Privacy Notice

Last updated: November 2026

The Origin Hunter takes your privacy seriously and handles personal information in accordance with UK data protection law. This notice explains what information may be collected, why it is needed, how it may be used and stored, and the rights of people whose information is processed.

1. Who is responsible for your information?

The Origin Hunter is an independent family history research service operated by Sarah Maywood. Privacy questions or requests can be sent to info@theoriginhunter.co.uk.

2. What information may be collected?

Depending on the research, this may include names and contact details; dates and places of birth, marriage and death; family relationships; occupations and addresses; photographs and family documents; payment and invoice information; and information found in genealogical or historical records. Limited information about living relatives may be used where relevant to establishing or researching a family line.

3. Information about living people

The Origin Hunter will collect and use only information reasonably necessary for the research. Clients should avoid supplying unnecessary sensitive or highly private information about living relatives. Information about living people will not normally be made publicly accessible, and appropriate privacy settings will be used on genealogy platforms where available.

4. Why information is used

Personal information may be used to communicate with clients; administer commissions and payments; carry out family-history research; identify people and family relationships; create family trees; prepare Research Summaries and agreed materials; provide completed research; maintain necessary business records; and deal with later queries about the work.

5. Lawful basis

The lawful basis depends on the information and purpose. Client information will usually be processed because it is necessary for a contract or for steps requested before a contract. Legal obligations may apply to certain business records. Limited information about living relatives may be processed where necessary for the legitimate interests of providing proportionate genealogical research. Consent will be used where it is the appropriate basis. The Origin Hunter will not intentionally seek special-category or criminal-offence information about living people unless it is necessary and there is a lawful basis and any additional condition required by law.

6. Information about deceased individuals

UK data protection law generally protects living individuals rather than people who have died. The Origin Hunter will nevertheless handle sensitive family information responsibly, particularly where disclosure could affect living family members.

7. Ancestry and other research services

Research may use family-history services including Ancestry and Findmypast. Where research is carried out directly within a client-owned Ancestry tree, the client remains the owner of the tree and The Origin Hunter accesses it only through temporary Editor access granted by the client.
Where a separate working tree is created by The Origin Hunter for later delivery as a GEDCOM file, appropriate privacy settings will be used, particularly for living individuals.
Access to some original records, documents or record images may require the client's own subscription. Third-party services operate under their own terms and privacy policies.

8. Where information comes from

Information may come from the client, family members, public and historical records, archives, genealogy databases, newspapers, historical publications, publicly accessible family trees and other legitimate research sources. Where reasonably practicable, The Origin Hunter will record the source of information about living people and provide privacy information where legally required, subject to any applicable exemption.

9. Sharing information

The Origin Hunter does not sell personal information. Information may be processed using third-party services needed for research or business administration, including genealogy platforms, email, website hosting, payment and secure storage providers. Some providers may process information outside the UK; appropriate lawful transfer safeguards will be relied upon where required. Information may also be disclosed where required by law.

10. How long information is kept

Personal information will be kept only for as long as reasonably necessary for the research, client queries and legitimate legal, tax, accounting or business requirements. Client contact details, research correspondence and final Research Summaries may normally be retained for up to 12 months after completion of the project for administrative, follow-up and record-keeping purposes.
Where research has been carried out within a client-owned Ancestry tree, The Origin Hunter's temporary Editor access may be removed once the project is complete. Separate working trees and temporary research files containing information about living people will be deleted when they are no longer reasonably required for the research or handover.
Information no longer required will be securely deleted or destroyed.

11. Security

Reasonable technical and organisational measures will be used to protect personal information against accidental loss, unauthorised access, alteration or disclosure. These include appropriate account security, passwords and access controls.

12. Your data protection rights

Depending on the circumstances and lawful basis, individuals may have rights to request access to their information; correction; deletion in certain circumstances; restriction; or to object to certain processing. Where processing is based on consent, consent may be withdrawn. These rights are not absolute and may be subject to legal exemptions.

13. Complaints

Please contact The Origin Hunter first if you have concerns about how personal information has been handled. You also have the right to raise a concern with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's data protection regulator.

14. Changes to this notice

This Privacy Notice may be updated to reflect changes to The Origin Hunter's services, third-party services or data protection requirements. The current version will be available on the website.