# Counselling Data Protection & Privacy Policy

Any personal data provided by you to Tadworth Therapy through any means (verbal, written, in electronic form, or by your use of our website) will be held and processed in accordance with the data protection principles set out in the [Data Protection Act 1998](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents) and the [General Data Protection Regulation](https://www.eugdpr.org/) for the purposes for which you have given consent, to provide the services you have requested from me.

## Introduction

I am committed to protecting your privacy. Please read the following in order to learn more about my privacy policy and my information collection and use practices.

This policy only applies to data collected by me, via forms and the website. Third party agents, and websites which are linked to ours, are not covered by this policy. If you have any queries concerning your personal information or any questions on our use of the information, please contact me.

When you request counselling with me, you will be asked to consent to my processing of your data under the terms of this policy.

## What information do I collect?

1. Counselling Requests– Registering with me to request access to our counselling service can be done online, or by phone. My request process involves providing us with your name, address, telephone numbers and email address. I may also request information on your availability, therapeutic issues, and other details which we deem relevant to processing your request.
2. Initial Assessment Appointments– At an initial appointment I will ask about your current personal, social, medical and financial circumstances.  I may also ask about your background and family history, as well as the issues which are affecting you now. I require this information so that I can decide about our offer of counselling to you, and to manage the service I will provide to you.

Website – I use Google Analytics to collect anonymous data relating to user behaviour and ‘web traffic’ statistics. The collection and use of this data by Google Inc. is subject to their own Privacy Policies.

1. Other Forms – The information you give me on our forms (including all enquiry and application forms) may include your name, postal address, email address, phone number and other messages to us.

## What do I use your information for?

I use information held about you in the following ways:

1. To provide clients with the professional counselling service requested from me.
2. To notify you about changes to your appointments and other changes to our services.
3. To improve my service to ensure that it is provided in the most effective manner for both of us.

## What information do we share?

We will**not** share any information about you with other organisations or people, except in the following situations:

1. Consent – I may share your information with professional carers or others whom you have requested or agreed we should contact.
2. Serious harm – I may share your information with the relevant authorities if I have reason to believe that this may prevent serious harm being caused to you or another person.
3. Compliance with law – I may share your information where I am required to by law or by the regulations and other rules to which I am subject.

## How do I keep your information safe?

All information you provide to me is stored as securely as possible.  All paper forms and correspondence are kept in locked filing cabinets on our premises.  All electronic records are stored on my on-site computer, all access to which requires password-protected authentication, or by reputable service providers using secure internet ‘cloud’ technology.

Unfortunately, the transmission of information via the internet is never completely secure. Although I will do my best to protect your information using industry-standard protocols and encryption, as in emails the use of Protonmail or Zoom for video sessions, I cannot guarantee the security of your data transmitted to us via email, including forms completed on our website which are transmitted by email; any transmission is at your own risk. Once I have received your information, I will use strict procedures and security features to try to prevent unauthorised access.

Your identifiable personal information is kept separately from any session notes and other descriptive material. Client notes and other documentation are destroyed 3 years after the end of counselling. Personal contact details are destroyed/deleted after 10 years of no contact or updates.

## Your rights

You have the right to ask me to provide a copy of the information held by me in our records. You also have the right to require me to correct any inaccuracies in your information.

You may withdraw your consent for me to hold and process your data at any time.  However, if you do this while actively receiving counselling with me, your counselling would have to end.