

CANNOCK WOOD PARISH COUNCIL

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Cannock Wood Parish Council needs to collect and use certain types of information about the Individuals or Service Users who come into contact with the Council in order to carry on our work. This personal information must be collected and dealt with appropriately whether is collected on paper, stored in a computer database, or recorded on other material and there are safeguards to ensure this under the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. Data Controller

Cannock Wood Parish Council is the Data Controller under the Act, which means that it determines what purposes personal information held, will be used for. It is also responsible for notifying the Information Commissioner of the data it holds or is likely to hold, and the general purposes that this data will be used for.

3. Disclosure

Cannock Wood Parish Council may share data with other agencies such as another parish or town council, a principal authority, funding bodies and other voluntary agencies.

The Individual/Service User will be made aware in most circumstances how and with whom their information will be shared. There are circumstances where the law allows Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL to disclose data (including sensitive data) without the data subject's consent.

These are:

- a) Carrying out a legal duty or as authorised by the Secretary of State
- b) Protecting vital interests of an Individual/Service User or other person
- c) The Individual/Service User has already made the information public
- d) Conducting any legal proceedings, obtaining legal advice or defending any legal rights
- e) Monitoring for equal opportunities purposes – i.e. race, disability or religion
- f) Providing a confidential service where the Individual/Service User's consent cannot be obtained or where it is reasonable to proceed without consent: e.g. where we would wish to avoid forcing stressed or ill Individuals/Service Users to provide consent signatures.

Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to successful working, and to maintaining the confidence of those with whom we deal.

Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL intends to ensure that personal information is treated lawfully and correctly.

To this end, Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL will adhere to the Principles of Data Protection, as detailed in the Data Protection Act 2018.

Specifically, the Principles require that personal information:

- Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject.
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes.
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
- Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- Kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed.
- Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures

Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL will, through appropriate management and strict application of criteria and controls:

- Observe fully conditions regarding the fair collection and use of information
- Meet its legal obligations to specify the purposes for which information is used
- Collect and process appropriate information, and only to the extent that it is needed to fulfill its operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements
- Ensure the quality of information used
- Ensure that the rights of people about whom information is held, can be fully exercised under the Act. These include:
 - The right to be informed that processing is being undertaken,
 - The right of access to one's personal information
 - The right to prevent processing in certain circumstances and
 - The right to correct, rectify, block or erase information which is regarded as wrong information)

- Take appropriate technical and organisational security measures to safeguard personal information
- Ensure that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards
- Treat people justly and fairly whatever their age, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity when dealing with requests for information
- Set out clear procedures for responding to requests for information

4. Data collection

Informed consent is when

- An Individual/Service User clearly understands why their information is needed, who it will be shared with, the possible consequences of them agreeing or refusing the proposed use of the data
- And then gives their consent.

Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL will ensure that data is collected within the boundaries defined in this policy. This applies to data that is collected in person, or by completing a form.

When collecting data, Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL will ensure that the Individual/Service User:

- a) Clearly understands why the information is needed
- b) Understands what it will be used for and what the consequences are should the Individual/Service User decide not to give consent to processing
- c) As far as reasonably possible, grants explicit consent, either written or verbal for data to be processed
- d) Is, as far as reasonably practicable, competent enough to give consent and has given so freely without any duress
- e) Has received sufficient information on why their data is needed and how it will be used

5. Data Storage

Information and records relating to service users will be stored securely and will only be accessible to authorised staff and volunteers.

Information will be stored for only as long as it is needed or required statute and will be disposed of appropriately.

It is Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL's responsibility to ensure all personal and company data is non-recoverable from any computer system previously used within the council, which has been passed on/sold to a third party.

6. Data access and accuracy

All Individuals/Service Users have the right to access the information Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL holds about them. The Council will also take reasonable steps ensure that this information is kept up to date by asking data subjects whether there have been any changes.

In addition, Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL will ensure that:

- It has an officer with specific responsibility for ensuring compliance with Data Protection
- Everyone processing personal information understands that they are contractually responsible for following good data protection practice
- Everyone processing personal information is appropriately trained to do so
- Everyone processing personal information is appropriately supervised
- Anybody wanting to make enquiries about handling personal information knows what to do
- It deals promptly and courteously with any enquiries about handling personal information
- It describes clearly how it handles personal information
- It will regularly review and audit the ways it hold, manage and use personal information
- It regularly assesses and evaluates its methods and performance in relation to handling personal information
- All staff are aware that a breach of the rules and procedures identified in this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against them

This policy will be updated as necessary to reflect best practice in data management, security and control and to ensure compliance with any changes or amendments made to the Data Protection Act 2018.

In case of any queries or questions in relation to this policy please contact

Chris Gracey Clerk, Cannock Wood PARISH COUNCIL

Signed: *C E Gracey*

Position: Clerk/RFO to the council

Date: 19th June 2025

Review Date: June 2026

Glossary of Terms

Data Controller – The person who (either alone or with others) decides what personal information **Cannock Wood Parish Council** will hold and how it will be held or used.

Data Protection Act 2018 – The UK legislation that provides a framework for responsible behaviour by those using personal information.

Individual/Service User – The person whose personal information is being held or processed by (**Cannock Wood Parish Council**) for example: a client, an employee, or supporter.

Explicit consent – is a freely given, specific and informed agreement by an Individual/Service User in the processing of personal information about her/him. Explicit consent is needed for processing sensitive data.

Notification – Notifying the Information Commissioner about the data processing activities of (**Cannock Wood Parish Council**), as certain activities may be exempt from notification.

The link below will take to the ICO website where a self assessment guide will help you to decide if you are exempt from notification:

http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_councilanisations/data_protection/the_guide/exemptions.aspx

Information Commissioner – The UK Information Commissioner responsible for implementing and overseeing the Data Protection Act 1998.

Processing – means collecting, amending, handling, storing or disclosing personal information.

Personal Information – Information about living individuals that enables them to be identified – e.g. name and address. It does not apply to information about council organisations, companies and agencies but applies to named persons, such as individual volunteers or employees within Cannock Wood Parish Council.

Sensitive data – refers to data about:

- Racial or ethnic origin
- Political affiliations
- Religion or similar beliefs
- Trade union membership
- Physical or mental health
- Sexuality
- Criminal record or proceedings