

UK Data Protection Act: Guidance for North Kent Methodist Church on-line access

This is summary of the how the UK Data Protection is most likely to apply to Methodist Churches, ministers and church organisations. It is based on information from the website of the UK Information Commissioner. <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>.

This website should be consulted for full details.

1. The UK Data Protection Act (1998) requires that those who hold personal information about identifiable individuals on computer or any structured file index system including paper systems must register as 'Data Controllers' with the information Commissioner unless they are exempt. **SEE POINT 4**
2. Under the terms of the act ministers of religion and others who hold information on computer **for the purpose of Pastoral Care** are required to register. (at present NKMC Cloud does not hold pastoral information)
3. Pastoral care data can be taken to include any personal information **other than Names, Addresses, and church membership records.**
4. **Church records such as membership names and addresses and Free Will Offering records can be held without requiring registration.**
5. Non- profit (church) organizations are allowed to maintain records on computer for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership or support for a body or association not established or conducted for profit, or providing or administering activities for individuals who are either members of the body or association or have regular contact with it.
6. However, such data must not be kept after the relationship between the organization and the data subject ends, unless and for so long as it is necessary to do so for the exempt purpose (eg Claiming Gift Aid).
7. **Holding information for staff administration purposes is also exempt.** The term staff includes all employees, office holders, temporary and casual workers, agents and volunteers. This purpose includes all personnel and work management matters, qualifications, work experience, pay and performance.
8. **Records of accounts, financial transactions, and financial data required for records are exempt.** The keeping of church accounts and offerings does not require registration providing those records are not retained on computer after a person ceases to have an association with that church or when the records are no longer required for official purposes (eg tax records).

The above is based on

http://www.irishmethodist.org/sites/default/files/pdf/hmd/all_about_data_protection.pdf

In addition all those we hold data on, of whatever nature, have a reasonable expectation that we treat this data with respect and confidentiality. For this reason personal telephone numbers and email addresses will not be used on public pages of NKMC web site (unless at the explicit request of the owner). Contact and other information found in the cloud should be regarded as confidential within the Church.