



DATA PROTECTION and GDPR POLICY

Adopted 13th May 2026

Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council recognises its responsibility to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation. These regulate the use of personal data. This does not have to be sensitive data. It can be as little as a name and address.

The Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act 1998 sets out high standards for the handling of personal information and protecting an individual's right for privacy. It also regulates how information can be collected, handled and used. The Data Protection Act applies to anyone holding information about people electronically or on paper.

The General Data Protection Regulation

The General Data Protection Regulation 2018 says that the information provided to people about how we process their personal data must be concise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible, written in clear and plain language, particularly if addressed to a child and free of charge.

The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 is designed to foster innovation and reduce the compliance burdens for businesses. It supports the use of AI and smart data. A new list of recognised legitimate interests allows processing of data for specific purposes, for example crime prevention and safeguarding. It also relaxes consent requirements for certain low risk first party analytical cookies and reduces the need for banners in those specific scenarios.

As a local authority Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council has a number of procedures in place to ensure that it complies with The Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 when holding personal information.

Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council has appointed the clerk as the designated Data Protection Officer. The Clerk receives training for this role, as required.

When dealing with personal data, Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council staff and councillors must ensure that:

- **Data is processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner**
This means that personal information should only be collected from individuals if staff have been open and honest about why they want the personal information.
- **Data is processed for specified purposes only**
This means that data is collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes only.

- **Data is relevant to what it is needed for**
Data will be monitored so that only what is genuinely needed will be held.
- **Data is accurate and kept up to date and is not kept longer than it is needed**
Personal data should be accurate. If it is not, it should be corrected. Data no longer needed will be securely disposed of or shredded.
- **Data is processed in accordance with the rights of individuals**
Individuals must be informed, upon request, of all the personal information held about them.
- **Data is kept securely**
There should be protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage.

Collecting Data

Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council recognises its responsibility to be open with people when taking personal details from them. This means that staff must be honest about why they want a particular piece of information. If, for example, a member of the public gives their phone number to staff or a member of the Parish Council, this will only be used for the purpose it has been given and will not be disclosed to anyone else. Data may be collected via the Parish Council's website – the 'Contact Us' form. The webpage for this form contains a policy statement about how the data will be stored and used.

Storing and Accessing Data

Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council may hold information about individuals such as their addresses and telephone numbers. These are kept in a secure location at the Parish Clerk's place of work and are not available for public access. All data stored electronically is password protected. Once data is no longer needed, is out of date or falls outside the minimum retention time of the Council's Records Retention Policy, it will be shredded or securely deleted from any hard drive.

The Parish Council is aware that people have the right to access any information that is held about them. If a person requests to see any data that is being held about them,

- They must be sent all the information that is being held about them
- There must be explanation for why it has been stored
- There must be a list of who has seen it
- It must be sent within 30 working days and should be free of charge
- Requests that are manifestly unfounded or excessive may be refused or a charge made
- If a request is refused, a reason must be given.

If an individual requests that their data is rectified or erased, this will be carried out.

Disclosure of Information

If an elected member of the Council needs to access information to help carry out their duties, this is acceptable. They are only able to access as much information as necessary and it should only be used for that specific purpose. If for instance someone has made a complaint about overhanging bushes in a garden, a councillor may access an address and telephone number of the person who has made the complaint so they can help with the enquiry. However, before they access any information about a person, they would need consent to do this from the Parish Clerk. Data should never be used for political reasons unless the data subjects have consented.

Confidentiality

Stanton Fitzwarren Parish Council staff must be aware that when complaints or queries are made, they must remain confidential unless the subject gives permission otherwise. When handling personal data, this must also remain confidential.

If a data breach is identified the ICO must be informed, and an investigation will be conducted.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or earlier if there is a change in legislation.

Policy will be reviewed May 2029