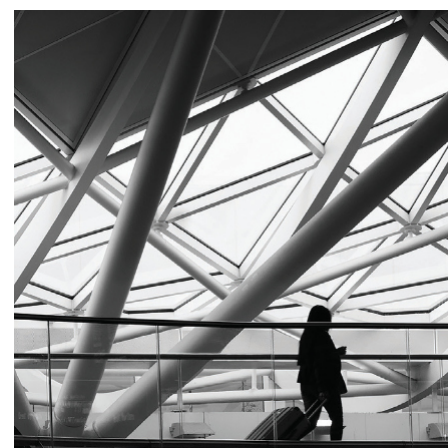
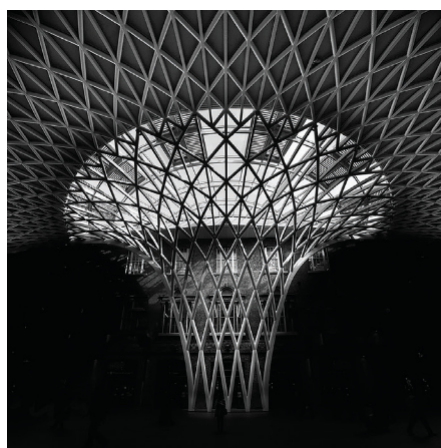
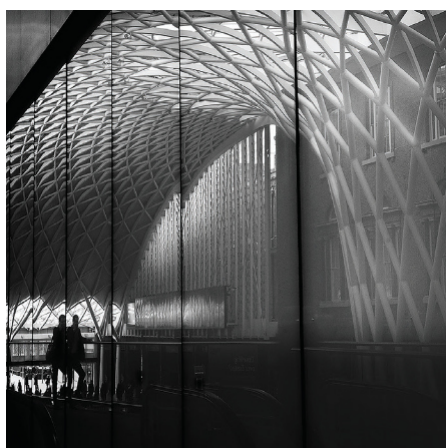


## Taking photos in public areas... Is it OK to photograph people?

Most people are unsure or confused about the legality of taking photographs in public, be it of people, buildings, or places. Is it OK to photograph people, and to use these for exhibitions, publish on website or on social media? On the whole, yes it is.



This is covered by the EU-GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Many photographers wish to take, manage and publish their work in photographic events, including use of websites and social media. For such photographers, the latest data protection legislation does not bar the taking, storing and exhibiting of images which include people and there is no effective change from the 1998 legislation. However, this will not necessarily apply if the photographs are being taken for business purposes, for sale or licence, etc.

So, for general amateur photography we are free to photograph anyone in public. However the sensitivities of the people being photographed is an important consideration and of course photographers should be sensitive to directly expressed objections from individuals being included in images taken in a public place. Whilst those using a phone are probably taking pictures for personal use, someone using a larger camera may be assumed to be professional. Denial takes time and may frustrate the photographer's purpose.

Photographers should also be mindful of situations where a person may have an expectation of privacy even in a public place.

Thanks to the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain for the above clarification.

While such photography in public places is allowed, it is often not clear which places are 'public'. A good example is shopping centres, which are generally commercially owned and so are not public areas, and any photography is usually not permitted. Similarly, railway stations, although feeling like public areas, are commercially owned. While in general the taking of photos on smartphones tends to be overlooked, using a large camera or a tripod is likely quickly to attract security guards. The same can apply to buildings in cities, where sometimes the land ownership extends well beyond the actual building line.

If you want particularly to do some serious photography in such commercial areas, then it is best to apply for a formal permit. This can be interesting! I had no trouble getting permission (with limitations) to use a

camera with tripod at King's Cross Station; just as well, as during my two hours taking photos I was approached twelve times by various security personnel and managers! On another occasion, when I sought approval to photograph the Victoria Gate centre in Leeds, I had to provide a written Risk Assessment before I was provided with a security badge; this took a bit of effort but was rewarded with a hassle-free visit. In both cases, being 'legitimate' made for a more relaxed photographic experience, resulting in photos like those attached.

If you have any questions or need help with anything photographic during this time, do feel free to contact us through the website [www.overtphoto.club](http://www.overtphoto.club) or email me personally and I will try to help or pass you on to someone who can.

**John Hodge**