

## Starting a New Business?

You've got the business plan, you've raised the finance and you've found the premises. You're on the road to an exciting future in business, but what do you have you registered and notified the ICO under the Data Protection Act?

If you hold and process information about your clients, employees or suppliers, you'll need to comply with the Data Protection Act. This states that personal information must be kept secure, up to date and processed lawfully and fairly.

Good information handling makes good business sense, and provides a range of benefits. You'll enhance your business' reputation, increase customer and employee confidence, and by ensuring that the information is accurate, save both time and money.

If you process personal information you must notify and register the Information Commissioner's Office, unless you're exempt. This costs £35 a year, and failure to notify is a criminal offence. Notifying means that you join the Public Register of Data Controllers.

You may also have a number of obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. If, for example, you are a health professional, you could be asked to supply records or personal information to individuals who ask for it.

The Privacy and Electronics Communications regulations apply to telephone, email and other electronic marketing methods - if you're planning a marketing campaign of this kind, you'll need to make sure you comply with the regulations.

If your business is concerned with the environment - for example if you're a setting up a recycling business - you'll also need to make sure you comply with the Environmental Information Regulations.

For further information about your obligations, please contact Beechwood Solicitors or email [info@beechwoodsolicitors.com](mailto:info@beechwoodsolicitors.com). Alternatively please telephone 01865 988358.