

Retention of Documents Policy

The Parish Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Parish Council.

This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited.

It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Retention Schedule
- Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically.

A small percentage of the Parish Council's records will be selected for permanent preservation as part of the Council's archives and for historical research.

Responsibilities

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and they are required to manage the Council's records in such a way as to promote compliance with this policy so that information will be retrieved easily, appropriately and in a timely manner. The Clerk

must ensure that the records for which she is responsible are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines.

Individual Councillors may hold records in hard copy format or electronically at home or on their home computers. If a Councillor considers that some of these documents are important in the context of the Parish Council's records, they should ensure that the Clerk retain a copy for the official record. Individual Councillors are strongly advised to undertake "weeding" and "housekeeping" on a regular basis. On resigning from the Council Councillors should delete electronic records they hold and destroy hard copy documents.

Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which it creates in the course of its business. The retention schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.

The Clerk is expected to manage the current record keeping systems using the retention schedule and to take account of the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems. This retention schedule refers to record series regardless of the media in which they are stored.

A list will be kept of those documents disposed of to meet the requirements of the GDPR regulations.

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Computer, Website and Office	Ideally at regular intervals, of not more than 5 years they should be archived and deposited with Hampshire County Council
Agendas	5 years	Management	Computer, Website and Office	Destroy

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
Accident/Incident reports	20 years	Potential claims	Office	Destroy
Scales of fees and charges	6 years	Management	Computer and Office	Destroy
Receipt & payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive	Computer and Office	N/A
All receipt books	6 years	VAT	Office	Destroy
All Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Audit	Office	Destroy
Bank paying in books	Last completed audit year	Audit	Office	Destroy
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	Office	Destroy
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Computer and Office	Destroy
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	Computer and Office	Destroy
Paid Cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980	Office	Destroy
VAT records	6 years generally, but 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT	Computer and Office	Destroy
Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
Petty cash books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Office	Destroy
Timesheets	3 years	Audit (requirement)	Office	Destroy

		Personal injury (best practice)		
Wages books/payroll	12 years	Pension	Computer and Office	Destroy
Insurance policies	While valid (but see next 2 items below)	Management	Computer and Office	Destroy
Insurance company names and policy numbers	Indefinite	Management	Computer and Office	Destroy
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from the date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI 2753) Management	Computer and Office	Destroy
Parish Park equipment inspection reports	21 years	Personal injury (best practice)	Computer and Office	Destroy
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Computer and Office	N/A
Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Computer, Safe and Office	N/A
Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, limitation Act 1980 (as amended)	Computer, Website and Office	Destroy
Information from other	Retained for as long as it is		Computer, Website and	Destroy

bodies e.g. circulars from county associations, NALC, principal authorities	useful and relevant		Office	
Local/historical information (Councils may acquire records of local interest and accept gifts or records of general and local interest in order to promote the use of such records (defined as materials in written or other form setting out facts or events or otherwise recording Information))	Indefinite – to be securely kept for the benefit of the Parish	Local Interest	Computer, Website and Office	N/A
Magazines and journals	Council may wish to keep its own publications indefinitely For others retain for as long as they are useful and relevant.	The Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 (the 2003 Act) requires a local council which after 1 February 2004 has published works in print Printed works as defined by the 2003 Act published by a local council therefore constitute materials which the British Library holds.	Office	Bin if applicable

Record Keeping

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
<p>To ensure records are easily accessible it is necessary to comply with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of files stored in cabinets will be kept • Electronic files will be saved using relevant file names 	The electronic files will be backed up daily in the cloud	Management	Computer, Website and Office	Documentation no longer required will be disposed of, ensuring anything confidential is destroyed as confidential waste.
General correspondence	Unless it relates to specific categories outlined in the policy, correspondence, both paper and electronic, should be kept. Records should be kept for as long as they are needed for reference or accountability purposes, to comply with regulatory requirements or to protect legal and other rights and interests.	Management	Computer, Website and Office	Destroy
Correspondence relating to staff	If related to Audit, see relevant sections above. Should be kept securely and	After an employment relationship has ended, a Council may need to retain	Computer, Website and Office	Destroy

	personal data in relation to staff If related to Audit, see relevant sections above. Should be kept securely and personal data in relation to staff	and access staff records for former staff for the purpose of giving references, payment of tax, national insurance contributions and pensions, and in respect of any related legal claims made against the council.		
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Documents from legal matters, negligence and other torts

Most legal proceedings are governed by the Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). The 1980 Act provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. Where the limitation periods are longer than other periods specified the documentation should be kept for the longer period specified. Some types of legal proceedings may fall within two or more categories. If in doubt, keep for the longest of the three limitation periods.

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
Negligence	6 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Defamation	1 year		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Contract	6 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Leases	12 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Personal injury	3 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste
To recover land	12 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste

Rent	6 years		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Breach of trust	None		Computer and file	Confidential waste
Trust deeds	Indefinite		Computer and file	N/A

For Halls, Centres & Recreation Grounds

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application to hire Invoices 	6 years	VAT	Computer, Website and Office	Confidential waste
Lettings calendar	Electronic files	VAT	Computer, Website and Office	N/A
Terms and Conditions	6 years	Management	Computer, Website and Office	Bin

For Allotments

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Location Retained	Disposal
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Computer, Website and Office	N/A
Legal papers	Indefinite	Audit, Management	Computer, Website and Office	N/A

