

Privacy Policy

For a counselling service and counsellor training provider

1. Introduction

This privacy policy explains how The Cove Wellbeing Centre collects, uses, stores and shares personal information when you use our website, contact us about counselling services, access counselling, enquire about or enrol on counsellor training, attend events, or otherwise interact with us.

We are committed to protecting your privacy and handling personal information lawfully, fairly and transparently under the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant UK privacy laws. Counselling and training services may involve sensitive information, including health and wellbeing information, which is treated with particular care.

2. Who we are

The Cove Wellbeing centre is the data controller for the personal information described in this policy unless we tell you otherwise. This means we decide why and how your personal information is processed.

Contact details: 2a Station Road, Birchington, Kent, CT7 9DQ | info@covewellbeing.co.uk | 01843 663819.

3. Personal information we collect

Depending on how you use our website and services, we may collect:

- identity and contact details, such as name, address, email address, telephone number and emergency contact details;
- information you provide when making an enquiry, completing forms, booking sessions, applying for training or contacting us;
- counselling-related information, which may include health, wellbeing, relationship, family, employment or other sensitive personal information relevant to the support requested;
- training-related information, such as qualifications, experience, application details, assignments, assessments, attendance, supervision information and placement information;
- payment and billing information, such as invoice details and payment status;
- website and technical information, such as IP address, browser type, device information, pages visited, referral source and cookie preferences;
- communications with us, including emails, messages, calls, feedback, complaints and consent records.

4. How we collect information

We collect personal information directly from you when completing website forms, send emails, make bookings, attend counselling sessions, apply for training, participate in learning activities, or communicate with us. We may also receive information from referral agencies, supervisors, placement providers, awarding bodies, professional bodies, payment providers, website analytics tools, or other third parties where this is relevant and lawful.

5. Why we use your information and our lawful bases

We only use personal information where we have a lawful basis to do so. Common purposes and lawful bases include:

Purpose	Lawful basis
Responding to enquiries and managing bookings	Legitimate interests and/or steps before entering a contract
Providing counselling services	Contract, legitimate interests, and for sensitive information an Article 9 condition such as provision of health or social care/treatment where applicable
Providing counsellor training, assessment and learner support	Contract, legitimate interests and, where required, legal obligation
Maintaining records, safeguarding, supervision and professional standards	Legal obligation, legitimate interests and/or substantial public interest where applicable
Processing payments and maintaining accounts	Contract and legal obligation
Sending service updates or administrative messages	Contract and legitimate interests
Sending marketing communications	Consent, or legitimate interests where lawful and appropriate
Improving our website and services	Legitimate interests and, for non-essential cookies, consent

6. Special category information

Some information connected with counselling, wellbeing, health, safeguarding, disability support, supervision or training may be special category data. This type of information requires extra protection. We will only process it where necessary, where we have a lawful basis under Article 6 of the UK GDPR and a separate condition under Article 9, and where appropriate safeguards are in place.

7. Counselling clients

If you access counselling with us, we may keep brief records of contact, appointments, assessments, session notes, risk or safeguarding concerns, therapeutic agreements, correspondence and payment records. These records are used to provide safe, ethical and effective services, manage appointments, meet professional duties and respond to legal or regulatory obligations.

Confidentiality is central to counselling. However, confidentiality may be limited in specific circumstances, such as where there is a serious risk of harm to you or another person, where safeguarding duties apply, where disclosure is required by law or court order, or where professional advice or supervision is needed using anonymised information where possible.

8. Counsellor training learners and applicants

If you apply for or enrol on training, we may use your information to process applications, assess suitability, administer learning, deliver teaching, record attendance, assess coursework, provide learner support, manage placements, liaise with tutors, supervisors, awarding or accrediting bodies, and issue certificates or references where appropriate.

9. Sharing your information

We do not sell personal information. We may share information where necessary with trusted service providers, professional advisers, supervisors, tutors, placement providers, awarding bodies, insurers, regulators, safeguarding agencies, emergency services, payment processors, IT providers and public authorities where required by law. Where we use processors, we require them to protect your information and only process it on our instructions.

10. International transfers

Some technology providers may process information outside the United Kingdom. Where this happens, we will take steps to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place, such as adequacy regulations, standard contractual clauses or other lawful transfer mechanisms.

11. Cookies and website analytics

Our website may use cookies and similar technologies to make the site work, understand how visitors use it and improve our services. Essential cookies are needed for the website to function. Non-essential cookies, such as analytics or marketing cookies, will only be used where required consent has been obtained. You can manage cookie preferences through your browser settings and, where available, our cookie banner or preference centre.

12. How long we keep information

We keep personal information only for as long as necessary for the purposes described in this policy, including to provide services, maintain records, meet professional, legal, safeguarding, insurance and accounting requirements, and resolve disputes. Retention

periods may vary depending on the type of record and the circumstances. These will be kept only for as long as necessary for the purpose for which it was collected.

The Cove Wellbeing Centre retain your personal data for the following periods:

- **Counselling Service records:** 7 years after our last session, in line with the Limitation Act 1980 and standard professional indemnity insurance requirements
- **Financial records:** 6 years (HMRC legal requirement)
- **Website enquiries (non-clients):** 12 months

After the applicable retention period, paper records are securely destroyed, and electronic records are permanently deleted.

13. Security

We use appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect personal information. These may include secure storage, access controls, passwords, encryption where appropriate, staff or associate confidentiality agreements, secure disposal, regular review of systems and procedures, and limiting access to those who need it.

14. Your rights

You have rights under data protection law, which may include the right to be informed, access your information, request correction, request erasure, restrict processing, object to processing, data portability, and withdraw consent where processing is based on consent. These rights do not always apply in every situation, and we may need to keep certain information where there is a lawful reason to do so.

To exercise your rights, please contact us using the details in section 2. We may need to verify your identity before responding.

15. Complaints

If you have concerns about how we handle your information, please contact us first so we can try to resolve the matter. You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office, the UK supervisory authority for data protection. Website: ico.org.uk.

16. Changes to this policy

We may update this privacy policy from time to time to reflect changes in our services, legal requirements or professional guidance. The latest version will be available on our website. Last updated: September 2026.