

Thorverton Parish Council - General Data Protection Policy and Statement.

Adopted July 2018 and last reviewed October 2020.

Thorverton Parish Council is registered as a Data Controller, with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO), under the General Data Protection Regulation because it may collect and process personal information about you. This applies to Council staff, Councillors, suppliers, service users and members of the public.

Any information is held in order that a public service can be provided to you. This notice explains how the information is used and shared. Information may be collected in paper or electronic format, by telephone, email, by a member of staff, a Councillor or by a volunteer.

Why is information about you collected?

In order to:

- deliver public services
- confirm your identity to provide some services
- contact you by post, email or telephone
- understand your needs to provide the services that you request
- understand what we can do for you and inform you of other relevant services and benefits
- update your records
- to build up a picture of how the Council is performing at delivering services to you and what services local people need
- process financial transactions
- prevent and detect fraud and corruption in the use of public funds
- obtain your opinion about our services
- allow statutory functions to be undertaken efficiently and effectively
- to ensure that statutory obligations are met including, for example, those related to diversity and equality

To provide you with a service information is required and your permission that the Council can use that information is also required.

How the Council uses your information

To provide you with information in a manner that conforms to the General Data Protection Regulation - information will be kept up to date and will not be kept for longer than necessary. In some instances the law sets the length of time certain information has to be kept.

Information will be used for the following purposes:

- for the service you requested, and to monitor and improve the Councils performance in responding to your request
- to allow the Council to be able to communicate and provide services and benefits appropriate to your needs
- to ensure that the Council meets legal obligations
- where necessary for the law enforcement functions
- to prevent and detect fraud or crime
- to process financial transactions including grants, payments and benefits involving the council, or where we are acting on behalf of other government bodies, e.g. Department for Work and Pensions, HMRC
- to collect monies owed to the Council
- to pay staff and suppliers
- where necessary to protect individuals from harm or injury
- to allow the statistical analysis of data to plan for provision of services

Personal data will **not** be passed onto third parties other than those who either process information on the Councils behalf or because of a legal requirement. Sufficient steps will be taken to protect personal data should the above circumstances arise.

Personal information will **not** be disclosed, if provided in confidence, unless your permission has been gained. Exceptions to this is in the few situations where disclosure is required, by law, or where there is good reason to believe that failing to share the information would put someone else at risk. You will be informed should this be the case.

Information sharing

Information may need to be passed to other people and organisations that provide services on the Councils behalf. These providers are obliged to keep your details securely and use them only to fulfil your request. If this applies to sensitive or confidential information your consent would first need to be obtained unless the Council is legally required to release the information.

The Council may disclose information to other partners where it is necessary, to comply with a legal obligation or where permitted under the General Data Protection Regulation, e.g. where the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of the prevention and/or detection of crime.

Where there is a need to disclose sensitive or confidential information, such as medical details to other partners, we will do so only with your prior consent or where there is a legal requirement to do so.

Information may be disclosed to prevent risk of harm to an individual.

At no time will your information be passed to organisations external to the Council and its partners, for marketing or sales purposes, or for any commercial use without your prior express consent.

Improving customer records

The Council is working towards making its record keeping more efficient. Your basic record comprises your name, address, contact details (telephone/email) and, in some cases, a brief summary of your contact with the council and a record of the services used. For example the plot number of an allotment and a record of deposits and rents received. Information will be regularly review for accuracy and to ensure that it is still required.

Detect and prevent fraud or crime

Thorverton Parish Council is required, by law, to protect the public funds it administers. It might use any of the information you provide for the prevention and detection of fraud. It might also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing and administering public funds or when undertaking a public function in order to prevent and detect fraud. This includes the Cabinet Office, the Department for Work and Pensions, other Local Authorities, HM Revenue and Customs and the Police.

Section 68 of the Serious Crime Act 2007 enables public authorities to disclose information for the purposes of preventing fraud as a member of a specified anti-fraud organisation or, otherwise, in accordance with any arrangements made with such an organisation.

Emergency response management

Data matching might be used to assist the council in responding to emergencies, or major accidents, by allowing the council, in conjunction with the emergency services, to identify individuals who might need additional support in the event of e.g. an emergency evacuation.

Telephone calls

Thorverton Parish Council does not record telephone conversations. However, if you call the Parish Clerk or a Councillor at a time when they are unable to answer the phone, you might be given the opportunity to

leave a message. Callers are advised not to leave any sensitive information on such occasions but to leave only sufficient information so as to be contacted at a later time.

Emails

If you email the Council, including contacts through the website, a record might be kept of your contact including your email address and the content of the message. For security reasons confidential information about you will not be used in any email the Council sends unless you actively consent to this.

It is suggested that you keep the amount of confidential information you send in emails to a minimum and use secure online forms and services when available.

Using the Councils website

If you are a user with general public access the Thorverton Parish Council website does not store or capture personal information but logs a number called your IP address which is automatically recognised by the system.

The system will record personal information if you:

- subscribe to or apply for services that require personal information
- report a fault and give your contact details for us to respond
- contact us and leave your details for us to respond

The Council employs cookie technology to help log visitors to our web site. A cookie is a string of information that is sent by a website and stored on your hard drive or temporarily in your computer's memory. The information collected is used for the administration of the server and to improve the service provided by the website. No personal information is collected this way. You can reject the use of cookies, but you may be asked for information again, e.g. to participate in a survey.

This statement only covers the council website and does not cover other websites linked from this site. You can refer to the website for a more comprehensive website privacy statement.

How the Council protects your information

The aim is not to be intrusive and no irrelevant, or unnecessary, questions will be asked. The information you provide will be subject to rigorous measures and procedures to make sure it can't be seen, accessed, or disclosed to anyone who shouldn't see it.

The Councils Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statements define commitments and responsibilities to your privacy and cover a range of information and technology security areas. The Council provides training to Councillors, staff, and volunteers who handle personal information and will take disciplinary measures if your personal information is not held correctly.

The Council will not keep your information for longer than it is needed or beyond a date where the law states how long it should be kept. Paper and electronic records will be disposed of, or deleted, when no longer required.

Your rights

You have the right to request that Thorverton Parish Council stops processing your personal data in relation to any Council service. However, this may cause delays or prevent delivery of a service to you. Where possible the Council will seek to comply with your request but may be required to hold or process information to comply with a legal requirement.

The Council will aim to ensure that any information held about you is correct. There may be situations where you find the information held is no longer accurate and you then have the right to have this corrected. Please contact the Parish Clerk in this instance.

You are legally entitled to request access to any information that is held about you. In some circumstances a small fee might be payable.

Further information

The council will provide further information about what is shared with other organisations on data collection forms, Privacy Notices, and specific service sharing agreements.

Changes to this privacy notice

The Council will continually review and update the contents to this Privacy Notice to reflect changes in services, and feedback from service users, as well as to comply with changes in the law. When such changes occur the date at the top of this notice will be amended.

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