

COOKIES POLICY

We use necessary cookies to make our site (**Website**) work. These cookies are set automatically. When you consent to it, we also use other cookies to improve the way the Website works, measure how it is used and provide relevant advertising to you.

This policy details how our Website works, and how we put you in control of managing cookies. It also outlines what cookies are used and why, as well as other information that may be useful to you.

WHAT ARE COOKIES?

Cookies are small text files set on a site to help operate and support its functionality. Cookies collect and store certain information about the way a site is used, and can help a site integrate with other third party sites. We use the term 'cookies' to describe cookies and other technologies that operate in a similar way (such as pixels and tags).

Cookies can be set by the owner of the website (**first party cookies**) or, in some cases, by external third parties who the owner of the website allows to present information, run content or provide other functionality on its website, such as analytics (**third party cookies**).

We may also refer to 'session cookies', which expire at the end of a user's browsing session (usually when a user exits their browser), and 'persistent cookies', which are stored on your device for a longer period and in between sessions.

If you are based in the UK, there is lots of useful information about cookies on the Information Commissioner's website.

<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/online/cookies/>

WHY ARE COOKIES USED ON THIS SITE?

Our Website uses cookies to enable certain functionality, such as security and accessibility. These cookies are necessary and set by default. They are essential to enable you to move around our Website and use its features. You may disable these cookies by changing your browser settings, but doing so will affect how our Website functions (i.e. it may mean that our Website does not work properly).

When you consent to it, our Website also uses the following cookies for the following reasons:

- **Preference & Functional Cookies** - allow our Website to remember choices or customisations that you have previously made. They are used to provide features and services specific to you;
- **Performance & Statistics Cookies (sometimes called analytical cookies)** - collect information about how you use our Website, such as what pages you have previously visited and what links you have previously clicked on. These cookies also allow us to identify where

errors may have occurred, and include third-party analytics services. They do not collect information that identifies individuals. All information is aggregated and anonymous; and

- **Marketing & Advertising Cookies (sometimes called targeting cookies)** - to collect information about your online activity to help advertisers deliver, for example, more relevant information to you. We may also share this information with third parties for this purpose.

Further information about the cookies we use and the purposes for which we use them is set out below.

THIRD PARTIES

Please note that certain third parties may also use cookies, over which we have no control. These named third parties may include, for example, advertising networks and providers of external services like web traffic analysis services. These third party cookies are likely to be analytical cookies or targeting cookies. Further information is set out in the table below.

You can deactivate the use of third party advertising cookies by managing your cookie preferences at any time.

TELLING US ABOUT YOUR COOKIES PREFERENCES

You can change your cookie settings at any time by managing your cookie setting in the privacy preference centre on our website. You can accept all cookies by clicking 'Accept All Cookies' or reject all cookies (except necessary cookies – see below) by clicking 'Reject All Cookies' You can personalise your choices by selecting which cookies you are willing to grant consent by "adjusting your preferences."

Alternatively, you can adjust the available sliders to 'On' or 'Off' to indicate your preference for each cookie category by clicking 'Manage Preferences' and saving your preferences.

Our Website will only use necessary cookies without your permission – we need your permission to set all other cookies.

The cookie consent mechanism does not affect the way that necessary cookies are used. As we set out above, if you would prefer necessary cookies not to be set, you can change your browser settings but this may affect the functionality or performance of the Website, or prevent you from using certain services provided through our Website.

WHAT COOKIES ARE USED ON OUR SITE?

Type of Cookie	Provider	Cookie Name	Purpose	Duration
Strictly necessary	OneTrust	OptanonConsent	This cookie is set by the cookie	The cookie has a normal lifespan

			<p>compliance solution from OneTrust. It stores information about the categories of cookies the site uses and whether visitors have given or withdrawn consent for the use of each category. This enables site owners to prevent cookies in each category from being set in the users browser, when consent is not given.</p>	<p>of one year, so that returning visitors to the site will have their preferences remembered. It contains no information that can identify the site visitor.</p>
Performance & Statistics	Hotjar	hjFirstSeen	<p>Identifies a new user's first session on a website, indicating whether or not Hotjar's seeing this user for the first time.</p>	30 minutes
Strictly necessary	Hotjar	_hjAbsoluteSessionInProgress	<p>This cookie is set so Hotjar can track the beginning of the user's journey for a total session count. It does not contain any identifiable information.</p>	Session
Strictly necessary	Banks	PHPSESSID	<p>Cookie generated by applications based on PHP language. This is a general purpose identifier used to maintain user session variables.</p>	Session

Performance & Statistics	Google Analytics	_ga_XRB99LS79D	This cookie is used by Google Analytics to persist session state.	One year and one month
Performance & Statistics	Google Analytics	_gid	This cookie is set by Google Analytics. It stores and updates a unique value for each page visited and is used to count and track page views.	One day
Performance & Statistics	Google Analytics	_gat_UA-18537578-1	This is a pattern type cookie set by Google Analytics, where the pattern element on the name contains the unique identity number of the account of website it relates to. It is a variation of the _gat cookie which is used to limit the amount of data recorded by Google on high traffic volume websites.	54 seconds
Performance & Statistics	Google Universal Analytics	_ga	<p>This cookie name is associated with Google Universal Analytics – which is a significant update to Google’s more commonly used analytics service.</p> <p>This cookie is used to distinguish unique users by assigning a randomly generated number as a client identifier. It</p>	One year and one month

			is included in each page request in a site and is used to calculate visitor, session and campaign data for site analytics reports.	
Marketing & Advertising	DoubleClick	IDE	This cookie is set by DoubleClick and carries out information about how the end user uses the website and any advertising that the end user may have seen before visiting the said website.	One year
Marketing & Advertising	DoubleClick	Test_cookie	This cookie is set by DoubleClick (which is owned by Google) to determine if the website visitor's browser supports cookies.	15 minutes
Marketing & Advertising	YouTube	YSC	This cookie is set by YouTube to track views of embedded videos.	Session
Marketing & Advertising	Google AdSense	_gcl_au	Used by Google AdSense for experimenting with advertisement efficiency across websites using their services.	Three months
Performance & Statistics	Hotjar	_hjSessionUser_2698778	Hotjar cookie that is set when a user first lands on a page with the Hotjar script. It is used to persist the Hotjar User ID, unique to that site on the browser. This	One year

			ensures that behavior in subsequent visits to the same site will be attributed to the same user ID.	
Unclassified	Hotjar	_hjIncludedInSessionSample_2698778	A cookie that is set to determine if a user is included any data sampling, defined by the website's daily session limit.	Two minutes
Unclassified	Hotjar	_hjSession_2698778	A cookie that holds the current session data. This ensures that subsequent requests within the session window will be attributed to the same Hotjar session.	30 minutes

For more information on how to manage cookies on popular browsers, please see the links below:

- [Google Chrome](#)
- [Microsoft Edge](#)
- [Mozilla Firefox](#)
- [Microsoft Internet Explorer](#)
- [Opera](#)
- [Apple Safari](#)
- [Apple Safari Mobile](#)

If you use an alternative browser, you may be able to find further information by visiting the browser developer's website.

PERSONAL DATA

To the extent that any of the cookies collect personal data, please see our [Privacy Policy](#) for details as to how this personal data is used.

CONTACT US

If you have any questions in relation to this policy - or our approach to cookies - please do not hesitate to contact us:

Telephone on 0191 378 6100;

Email at david.martin@banksgroup.co.uk; or

Post at:

David Martin, Data Protection
Officer, The Banks Group,
Inkerman House,
St John's Road, Meadowfield Industrial Estate,
Durham,
DH7 8XL