns about the way the study was carried out?

Please contact Michaela Benzeval, the Director of Understanding Society  
**01206 873983** [mbenzeval@essex.ac.uk](mailto:mbenzeval@essex.ac.uk)

Paul Clarke, the Research Director of ISER  
**01206 873760** [pclarke@essex.ac.uk](mailto:pclarke@essex.ac.uk);

Mantelena Sotiriadou, the Research Governance and Planning Manager  
at the University of Essex  
**01206 876320** [ms21994@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ms21994@essex.ac.uk)

## Thank you

If you have any questions or concerns,  
just call our **Freephone number 0800 252 853**  
or write to us.

For more information,  
visit: [www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants](http://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants)



Information  
on adding  
energy use  
and energy  
efficiency  
records



Economic  
and Social  
Research Council



## Introduction

Government departments and agencies collect all sorts of information about us for administrative purposes. This is so they can provide various services (e.g. health, education, transport) to us when we need them. While we can learn about people's lives, economic circumstances, experiences, behaviour and beliefs by asking direct questions, it can sometimes be easier to get some of this information from government departments. Doing this means that we don't have to ask you about these and the interview can be much shorter.

**This leaflet explains more about this. Please take a moment to read it.**

## What information would be added?

Information on energy use and energy efficiency for each address in the country is collected by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and held by them and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). We would like to link the information for your address to your survey answers to enable valuable research on the energy use of different types of households.

## Who will use it?

Like your survey responses, the additional information would be used by academic and social policy researchers for non-commercial statistical analysis. Any sensitive information would only be made available to them under restricted access arrangements which make sure that the information is used responsibly and safely. Names and addresses are never included in the results and no individual can be identified from the research.

## Your permission – what does it cover?

Information can only be released with your permission. To make the link between energy use and energy efficiency records for your address, and your survey responses we would need to pass on your address to the ONS. They will use this information to identify your administrative records. Once identified, the file containing your administrative records will be anonymised (i.e. your address removed) with an identifier which will allow linkage to your survey responses. The anonymous dataset will then be created that will contain the linked data and will be stored securely at the ONS. The data will be made available to researchers under restricted access arrangements which make sure that the information is used responsibly and safely.

Like the answers you have given us in the survey, the information from other sources will be treated in confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Your current or future dealings with any of the departments or agencies won't change.

## How long does your consent last?

We would like to add information relating to your present, past and future circumstances. We are not putting an expiry date to this consent as we do not know exactly when we will obtain and add the information. We will remind you regularly of the permissions you have given, and you are free to withdraw your consent at any time. If you do choose to withdraw your consent we will no longer link your records to your survey responses but we will retain data which has been previously linked if you have given us permission.

## Do you have to give permission?

No, this part of the Study, like the rest of Understanding Society is completely voluntary.

## What are the benefits of giving permission?

Adding this information collected by the DESNZ to your survey responses will help us to get a better picture of energy use.

## Are there any risks involved in giving permission?

There are no risks associated with adding information on energy use and energy efficiency at your address to your survey responses.

## What about data security?

Your survey answers and energy use and energy efficiency records will be anonymised and will only be used for research and statistics. We are extremely security conscious and all of our systems are password protected and only accessed by a small number of authorised staff. The information we need to exchange with the government departments and agencies will be sent via secure transfer systems. We implement the most up-to-date data security protocols and procedures. Your personal details will be secure at all times.

## Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how we use your information at [www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants/energy-records](http://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/participants/energy-records)

## Has the study been reviewed and approved by an Ethics Committee?

Yes. Before any research like this can be done it is looked at carefully by an Ethics Committee. In this case, the study has been approved by the NHS Health Research Authority, East of England – Essex Research Ethics Committee, reference: 22/EE/0260.