

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DATA PROTECTION POLICY - 2025

Sealand Community Council recognises its responsibility to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. The act and regulation regulate the use of personal data, this does not have to be sensitive data, it can be as little as a name and address.

The Data Protection Act 1998 sets out high standards for the handling of personal information and protecting individuals' rights for privacy. It also regulates how information can be collected, handled and used. The Data Protection Act applies to anyone holding information about people electronically or on paper.

In addition to the Data Protection Act 1998, the Council is subject to the current UK data protection framework: the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. These laws require that all personal data be processed fairly, lawfully, and transparently, and only for specified purposes. Data must be accurate, kept only as long as necessary, and stored securely.

The Act says that the information provided to people about how we process their personal data must be concise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible, written in clear and plain language, particularly if addressed to a child and free of charge.

As a local authority Sealand Community Council has a number of procedures in place to ensure that it complies with The Data Protection Act 1998 when holding personal information.

Sealand Community Council has appointed the Clerk as the designated Data Protection Officer.

When dealing with personal data, the Clerk and Councillors must ensure that:

IT IS PROCESSED FAIRLY AND LAWFULLY - This means that information should only be collected from individuals if staff and Councillors have been open and honest about why they want the information.

IT IS PROCESSED FOR SPECIFIED PURPOSES ONLY

IT IS RELEVANT TO WHAT IT IS NEEDED FOR - Data will be monitored so that too much or too little is not kept; only data that is needed should be held.

IT IS ACCURATE AND KEPT UP TO DATE- Personal data should be accurate, if it is not it should be corrected.

IT IS NOT KEPT LONGER THAN IT IS NEEDED

IT IS PROCESSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS - This means that individuals must be informed, upon request, of all the information held about them.

IT IS KEPT SECURELY - This means that only staff and Councillors can access the data, it should be stored securely so it cannot be accessed by members of the public.

COLLECTING DATA

Sealand Community Council recognises its responsibility to be open with people when taking personal details from them. This means that staff must be honest about why they want a particular piece of information.

If, for example, a member of the public gives their phone number to the Clerk or a member of the Council, this will only be used for the purpose it has been given and will not be disclosed to anyone else.

STORING AND ACCESSING DATA

Sealand Community Council may hold information about individuals such as their addresses and telephone numbers. These are kept in a secure location at the Clerk's place of residence and are not available for the public to access. All data stored is stored securely. Once data is not needed anymore, if it is out of date or has served its use, it will be shredded or deleted as appropriate.

The Council is aware that people have the right to access any information that is held about them. If a person requests to see any data that is being held about them,

- They must be sent all of the information that is being held about them
- There must be explanation for why it has been stored
- There must be a list of who has seen it
- It must be sent within one month

SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- Requests that are manifestly unfounded or excessive may be refused or a charge made
- If a request is refused, a reason must be given.

If an individual requests that their data is rectified or erased, this will be carried out.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

If an elected member of the Council, for example a Councillor needs to access information to help carry out their duties, this is acceptable. They are only able to access as much information as necessary and it should only be used for that specific purpose. If for instance someone has made a complaint about over hanging bushes in a garden, a councillor may access an address and telephone number of the person who has made the complaint so they can help with the enquiry. They can only do this providing they represent the area that the subject lives in. However, before they access any sensitive information about a person, they would need

consent to do this from the Clerk. Data should never be used for political reasons unless the data subjects have consented.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Sealand Community Council must be aware that complaints or queries must remain confidential unless the subject gives permission otherwise. When handling personal data, this must also remain confidential.

If a data breach is identified, the Council must notify the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) of any personal data breach likely to affect individuals' rights, and an investigation will be conducted.

Some exceptions in the law apply to public authorities; the Council will use them only where appropriate. Staff and Councillors must follow all procedures to ensure compliance.

This policy will be reviewed annually, along with an annual review of its compliance and effectiveness.

Adopted by Sealand Community Council in the light of GDPR at its meeting on 11th December 2017.

The policy was reviewed and agreed by the Council at its meeting on Monday, 20th October 2025

A Griffiths - Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

October 2025