



**Information Commissioner's Office**  
Promoting public access to official information  
and protecting your personal information

## Publication schemes for authorities merging or undergoing boundary changes

The ICO have received a number of enquiries from authorities that are merging or undergoing boundary changes on 1 April 2009 regarding whether they need to adopt the new scheme. The answer is yes they do. We expect all existing bodies to comply with legal requirements by adopting and operating in accordance with the approved model publication scheme from 1 January 2009.

In order to operate the scheme authorities must compile a directory of information. This will enable the authority and the public to know what information they provide under each of the class headings. The directory does not require approval from the ICO. To assist authorities in compiling the directory the ICO have published [guidance](#) for each sector on our website.

The new model scheme covers ALL public authorities therefore any new bodies formed from mergers post January 2009 will adopt the same scheme they had previously adopted as separate bodies. However, the new authority will need to reconcile the directories of information in order to operate the scheme.

All public bodies have an obligation under the Freedom of Information Act to adopt a publication scheme which commits them to routinely publish certain sorts of information. Present schemes expire on 31 December 2008, a new model publication scheme has been developed and approved by the Information Commissioner which should be adopted by all public authorities on the 1 January 2009.

[Model publication scheme 2009](#)