

Privacy Policy - Dorset Hypnotherapy Practice



At Dorset Hypnotherapy Practice, your privacy is taken seriously. This policy explains how your personal information is collected, stored, and used. It is written in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, both as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. The main changes introduced by that Act took effect on 5 February 2026 and 19 June 2026, and are reflected throughout this policy, in particular your new right to make a data protection complaint directly to me, set out in section 13.

1. Data Controller

The Data Controller responsible for your personal information is:

Helen Wilks - Dorset Hypnotherapy Practice

Email: helen@dorsethypnotherapypractice.co.uk

Telephone: 07388 566312 | Address: 76 Golf Links Road, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8BZ

I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office **ICO Registration Number: ZB994751**.

I am a sole practitioner and act as the Data Controller for all client information. There is no separate Data Protection Officer; all data protection matters come directly to me using the contact details above.

2. Information I Collect

To provide safe and effective hypnotherapy services, I may collect the following:

Personal details

- Full name, date of birth, address, telephone number, email address
- GP details
- Emergency contact details
- Appointment, payment and correspondence records

Special category personal data (health information)

Only information relevant to your care is collected. As part of the assessment process, I may also collect:

- Relevant medical and mental health history, current medications, allergies
- Personal circumstances relevant to treatment
- Therapy goals
- Brief session notes

Information about other people

Your records may contain limited information about other people - for example an emergency contact, or a partner or child mentioned during sessions. If you give me someone else's contact details, please make sure they are happy for you to do so, and let them know that I hold their name and number for that purpose only.

3. Why I Collect Your Information

Your information is collected so that I can:

- Arrange and manage appointments
- Provide safe and appropriate hypnotherapy sessions
- Maintain accurate clinical records
- Monitor progress
- Respond appropriately in emergencies
- Take payment and keep business records
- Meet my professional, insurance and legal obligations
- Send you newsletters or information about services and offers, where you have asked me to

4. Lawful Basis for Processing

Under UK GDPR, the lawful bases relied upon are:

Ordinary personal data

- **Article 6(1)(b) - Contract.** To provide the hypnotherapy services you have asked for.
- **Article 6(1)(c) - Legal obligation.** To comply with legal, tax and professional record-keeping requirements.
- **Article 6(1)(f) - Legitimate interests.** To run the practice safely, securely and professionally, including keeping records for insurance purposes.
- **Article 6(1)(ea) - Recognised legitimate interests.** This basis was introduced by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. I may rely on it where I need to share information to safeguard a child or an adult at risk, or to respond to an emergency that threatens someone's life, health or safety.
- **Article 6(1)(a) - Consent.** For optional extras only, such as marketing emails or newsletters. You can withdraw this at any time without affecting your therapy.

Special category data (health information)

- **Article 9(2)(h) - Provision of health care or treatment,** together with the condition at paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 to the Data Protection Act 2018 (health or social care purposes). This processing is carried out by me under a professional duty of confidentiality owed under the codes of ethics of the National Council for Hypnotherapy, the Association for Solution Focused Hypnotherapy and the Complementary and Natural Healthcare Council.

- **Article 9(2)(c) - Vital interests**, where information must be shared urgently to protect someone's life and consent cannot be obtained.
- **Article 9(2)(a) - Explicit consent**, where I ask for your specific written consent - for example to write to or speak with your GP.

Where consent is the basis relied upon, you may withdraw it at any time. Withdrawing consent does not affect the lawfulness of anything done before you withdrew it, and it will not affect the therapy you receive.

Marketing emails are also governed by the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003. You will only receive them if you have opted in, and every email includes an unsubscribe link.

5. How Your Information Is Stored

- Paper records are kept in a locked filing cabinet
- Digital records are stored on password-protected encrypted devices
- Access is restricted to me as the Data Controller
- Records are kept confidential at all times

I use a small number of trusted service providers to run the practice, for example website hosting, email, online video calling, scheduling and payment processing. These act as data processors on my behalf, are bound by written terms, and only receive the minimum information they need.

Your personal data will never be sold, rented or traded, and will never be shared for marketing purposes without your explicit consent.

6. How Long Information Is Kept

Adult client records are normally retained for **8 years after your final session**. This is in line with my professional insurance requirements, my legal obligations and professional body guidance.

Young person records

Records for clients under 18 are retained until:

- age 25 if treatment ended before age 17
- age 26 if treatment ended at age 17 or 18

After this period, records are securely destroyed.

Enquiries and marketing

- Enquiries that do not lead to sessions: kept for up to 12 months, then deleted
- Mailing list details: kept until you unsubscribe, and removed promptly afterwards
- Financial and payment records: kept for 6 years plus the current tax year, as required by HMRC

After the relevant period, records are securely destroyed - paper by shredding, and digital files by secure deletion.

7. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

Sessions are confidential. Your information will only be shared when:

- You have given written consent
- There is a serious risk of harm to you or another person
- A child or vulnerable adult is at risk
- I am required to do so by a court order
- I am otherwise required to do so by law

Wherever it is safe and possible to do so, I will discuss this with you first and explain what I need to share and why.

8. Clinical Supervision

As part of good professional practice, anonymised information may occasionally be discussed with a clinical supervisor to make sure you are receiving the best possible care. No identifying details are disclosed unless it is necessary and lawful to do so.

9. Children and Young People

I work with children aged 6 and over. Where I work with a child or young person:

- For younger children, a parent or guardian with parental responsibility will normally provide consent and will be given a copy of this policy.
- Young people who are able to understand what is involved may give their own consent, and I will assess this on an individual basis.
- Sessions remain confidential to the young person, within the safeguarding limits described in section 7. I will explain those limits to them in language they understand at the start of our work together.
- Information will not be shared with a parent or guardian without the young person's knowledge, unless there is a safeguarding reason to do so.
- A parent or guardian may usually exercise data protection rights on behalf of a younger child. For older children, I will consider whether the young person is able to exercise those rights themselves.

10. Website Information

When you visit the Dorset Hypnotherapy Practice website, limited technical information may be collected automatically, including your IP address, browser and device type, and the pages you visit. Contact form submissions come directly to me.

This information is used to respond to enquiries, keep the website secure and understand how the site is used. Where cookies are used, you will be told through the website cookie banner. Full detail is set out in the separate Website Privacy Policy at www.dorsethypnotherapypractice.co.uk.

11. International Data Transfers

Your data is normally stored within the UK. Some of the service providers I use, such as website hosting, email and video calling, may store or process data outside the UK. Where that happens, I make sure appropriate safeguards are in place, such as UK adequacy regulations or the International Data Transfer Agreement, so your information continues to receive an equivalent level of protection.

12. Your Rights

You have the right to:

- Request access to the personal data I hold about you
- Have inaccurate information corrected
- Request restriction of processing, or object to processing
- Request erasure of your data, where that is legally possible
- Request a copy of certain data in a portable format
- Withdraw consent, where consent is the basis I am relying on
- Make a data protection complaint - see section 13

I will normally respond within one month. That month runs from the point at which I have everything I need to deal with your request - including confirmation of your identity where I have asked for it. If your request is unclear and I reasonably need more information to understand what you are looking for, the clock pauses while I wait for your reply. If a request is particularly complex, I may extend the period by up to a further two months, and I will tell you within the first month if that applies.

Please note that some records may need to be retained for legal, professional or insurance reasons even where you ask for erasure. If I cannot act on your request, I will explain why, and let you know that you can complain to me and to the ICO.

13. Making a Data Protection Complaint

This section reflects a change in the law that took effect on 19 June 2026.

You now have a statutory right to complain directly to me about how your personal information has been handled. In most cases you should raise your concern with me first, before going to the Information Commissioner's Office.

A data protection complaint can be about anything to do with your personal information — for example how a request for your records was handled, how long I have kept your data, how your information was stored or shared, or the emails you have received. You do not need to use any legal wording, and you do not need to use a particular form.

How to complain

- Online: complete the data protection complaint form at www.dorsethypnotherapypractice.co.uk [add link to the form page]
- Email: helen@dorsethypnotherapypractice.co.uk
- Post: Helen Wilks, Dorset Hypnotherapy Practice, Cardinal House, 76 Golf Links Road, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8BZ
- Phone: 07388 566312 - I will make a written note of your complaint and confirm it back to you

What happens next

- I will acknowledge your complaint within 30 days of receiving it.
- I will look into it without undue delay, make any enquiries I need to, and keep you updated on progress.
- I will tell you the outcome and explain the reasons for it.
- If anything has gone wrong, I will tell you what I am putting right and what I have changed.

If you are still not satisfied

- If you are unhappy with my response, or if I have not responded, you can take your complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office:
- Website: ico.org.uk
- Telephone: 0303 123 1113
- Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

14. Changes to This Policy

This privacy policy may be updated from time to time to reflect legal or operational changes. The version number and date at the bottom of this document will tell you which version you have. The current version is always available on request and on the Dorset Hypnotherapy Practice website.

