



Data Protection Policy

May 2026

1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out how Wessex Rivers Trust, an environmental charity operating in the UK, protects personal data in line with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. It ensures we handle supporter, volunteer and partner information lawfully, fairly, and transparently.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, trustees, volunteers, supporters and contractors
- All personal data processed by the charity, whether digital or paper
- All activities including fundraising, environmental monitoring, education programmes, and community engagement

3. Key Definitions

- Personal Data: Any information relating to an identifiable individual
- Special Category Data: Sensitive data such as health information or ethnicity
- Processing: Any operation performed on personal data (collecting, storing, sharing, deleting)
- Data Subject: The individual whose data we hold

4. Data Protection Principles

We take reasonable steps to ensure all personal data is:

- Lawful, fair, and transparent
- Collected for specific, explicit purposes
- Adequate, relevant, and limited
- Accurate and kept up to date
- Stored no longer than necessary
- Secure and protected against loss or unauthorised access

5. Lawful Bases for Processing

We process data under one or more of the following lawful bases:

- Consent – e.g. email newsletters, magazines
- Contract – e.g. volunteer agreements
- Legal obligation – e.g. safeguarding, HMRC requirements

- Vital interests – e.g. emergency contact details
- Public task – where delivering environmental education or public-benefit activities
- Legitimate interests – e.g. fundraising and environmental project participation

6. Categories of Data We Collect

Depending on the activity, we may collect:

- Contact details (name, email, phone, address)
- Donation and Gift Aid information
- Volunteer records and training logs
- Event registrations
- Environmental project participation data (e.g. volunteering, survey submissions)
- Website analytics and cookies
- Photographs or video (with consent where required)

7. Data Security

We implement appropriate technical and organisational measures, including:

- Password protection and multi-factor authentication
- Encrypted storage and secure cloud services
- Role-based access controls
- Regular data-protection training
- Secure disposal of paper and digital records
- Data-processing agreements with third-party suppliers

8. Data Sharing

We may share data with:

- Funding bodies (only when required for reporting)
- Partner organisations delivering joint environmental projects
- Approved service providers (e.g. mailing platforms, CRM systems)

All sharing is governed by data-processing agreements and follows UK GDPR principles.

We never sell personal data.

9. Individual Rights

Data subjects have the right to:

- Be informed
- Access their data
- Rectify inaccuracies
- Erase data (“right to be forgotten”)
- Restrict processing
- Data portability
- Object to processing
- Not be subject to automated decision-making

We respond to all requests within one month.

10. Data Breaches

We maintain a breach-response procedure that includes:

- Immediate containment and assessment
- Logging all incidents
- Reporting serious breaches to the ICO
- Informing affected individuals where required

11. Data Retention

We retain data only as long as necessary:

- Supporter data: for as long as required
- Gift Aid records: 6 years (legal requirement)
- Volunteer records: duration of involvement
- Environmental project data: as required for scientific or reporting purposes, anonymised where possible

12. Environmental Project Data

As an environmental charity, we may collect:

- Wildlife survey data
- Geographic location data
- Photographs submitted by citizen scientists

Where possible, we anonymise or pseudonymise this data before analysis or publication.

13. Privacy Notices

We maintain clear, accessible privacy notices for:

- Website users
- Donors
- Volunteers
- Event participants

14. Roles and Responsibilities

- Trustees: Overall accountability
- Data Protection Lead: Day-to-day compliance, training, breach management
- All staff/volunteers: Follow this policy and report concerns

15. Contact

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