

CivilDev Privacy Policy

Last Updated: January 15, 2026

1. Introduction

Welcome to CivilDev's Privacy Policy. This document explains how we collect, use, disclose, and protect your personal information when you use our civic engagement platform.

CivilDev ("we", "us", "our") is committed to protecting your privacy and ensuring transparency about our data practices. This Privacy Policy applies to our website and services available at <https://civildev.co.uk>.

By using CivilDev, you agree to the collection and use of information as described in this Privacy Policy.

2. Information We Collect

2.1 Information You Provide Directly

Account Information - Name - Email address - Username - Password (encrypted) - Profile picture/avatar - Preferred role requests

Content You Submit - Project proposals (title, description, location, images) - Ideas and suggestions - Issue reports (description, location, images, status) - Comments and feedback - Likes and reactions - Messages to other users - Progress notes and updates

Location Information - Geographic coordinates for projects, ideas, and issue reports - Postcodes or addresses you provide - Map interaction data

Communication Data - Messages you send through our platform - Emails you send to us - Responses to surveys or feedback requests

2.2 Information Collected Automatically

Usage Data - Pages viewed and features used - Time spent on the platform - Click patterns and navigation paths - Search queries - Projects, ideas, and reports you view

Device and Technical Information - IP address - Browser type and version - Operating system - Device identifiers - Screen resolution - Referral URLs

Cookies and Similar Technologies - Session cookies for authentication - Preference cookies for settings - Analytics cookies for usage tracking - Performance cookies for optimization

2.3 Information from Third Parties

Authentication Providers - If you sign up using third-party authentication (e.g., Google, GitHub), we receive basic profile information according to your settings with those providers

Public Data - Information about civic projects from public sources may be integrated into the platform

3. How We Use Your Information

We use your information for the following purposes:

3.1 Platform Operations

- Create and manage your account
- Authenticate your identity and provide secure access
- Display your profile to other users
- Enable you to submit projects, ideas, and issue reports
- Facilitate communication between users
- Show your content on maps and in lists
- Process likes, comments, and other interactions

3.2 Content Management

- Categorize projects by type (Infrastructure, Environmental, Education, Public Safety, Transport)
- Track project status (Proposed, In Progress, Completed)
- Assign appropriate user roles (Citizen, Admin, Mayor, Council, Planner, Inspector, Moderator)
- Moderate content for compliance with our Terms of Use

3.3 Communication

- Send notifications about project updates
- Notify you of comments and likes on your content
- Deliver private messages from other users
- Send important service announcements
- Respond to your inquiries and support requests
- Send newsletters (with your consent)

3.4 Analytics and Improvement

- Understand how users interact with the platform
- Identify popular features and areas for improvement
- Monitor platform performance and stability
- Develop new features and services
- Conduct research and analysis

3.5 Security and Compliance

- Detect and prevent fraud, abuse, and security incidents
- Enforce our Terms of Use
- Comply with legal obligations
- Protect the rights and safety of users
- Investigate and respond to user reports

3.6 Civic Engagement

- Connect citizens with local authorities
- Facilitate democratic participation
- Track community priorities and concerns
- Generate statistics on civic engagement (anonymized)

4. Legal Basis for Processing (GDPR)

If you are in the European Economic Area (EEA) or UK, we process your personal data based on:

- **Contract Performance:** Processing necessary to provide our services (Article 6(1)(b) GDPR)
- **Legitimate Interests:** Platform improvement, security, and analytics (Article 6(1)(f) GDPR)
- **Consent:** Marketing communications and optional features (Article 6(1)(a) GDPR)
- **Legal Obligations:** Compliance with laws and regulations (Article 6(1)(c) GDPR)

5. How We Share Your Information

5.1 Public Information

The following information is **publicly visible** on the platform: - Your username and profile picture - Projects, ideas, and issue reports you submit - Comments and replies you post - Likes and reactions you give - Your user role badge - Statistics (number of projects, ideas, reports, comments, likes)

5.2 With Other Users

- Private messages are only shared with the intended recipient
- Your email address is NOT shared with other users unless you choose to disclose it

5.3 With Service Providers

We share data with trusted third-party service providers:

Hosting and Infrastructure - Vercel (platform hosting) - Neon PostgreSQL (database hosting in AWS)

Storage Services - Supabase (image and file storage)

Authentication - NextAuth providers (Google, GitHub, etc.)

Communication Services - Resend (email delivery) - Pusher (real-time messaging) - Socket.IO (WebSocket connections)

Analytics and Performance - Usage analytics providers (specifics disclosed in cookie policy)

Security Services - Google reCAPTCHA (spam prevention)

All service providers are contractually obligated to protect your data and use it only for specified purposes.

5.4 With Local Authorities

- Projects, ideas, and issue reports may be shared with relevant local authorities to facilitate civic engagement
- Authorities may have access to public information on the platform
- We do NOT share private messages or non-public personal information without your consent

5.5 Legal Requirements

We may disclose your information if required to: - Comply with applicable laws, regulations, or legal processes - Respond to lawful requests from public authorities - Enforce our Terms of Use and other policies - Protect the rights, property, or safety of CivilDev, our users, or the public

5.6 Business Transfers

If CivilDev is involved in a merger, acquisition, or sale of assets, your information may be transferred. We will notify you before your data is transferred and subject to a different privacy policy.

6. Data Retention

We retain your personal information for as long as necessary to provide our services and comply with legal obligations:

- **Account Data:** Retained while your account is active and for a reasonable period after deletion (to prevent fraud)
- **Projects, Ideas, Reports:** Retained indefinitely as they contribute to the public record of civic engagement
- **Comments and Interactions:** Retained as long as the associated content exists

- **Messages:** Retained until you delete them or close your account
- **Usage Logs:** Typically retained for 12-24 months
- **Backups:** May retain data in backups for up to 90 days after deletion

You can request deletion of your account and associated data at any time (see Section 9).

7. Data Security

We implement appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect your information:

7.1 Security Measures

- **Encryption:** Passwords are hashed using bcrypt; messages are encrypted
- **Secure Communication:** HTTPS/TLS encryption for all data transmission
- **Authentication:** NextAuth.js with secure session management
- **Access Controls:** Role-based permissions to limit data access
- **Database Security:** Neon PostgreSQL with access restrictions
- **Regular Security Audits:** Ongoing monitoring and vulnerability assessments

7.2 Your Responsibility

- Choose a strong, unique password
- Do not share your account credentials
- Log out after using shared devices
- Report suspicious activity immediately

Despite our efforts, no security system is impenetrable. We cannot guarantee absolute security of your data.

8. Your Privacy Rights

Depending on your location, you may have the following rights:

8.1 Access and Portability

- **Right to Access:** Request a copy of your personal data
- **Data Portability:** Receive your data in a structured, machine-readable format

8.2 Correction and Deletion

- **Right to Rectification:** Correct inaccurate or incomplete data
- **Right to Erasure:** Request deletion of your data (“right to be forgotten”)

Note: Some data may need to be retained for legal or legitimate business purposes.

8.3 Restriction and Objection

- **Right to Restriction:** Limit how we process your data in certain circumstances
- **Right to Object:** Object to processing based on legitimate interests

8.4 Withdraw Consent

- Withdraw consent for processing where we rely on consent (e.g., marketing emails)
- Manage notification preferences in your account settings

8.5 Automated Decision-Making

- CivilDev does not use automated decision-making or profiling that significantly affects you

8.6 How to Exercise Your Rights

To exercise these rights: 1. Log into your account and access Profile → Settings
2. Email us at: info@civildev.co.uk 3. Use our contact form: </about/contact>

We will respond to requests within 30 days (or as required by law).

8.7 Right to Complain

If you believe we have violated your privacy rights, you have the right to lodge a complaint with a data protection authority: - **UK:** Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) - <https://ico.org.uk> - **EU:** Your local Data Protection Authority

9. Cookies and Tracking Technologies

9.1 What Are Cookies?

Cookies are small text files stored on your device when you visit websites. We use cookies and similar technologies to enhance your experience.

9.2 Types of Cookies We Use

Essential Cookies - Authentication and session management - Security features - Required for platform functionality

Functional Cookies - Remember your preferences (theme, language) - Store your location for relevant content - Enable features you've requested

Analytics Cookies - Understand how you use the platform - Measure feature effectiveness - Identify areas for improvement

Performance Cookies - Monitor platform performance - Optimize loading times - Troubleshoot technical issues

9.3 Managing Cookies

You can control cookies through: - Browser settings (block or delete cookies) - Platform settings (manage optional cookies)

Note: Disabling essential cookies may affect platform functionality.

9.4 Third-Party Cookies

Some features use third-party cookies: - Google reCAPTCHA - Authentication providers - Analytics services

These are governed by the respective third-party privacy policies.

10. Children's Privacy

CivilDev is not intended for children under 13 years old. We do not knowingly collect personal information from children under 13.

If we discover we have collected data from a child under 13, we will delete it immediately. If you believe we have inadvertently collected such information, contact us at info@civildev.co.uk.

11. International Data Transfers

CivilDev is operated from the UK. If you access the platform from outside the UK, your information may be transferred to, stored, and processed in: - United Kingdom - European Union - United States (AWS data centers)

We ensure appropriate safeguards are in place: - **Standard Contractual Clauses** (for EU transfers) - **Adequacy Decisions** (where applicable) - **Privacy Shield** successor frameworks (for US transfers)

12. California Privacy Rights (CCPA)

If you are a California resident, you have additional rights under the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA):

12.1 Right to Know

- Request information about the personal data we collect, use, disclose, and sell

12.2 Right to Delete

- Request deletion of your personal data (subject to exceptions)

12.3 Right to Opt-Out

- **We do NOT sell your personal information**
- You can opt out of targeted advertising (if implemented in the future)

12.4 Non-Discrimination

- We will not discriminate against you for exercising your CCPA rights

12.5 Authorized Agents

- You may designate an authorized agent to make requests on your behalf

To exercise CCPA rights, email us at info@civildev.co.uk with “CCPA Request” in the subject line.

13. Changes to This Privacy Policy

We may update this Privacy Policy from time to time to reflect: - Changes in our practices - Legal or regulatory requirements - New features or services

When we make changes: - We will update the “Last Updated” date - Material changes will be announced through the platform or by email - Continued use after changes constitutes acceptance

We encourage you to review this Privacy Policy periodically.

14. Third-Party Links

CivilDev may contain links to external websites and services: - Citizens Advice (legal advice) - Local authority websites - Social media platforms - Service provider sites

We are not responsible for the privacy practices of third-party sites. Review their privacy policies before providing personal information.

15. Data Protection Officer

For privacy-related inquiries, you can contact our Data Protection Officer:

Email: dpo@civildev.co.uk

Address: [Your Business Address]

16. Contact Us

If you have questions, concerns, or requests regarding this Privacy Policy or your personal data:

General Inquiries

Email: info@civildev.co.uk

Contact Form: <https://civildev.co.uk/about/contact>

Data Protection Inquiries

Email: info@civildev.co.uk

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Response Time: We aim to respond to all inquiries within 5 business days.

17. Specific Feature Privacy Details

17.1 Messaging System

- Private messages are encrypted
- Messages are transmitted via WebSocket (Socket.IO) with authentication
- Messages are stored until you delete them
- We do not read private messages except in cases of reported abuse

17.2 Map and Location Data

- Location data for projects, ideas, and reports is publicly visible
- Precise coordinates are displayed on interactive maps
- Multiple projects at the same location are clustered for clarity
- You control what location data you submit

17.3 Image Uploads

- Images are stored on Supabase cloud storage
- Images are publicly accessible via URL
- Images are associated with your projects, ideas, or reports
- Inappropriate images may be removed by moderators

17.4 Notifications

- Notifications include updates on your projects, comments, likes, and messages
- You can configure notification preferences in settings
- Push notifications require browser permission

17.5 Role-Based Data Access

Different user roles have different data access levels: - **Citizens:** See public content - **Moderators:** Can view reported content - **Admins:** Can access user account information for management purposes - **Local Authorities:** May see project data relevant to their jurisdiction

18. Your Consent

By using CivilDev, you consent to: - The collection and use of information as described in this Privacy Policy - The transfer of data to third-party service providers - The public display of content you submit - Communications from us regarding platform updates and your activity

You can withdraw consent for optional processing at any time.

19. Accessibility

We are committed to making this Privacy Policy accessible to everyone. If you need this policy in an alternative format (large print, audio, braille), please contact us.

CivilDev - Your Privacy, Our Priority

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This Privacy Policy was last reviewed and approved on January 15, 2026.