

Privacy Policy

Last updated: 8th September 2025

Hi, I'm Chris — a BACP-registered counsellor offering one-to-one therapy online. This Privacy Policy explains how I collect, use, and protect your personal data when you visit my website, contact me, or work with me as a therapy client.

I take your privacy seriously, and I aim to be transparent, respectful, and straightforward in how I handle your information.

Who this policy is for

This policy applies to:

- Visitors to my website (www.assurecounselling.co.uk)
- People who contact me via the contact form or email
- Clients (or prospective clients) who engage in therapy with me

What personal data I collect

Depending on your interaction with me, I may collect:

- Your name and contact details (email address, phone number if you provide it)
- Any personal information you share via the contact form or email
- Brief client notes (first name only, no full identifiers)
- Technical data when you visit my website (IP address, cookies, browser type etc.)

Why I collect it

I only collect data when I have a lawful reason to do so, such as:

- To respond to your enquiry or contact request
- To provide therapy services to you as part of our agreement
- To maintain appropriate records (for ethical and legal reasons)
- To improve my website (via anonymised analytics)

My lawful basis for processing

Under UK GDPR, I rely on the following legal bases to process your information:

- **Contract** – to provide counselling services you've requested
- **Legitimate interests** – to respond to enquiries or manage my work effectively
- **Legal obligation** – in situations where I may be required to share information for safeguarding or legal reasons

How I store and protect your data

I take data security seriously. Here's how I keep your information safe:

- **Client notes** are stored in the GoodNotes app on my iPad, protected by password and linked to my private iCloud account (which is not publicly accessible). Notes are minimal and anonymised — only your first name and start date are used as identifiers.
- My devices (iPad and desktop) are password-protected and used solely by me.

- Email communications are accessed securely using Apple Mail, with a strong password.
- I don't share your data with third parties unless legally required or ethically necessary to do so (see below).

When I may need to share information

In line with the **BACP Ethical Framework**, I will only break confidentiality in exceptional circumstances — for example:

- If I believe you or someone else is at serious risk of harm
- If there is a safeguarding concern involving a child or vulnerable adult
- If I am legally required to disclose information (e.g. related to terrorism or money laundering)

Where possible, I would always aim to discuss this with you first.

Supervision

To ensure I'm working ethically and effectively, I discuss my client work in clinical supervision. Any material shared is anonymised — no identifiable details are disclosed.

How long I keep your information

If you become a client, I will retain your records for **7 years** after your final session, in line with professional guidelines.

If you contact me but don't begin therapy, I will usually delete your details within **3 months** of our last correspondence.

Website analytics and cookies

I use **Google Analytics** to help understand how people use my website. This collects anonymised data such as your IP address, browser type, and time spent on pages.

Cookies are small text files placed on your device to help the site function and measure usage. You'll be asked to accept or decline cookies when you first visit.

If you use the contact form, your data will be stored securely and not shared.

Your rights

You have the right to:

- Access a copy of the data I hold about you
- Ask for corrections or updates
- Request deletion of your data (where appropriate)
- Lodge a complaint with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** if you have concerns

My details

Data controller: Christopher Macdonald

ICO Registration Ref: ZB971754

Email: chris@assurecounselling.co.uk

Website: www.assurecounselling.co.uk

Privacy Policy

If you have any questions about how I use your data, just get in touch — I'll always aim to respond clearly and respectfully.