

**THE WOLDS COUNSELLING SERVICE**

**HELEN BENSON BA(HONS) MBACP. ACCRED**

**PRIVACY NOTICE**

**Introduction**

As part of my work with you it is necessary for me to collect information about you and to make notes about our work together. Your privacy is important to me and you can be confident that all personal information will be kept confidential, safe & secure and only used for the purpose it was given to me.

This privacy notice is a requirement of current data protection law (GDPR, DPA 2018 and Privacy & Electronic Communications regulations 2003). The notice sets out the legal basis for me collecting and processing your personal data, the ways in which I will do this, how long I’ll hold it for and what I will/or may do with it as well as your rights regarding this.

I am happy to discuss any of this with you if you have any general concerns or any specific questions. Please feel free to contact me about this via email, phone or when we meet.

**Owner and Data Controller**

Helen Benson

The Wolds Counselling Service

c/o 30 Wysall Lane

Wymeswold

Leicestershire

LE12 6US

**Website:** www.thewoldscounselling.co.uk

**Email:** [support@thewoldscounselling.co.uk](mailto:support@thewoldscounselling.co.uk)

**Tel:** 07754 908873

**My lawful basis for holding & using personal information**

The GDPR states that I must have a lawful basis for processing personal data. There are different lawful reasons for doing so and they can be different depending on the type of information and my reasons for needing to have that information.

I may process Personal Data relating to clients if one of the following applies:

* Users have given their consent for one or more specific purposes;
* Provision of Data is necessary for the performance of an agreement with the User and any pre-contractual obligations;
* Processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the Owner is subject;
* Processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the Owner or by a third party;
* Upon request, the Owner will help to clarify the specific legal bases that apply to the processing if there is any concern.

Whilst you are having therapy with me, the lawful basis for me processing information is our contract.

If you have ended therapy then it is necessary as a legitimate interest. I need to keep records for approximately 7 years to meet the requirements of my business and for insurance purposes.

Some of the data I hold, due to its sensitive nature, may fall under “special category personal information”. The lawful basis for me processing this type of information is that it is necessary for provision of health care. (There are some disparities in the legislation regarding whether or not private therapists are health care professionals, but I take the view that the kind of information I hold is extremely sensitive and therefore should be covered by this part of the legislation as it requires me to keep it confidential unless there is a valid and sufficient reason to share it.)

**Types of information & How I use this information**

Initial contact

I will collect what data is required to respond to your initial enquiry. This will include the data on the contact method / contact information form, which I will use to contact clients when appropriate. Names, telephone number and email address will be saved as a contact in my electronic devices.

Other professionals or organisations may provide me with referral information and documentation. This includes, but is not limited to, Insurance companies, Employee Assistance Programmes, GPs, local counselling organisations.

If you decide not to proceed then I will ensure all personal data is deleted within one month. If you would like me to delete sooner then please let me know.

While you are accessing therapy

What you discuss with me is confidential and this is one of the fundamental principles of therapeutic practice. However, there are exceptions to this which I will discuss with you before we begin therapy. I will, reiterate these here:

* If you give consent for me to share information
* If there is a serious risk of harm to you or someone else
* My monthly counselling-supervision, which is a part of ethical practice
* Where the law requires it, for example, with terrorism, drug trafficking or money laundering

**If I feel it is necessary to break confidentiality, then I would discuss this with you first. The exception to this is if the law does not permit it.**

I am required by my professional indemnity insurance and the ethical code under which I work to keep a record of our work together. This record will include client history as self-reported, and a brief note from sessions to ensure that I am able to reflect on and evidence the work done together.

These notes are held securely and in general are paper records, however, some records may be retained on electronic devices. For example referrals from organisations tend to be received electronically and they require reports to be sent to them electronically. Client records are retained for 7 years and then destroyed safely.

I retain emails, text messages and Whatsapp for one year and then they are deleted. If emails contain important information I print off and retain with client written notes.

After counselling has ended

Once counselling has ended records are retained for 7 years. This is based on good ethical practice. If you wish me to retain any records for longer than 7 years then please inform me in writing.

**Security of data**

Files are kept in a locked filing cabinet. Once therapy ends I retain old files in a secure space for a period of 7 years. Digital information is on my electronic devices which all have encryption and secure passwords.

**Third party recipients of personal data**

I sometimes share personal data with third parties, for example, where I have contracted with a supplier to carry out therapy. This could be insurers such as Bupa or EAP providers of therapy in the workplace. These organisations have strict data sharing requirements which I, and they, adhere to.

I make use of information technology services such as Microsoft Office 365 and Norton 360. I ensure I update with the latest security updates.

**Your rights**

Clients have certain rights in respect of any data I hold about them. You have the right to ask me to:

• Delete information about you

• Limit how I process information I hold about you

• Stop processing your personal data

• See a copy of any information I hold about you

• Amend data which is inaccurate

You can find out more about your rights at <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/>

If I do hold information about you I will:

• Give you a description of what I hold and where it came from

• Tell you why I am holding it, how long I’ll keep it for and why I came to this decision

• Tell you who it could be disclosed to

• Provide you with a copy of the information, if that is practical, and unless there are good lawful reasons why I should not

To make a request regarding personal information I hold please put the request in writing, either via email or to Foxhall Lodge, Foxhall Road, Nottingham NG7 6LH

**Complaints**

If you are not happy with any aspect of how I collect and use your data or how I have processed your personal information, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO), the UK supervisory authority for data protection issues ([www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk/)). I would be grateful if you would contact me first if you do have a complaint so that I can try to resolve it for you. My ICO registration number is 13458626.

Helen Benson owner of:

The Wolds Counselling Service c/o 30 Wysall Lane, Wymeswold, Leicestershire, LE12 6US

Email: benson\_helen@hotmail.com

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