

Information About Our Use Of Cookies

Interested in this issue but short of time? Here's what we think you need to know:

- We use cookies to make our website easier for you to use
- We use cookies to help stop our online forms from being used to send spam-email
- We use cookies to monitor usage so we can spot trends and make improvements
- We **do not** use cookies to identify individuals and never will
- We **do not** store personal information in cookies
- We believe that our use of cookies is very necessary for the smooth functioning of the website. We do not believe that they pose any threat to your personal privacy or online security and we recommend that you "allow" cookies

If you "disable" cookies the interactive functions of the website will not operate. For example, data-submission via forms, as well as user-registration, user-login, and many other features of the website cannot work fully without using cookies

More Detailed Information:

When did the law change and who enforces it?

The original EU legislation that became known as the "E-Privacy Directive" was published in 2003 and implemented as European Directive - 2002/58/EC. It was concerned quite widely with the protection of privacy in the electronic communications sector. In 2009 the Directive was amended by Directive 2009/136/EC that included a requirement to seek consent for cookies and similar technologies. The EU Directive entered UK law on 26 May 2011 as "The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) (Amendment) Regulations 2011". It is regulated by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) www.ico.gov.uk who decided that enforcement would commence from 26 May 2012.

What are cookies?

A cookie is used by a website to send "state information" to a Users' browser and for the browser to return the state information to the website. The state information can be used for authentication, identification of a User session, User preferences, shopping cart contents, or anything else that can be accomplished through storing text data on the User's computer.

Cookies **cannot** be programmed, **cannot** carry viruses and **cannot** install malware on the host computer. However, they can be used to track users' browsing activities which was a major privacy concern that prompted European and US law-makers to take action.

Cookies are used by most websites for a variety of reasons - often very practical reasons to do with the operation of the website. However, they are also used to monitor how people are using the website (which pages are visited and how long is spent on each page). Each "visitor session" is tracked even though no effort is made to try to identify them in person.

The new legislation now states that you must be able to opt-out from having cookies stored on their computer.

What happens if you disable cookies?

If you decide to disable cookies we record this so you don't get asked the question again. You will find that most of the website works as expected although functions that rely on cookies are obviously disabled. These functions include using online forms (e.g. our enquiry form) or any feature that requires login. We use a cookie to remember your cookie preferences, this has a couple of consequences:

- If you delete all your cookies you will have to tell us your preference again
- If you use a different device, computer profile or browser you will have to tell us your preference again
- If you ignore the “No Problem” affirmation of your acceptance of cookies the website will continue to set cookies as necessary. This approach of "implied opt-in" is specifically discussed and approved in the guidance notes issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (the organisation charged with enforcement of this legislation)

Further Information About Our Use of Cookies

Google Analytics

We use Google Analytics to monitor usage of the website. Google Analytics collects information anonymously. It reports website trends without identifying individual visitors (not by name or IP address).

Functionality

"Functionality" cookies are used to provide services or to remember settings to improve your visit.

Targeting

"Targeting" cookies are linked to services provided by third parties, such as “Like” buttons and “Share” buttons. The third party often provides these services in return for recognising that you have visited our website.