



# Widmore Methodist Circuit – Data Security Policy

## 1. Purpose

Widmore Methodist Circuit is committed to protecting personal data & handling it in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. This policy ensures personal data is used lawfully, securely, and respectfully.

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## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all personal data held by Widmore Methodist Circuit, including information relating to members, adherents, visitors, volunteers, employees, and those receiving pastoral care. It applies to all ministers, officers, employees, and volunteers.

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## 3. Data Protection Principles

The Circuit ensures that personal data is:

- Processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently
  - Collected for specific and legitimate purposes
  - Adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary
  - Accurate and kept up to date
  - Retained only as long as necessary
  - Kept secure and confidential
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## 4. Data Held

The Circuit may hold:

- Contact details (name, address, telephone, email)
- Membership and church involvement information
- Pastoral records (including sensitive personal information)
- Safeguarding records where required

Special category data (e.g. religious belief, health information) is handled with additional care.

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## 5. Lawful Basis

Personal data is processed under:

- Consent (e.g. communications)
- Legitimate interests (e.g. pastoral care and administration)
- Legal obligations (e.g. safeguarding)

Explicit consent is obtained where required, particularly for sensitive data.

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## 6. Data Security

Widmore Methodist Circuit protects data by:

- Using password-protected devices and systems
  - Limiting access to authorised individuals only
  - Storing paper records in locked cabinets
  - Ensuring secure digital storage and regular system updates
  - Avoiding insecure sharing of personal data
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## 7. Access and Confidentiality

- Access is restricted to those who need it for their role
  - All data is treated as confidential
  - Pastoral information is handled with particular sensitivity
  - Information is not shared without appropriate authority
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## 8. Data Sharing

Data will not normally be shared outside the Circuit unless:

- Consent has been obtained
- Required for safeguarding or legal reasons
- Necessary for agreed Methodist or ecumenical activities

All sharing is carried out securely and appropriately.

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## 9. Retention

- Data is kept only as long as necessary
  - Records are reviewed regularly
  - Data is deleted or archived in line with Methodist Church guidance
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## 10. Disposal

- Paper records are securely shredded
  - Digital records are permanently deleted
  - Disposal ensures data cannot be reconstructed
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## 11. Data Breaches

Any data breach must be reported immediately to the Superintendent Minister or appointed data lead. Serious breaches will be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office where required.

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## 12. Responsibilities



- The Circuit Meeting/Council has overall responsibility
  - All ministers, staff, and volunteers must follow this policy
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### **13. Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed.

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### **14. Contact**

For queries about this policy or data protection, contact the Superintendent Minister or Circuit Data Protection Lead.