

Data Privacy Notice

St Peter's, Colchester

Last updated: April 2026

Minor update: July 2026

Review date: April 2029

Policy owner: The Parochial Church Council

St Peter's Church counts it a privilege and serious responsibility to hold your personal information. We are committed to ensuring your privacy is respected, and that we comply with both the letter and spirit of all applicable laws, as is our Christian duty.

We will do all we can to protect your privacy and to ensure that any personal information you share with us is stored securely and used only where we have a lawful basis to do so. We will never sell information about you.

This notice tells you what information we collect, how we use and share the information, what your rights are, and how you can contact us with questions or concerns.

1. Your personal data - what is it?

Personal data relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data.

Identification can be by the information alone or in conjunction with any other information in the data controller's possession or likely to come into such possession.

The processing of personal data is governed by the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and other applicable data protection legislation.

2. Who are we?

The PCC of St Peter's Church, Colchester and the Vicar of St Peter's Church, Colchester are data controllers for the personal data they process.

In some cases they act separately, and in some cases jointly, depending on the activity.

3. How do we process your personal data?

The PCC of St Peter's Church, Colchester and the Vicar of St Peter's Church, Colchester comply with their obligations under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 by

- keeping personal data up to date; by storing and destroying it securely;
- not collecting or retaining excessive amounts of data;
- protecting personal data from loss, misuse, unauthorised access and disclosure;

- ensuring that appropriate technical and organisational measures are in place to protect personal data.

We may process your name, contact details, date of birth, family relationships, attendance or membership information, records of donations and Gift Aid declarations, volunteer and role information, safeguarding information, photographs or video images, communications with us, and, where relevant, employment, DBS, health, pastoral or other sensitive information.

We use your personal data for the following purposes:

- to administer membership of groups and committees;
- to provide pastoral care to our parishioners and members;
- to manage our employees and volunteers;
- to maintain our own accounts and records (including the processing of Gift Aid applications);
- to inform you of news, events, activities and services running at St Peter's and elsewhere that we consider may be of interest to you;
- to operate the St Peter's Church website and deliver services that individuals have requested;
- to fundraise and promote the interests of St Peter's and charitable causes we support;
- to exercise statutory, governmental or other public functions (for example, the registering of marriages, administering the Electoral Roll);
- to enable us to provide services for the benefit of parishioners and others in the local area.

You can opt out of non-essential church communications at any time.

We may take photographs or video at church services and events for church communications, publicity or historical records. We will seek consent where appropriate, especially for children or sensitive contexts. If CCTV, livestreaming or recording is used, we will provide additional notices explaining this.

Our website may use cookies and similar technologies. Some cookies may be necessary for the website to function properly, while others may help us understand how the website is used, provide embedded content, or improve our communications. Where required by law, we will ask for your consent before using non-essential cookies. Further information about the cookies and similar technologies used on our website will be made available on the website or in a separate cookie notice.

We may process personal data relating to children and young people for church groups, events, pastoral care and safeguarding. Where appropriate, we will seek consent from a parent or guardian and will take additional care when using children's information, photographs or video images.

4. What is the legal basis for processing your personal data?

We will only process your personal data where we have a lawful basis to do so under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. The lawful basis we rely on will depend on the purpose for which we are using your information.

We may process your personal data where this is necessary to comply with a legal obligation, for example in relation to Gift Aid records, safeguarding requirements, employment records, health and safety obligations, accounting records, or parish records such as marriage registers and other official records.

We may process your personal data where this is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority. This may include activities such as maintaining the church electoral roll, administering parish records, registering marriages, and carrying out other functions connected with the Church of England's public and ecclesiastical responsibilities.

We may process your personal data where this is necessary for our legitimate interests as a parish church and charity, provided that your own rights and interests do not override those interests. This may include administering church membership, organising services and events, managing rotas and volunteers, keeping appropriate pastoral records, responding to enquiries, maintaining accounts and records, fundraising, and keeping regular members, supporters and contacts informed about church life. You have the right to object to processing based on legitimate interests.

We may process your personal data where you have given us consent. This may include sending certain communications, using photographs or video in particular circumstances, or enabling you to use systems such as ChurchSuite where consent is the appropriate basis. Where we rely on consent, you can withdraw it at any time.

We may process personal data where this is necessary for the performance of a contract or to take steps before entering into a contract. This may apply, for example, to employment arrangements, room hire, supplier arrangements, or other services requested from us.

We do not use your personal data for solely automated decision-making that has legal or similarly significant effects on you.

Some of the information we process may be special category data. This may include information revealing religious belief, health information, pastoral information, safeguarding information, or other sensitive information. We will only process this type of information where a specific condition under data protection law applies, such as where we have your explicit consent, where the processing is carried out by a not-for-profit religious body in relation to its members, former members or regular contacts, where it is necessary for employment or social protection obligations, where it is necessary for safeguarding or substantial public interest reasons, or where it is necessary for legal claims.

We may also process information relating to criminal convictions or offences, including DBS information, where this is necessary for safeguarding, employment, volunteering, legal or regulatory purposes and where the law allows us to do so.

5. Sharing your personal data

We will treat your personal data confidentially and will only share it where there is a lawful basis to do so.

We may share personal data with clergy, authorised members of the PCC, staff, volunteers, group leaders, safeguarding officers or other church members where this is necessary for church administration, pastoral care, safeguarding, the provision of church services and activities, or other purposes connected with the church.

We will not share your personal data with other organisations unless you have consented, it is necessary for our church operations, we are legally required or permitted to do so, or it is necessary for safeguarding, pastoral, insurance, professional advice, regulatory or statutory purposes.

We may use trusted service providers to help us operate the church, including ChurchSuite and other providers of church management software, email and communications systems, website hosting, accounting, payroll, banking, safeguarding administration, data storage and mailing services. Where these providers process personal data on our behalf, we require them to protect it and to use it only for the purposes for which it is provided.

Where personal data is transferred outside the UK, we will ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place as required by data protection law.

6. How long do we keep your personal data?

We keep data in accordance with the Church of England Records Retention Schedule and the Church of England Safeguarding Records Retention Schedule, as updated from time to time.

Specifically, we retain electoral roll data while it is still current; Gift Aid declarations and associated paperwork for up to 6 years after the calendar year to which they relate; safeguarding records in accordance with Church of England safeguarding records retention guidance, which may require retention for long periods; and parish registers (baptisms, marriages, funerals) permanently.

Where no specific retention period is listed, we retain personal data only for as long as necessary for the purpose for which it was collected, including for legal, accounting, safeguarding, archival or reporting requirements.

7. Your rights and your personal data

Unless subject to an exemption under data protection law, you have the following rights with respect to your personal data:

- the right to request a copy of your personal data which the Vicar or PCC of St Peter's holds about you;
- the right to request that we correct any personal data if it is found to be inaccurate or out of date;
- the right to request that your personal data is erased where it is no longer necessary for us to retain such data;
- the right to withdraw your consent to the processing at any time;
- the right to request that we provide you with your personal data and, where possible, transmit that data directly to another data controller, known as the right to data portability, where applicable;
- the right, where there is a dispute in relation to the accuracy or processing of your personal data, to request that a restriction is placed on further processing;
- the right to object to the processing of personal data, where applicable; and
- the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office.

We will normally respond to data protection rights requests within one month, unless the law allows a longer period.

8. Further processing

If we wish to use your personal data for a new purpose, not covered by this Data Privacy Notice, then we will provide you with a new notice explaining this new use prior to commencing the processing and setting out the relevant purposes and processing conditions.

Where and whenever necessary, we will seek your prior consent to the new processing.

9. Contact details

To exercise your data protection rights, make a query, or make a complaint about how we have handled your personal data, please contact the Church Administrator using the details below. Complaints may be made by email or post. We will acknowledge your complaint within 30 days, take appropriate steps to consider it, keep you informed, tell you the outcome, and respond without undue delay. If you remain dissatisfied, you may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office.

- Church Administrator – c/o The Vicarage, Balkerne Close, Colchester CO1 1NZ | office@stpeterscolchester.org
- Information Commissioner's Office – Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF | 0303 123 1113 | ico.org.uk