

1. Who is responsible for your information?

I am **Stuart Wharton, known as Stu**, a sole trader operating as **Calm Horizons 247**. I am the data controller: this means I decide why and how personal information is used in my private practice. I am an NMC-registered mental health nurse and a Society for DBT-accredited therapist.

Email: calm.horizons247@gmail.com

Telephone: 07301 032061

Business correspondence address: 21 Renfrew Close, Wordsley DY8 5EL

ICO registration reference: ZC197353

This notice explains how I use information about people who enquire about or receive therapy, and limited information about their contacts where relevant to care. My private practice is separate from my NHS employment; information is not automatically shared with my NHS employer.

2. What information do I collect?

I collect information that is relevant and necessary for the purpose concerned. Depending on our contact, this may include:

Identity and contact details: your name, date of birth, address, telephone number, email, preferred contact arrangements and accessibility needs; and relevant GP, other professional or nominated emergency-contact details.

Therapy information: your reasons for seeking support, relevant health and personal history, therapy goals, assessments, session notes, risk and safety plans, diary cards, worksheets, outcome measures and relevant correspondence. Health information and some other sensitive details are legally classed as special category data.

Administration and website information: appointments, agreements, consent records, invoices, payment references, complaints and requests about your information. Website information may include technical logs, device information and cookie choices, as specified in section 9.

3. Where does the information come from?

Usually directly from you, through enquiries, forms, correspondence and therapy. Where appropriate and lawful, it may also come from a referrer, GP, another professional involved in your care, or a nominated contact. I will normally explain the source and purpose when information comes from someone else. Technical information may be collected by the website and its service providers.

4. Why do I use information, and on what legal basis?

I apply the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and other applicable UK privacy law. The basis depends on the particular use; consent is not the basis for everything.

Enquiries, assessment and therapy - contract, Article 6(1)(b). I use information necessary to respond to a request about starting therapy, arrange appointments, assess suitability, provide the agreed service, keep necessary treatment records and administer payment.

Safe practice and administration - legitimate interests, Article 6(1)(f). Where appropriate, I use necessary information to manage general enquiries, protect records and systems, arrange confidential supervision, handle complaints, retain justified records and manage relevant third-party contact details. My interests are providing a safe, accountable service and protecting the practice and the people involved. I balance those interests against your rights and use less intrusive alternatives where possible.

Legal duties - legal obligation, Article 6(1)(c). This includes necessary financial records for tax law, responding to data-protection rights and complying with binding legal disclosure requirements. A professional expectation or an insurance term is not automatically treated as a legal obligation.

Health information - Article 9(2)(h). In addition to an Article 6 basis, necessary health and therapy information is processed for the provision or management of health care or treatment, under Article 9(2)(h) and Schedule 1, Part 1, paragraph 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018. This is subject to the confidentiality safeguards in Article 9(3).

Legal advice and claims. Where necessary to establish, exercise or defend legal claims, I rely on legitimate interests, or a relevant legal obligation, together with Article 9(2)(f) for special category information. Only information needed for that purpose is used.

Emergencies and safeguarding. Necessary care and safety work uses the relevant bases above. In an emergency, Article 6(1)(d) may apply to protecting life. Article 9(2)(c) applies to special category information only where the person concerned is physically or legally incapable of consenting. For qualifying safeguarding disclosures outside routine care, legitimate interests may be used with Article 9(2)(g) and Schedule 1, Part 2, paragraph 18, only where the specific legal requirements and safeguards are met.

Optional uses - consent. Where I rely on consent, including any separately agreed optional recording, I explain the purpose and choices beforehand. The bases are Article 6(1)(a) and, for special category information, Article 9(2)(a). You may withdraw consent at any time without affecting the lawfulness of earlier processing.

Agreeing to therapy is not blanket consent to every use of your information. You can choose to end therapy, but I may still need to retain some records for the purposes and periods explained in this notice.

5. Confidentiality and sharing

I treat therapy information as confidential. I do not sell your personal information or use your clinical records for advertising. I share only what is necessary and where there is a lawful basis and an appropriate confidentiality justification.

Clinical supervision: relevant work may be discussed confidentially to support safe practice. I use anonymised information wherever practicable. Where someone could still identify you, the information continues to be treated as personal data and is limited to what is needed.

Other professionals and safety contacts: I normally discuss and agree communication with your GP or another professional. Limited information may be shared without your agreement where necessary and justified to address a serious risk of harm, safeguard a child or adult at risk, or comply with law. Recipients may include health or safeguarding services, emergency services or a nominated contact. I will normally discuss this with you first unless that would increase risk, be impracticable or be prohibited by law.

Professional advisers and public bodies: relevant information may be shared with an insurer, legal adviser, accountant, regulator, court or HMRC where necessary for the particular purpose. Financial administration does not normally require access to therapy notes.

Service providers: providers supporting the website, communications, online sessions, record storage or payments may process information. Providers acting on my instructions must have appropriate confidentiality and data-processing arrangements. Banks and some other providers may act as independent controllers for their own purposes.

6. Systems, security and overseas processing

Service	Provider and information involved
Email	Google/Gmail: enquiry, appointment and relevant correspondence.
Website and contact form	IONOS
Video appointments	Google Meet, email only recorded
Clinical records and backups	Calm Horizons 247 has a dedicated laptop and secure facial recognition vault. Back Up Via Microsoft One Drive to the company.
Payments and accounts	Lloyds Personal Account

I limit access to authorised people and use safeguards appropriate to the sensitivity of the information. **Security arrangements:** Calm Horizons 247 has a dedicated laptop and secure facial recognition vault. Back Up Via Microsoft One Drive to the company.

7. Recordings, AI-assisted tools and contact

Session recording and transcription: None

AI-assisted tools: ChatGPT Business is used for drafting emails and notes; no identifiable data is used.

Any optional use requiring consent will be explained and agreed separately, rather than being authorised merely by attending therapy. Clinical decisions remain my responsibility; I do not make decisions about your care based solely on automated processing.

Please use the contact details in section 1 and avoid including detailed clinical information in an initial website enquiry. We can agree suitable ways to exchange sensitive documents and contact you. No online communication method is entirely risk-free. Messages are not monitored continuously and this is not an emergency contact service.

8. How long is information kept?

I keep identifiable information only for as long as it is necessary for its purpose. The normal periods are:

Record type	Normal retention period
Enquiries that do not lead to therapy	7 days after the last enquiry contact.
Clinical records and relevant therapy correspondence	7 years after the last session or discharge; specify any different rules that apply to particular clients.
Signed agreements and consent records	7 Years
Financial and tax records	Normally five years after the 31 January Self Assessment submission deadline for the relevant tax year, or longer where tax law requires.
Website logs, cookie records and any recordings	Managed through IONOS

Relevant records may need to be kept longer for an unresolved complaint, claim, investigation or another specific legal requirement. I document and review any extension. When the retention period ends, records are securely destroyed or deleted; backup copies are removed through 7 years cycle.

9. Website cookies and optional communications

Website technologies: Managed via IONOS

Cookies or similar technologies requiring consent are not activated until you consent. Any use relying on a legal exception is explained in the cookie information, including an objection option where required. You can change your choices through privacy setting on website homepage. Links to other websites lead to services with their own privacy notices.

Enquiring about or attending therapy does not automatically subscribe you to marketing. Any optional marketing subscription is handled separately and can be stopped at any time.

10. Your choices and information rights

You may ask to access your personal information, correct inaccuracies, erase information or restrict its use where the law allows. You may object to processing based on legitimate interests and request an electronic copy of information in a portable format where that right applies. You may withdraw consent for processing that relies on consent and complain about how your information is handled.

These rights have conditions and exceptions. For example, information may need to be retained for a lawful clinical or legal purpose even after therapy ends. I will explain any restriction on a request rather than treating all therapy records as exempt.

Contact me using the details in section 1; no special form is required. Requests are normally free and answered without undue delay, usually within one month. Where reasonable identity checks, necessary clarification or a legally permitted extension affect the timescale, I will explain this.

You are not generally required by law to seek therapy or provide information. However, I need relevant identity, contact, safety and payment information to arrange and provide the agreed service. If essential information is withheld, I may be unable to offer or continue therapy safely. I will explain what is needed and discuss this with you; optional information will be identified as optional.

11. Questions and complaints

Please contact me if you have a question, need this notice in another format, or are concerned about your information. You can make a data-protection complaint by email, telephone or post using section 1. I will acknowledge it within 30 days, investigate without undue delay, keep you informed and explain the outcome.

You also have the right to complain to the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**. You do not need my permission to do so.

Website: ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

12. Changes to this notice

I review this notice when my services, systems or legal obligations change. The latest version will be available on my website. I will explain significant changes that affect existing clients, including any proposed new use of their information before that use begins.