

Box Parish Council

Retention of Records

Policy no. 27



Date Approved	July 26
Review Date	July 28
Committee	Fin & Gov

Parish Council Retention of Records Policy

1. Purpose

This Retention of Records Policy sets out the minimum periods for retaining Parish Council records to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, support good governance, protect the Council's legal interests, and provide an efficient records management system.

The Council will retain records only for as long as necessary to fulfil legal, financial, administrative, historical and operational requirements. Once the retention period has expired, records will be securely destroyed unless they are identified as having permanent historical value.

This policy should be read alongside the Council's:

- Data Protection Policy
 - Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
 - Information Security Policy
 - Cemetery Regulations (where applicable)
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2. Legal Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Local Government Act 1972
 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) Regulations 2012
 - General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977
 - Limitation Act 1980
 - VAT Act 1994
 - HMRC Record Keeping Requirements
 - Employment legislation
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3. Responsibility

The Parish Clerk is responsible for:

- Maintaining Council records.
- Ensuring records are securely stored.

- Arranging secure disposal when retention periods expire.
- Maintaining an archive of permanent records.

The Council is responsible for approving this policy and reviewing it every three years.

4. Retention Schedule

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minutes (Council and Committees)	Permanently	Historical record
Agendas	6 years	Administration
Signed Minutes	Permanently	Legal record
Policies	Superseded version plus 6 years	Governance
Standing Orders	Superseded version plus 6 years	Governance
Financial Regulations	Superseded version plus 6 years	Governance
Asset Register	Permanently	Audit
Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)	Permanently	Audit
Annual Accounts	Permanently	Audit
Budget Papers	6 years	Audit
Receipt and Payment Accounts	Permanently	Audit
Cash Books	6 years	Audit
Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank Paying-in Books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque Book Stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Invoices (Paid)	6 years	VAT
Quotations and Tender Documents	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Contracts	6 years after expiry	Contract law
VAT Records	6 years (20 years for property-related VAT where applicable)	HMRC
Petty Cash Records	6 years	VAT and Audit
Payroll Records	6 years after employment ends	HMRC
PAYE Records	3 years after tax year	HMRC
Pension Records	12 years	Pension requirements
Timesheets	3 years	Audit and employment
Insurance Policies	Current policy plus 6 years	Insurance
Employers' Liability Insurance Certificates	Permanently	Future claims
Risk Assessments	6 years after superseded	Health & Safety

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Accident Books	3 years after last entry (longer for incidents involving children)	Health & Safety
Planning Applications Received	6 years	Administration
Cemetery Registers	Permanently	Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977
Register of Burials	Permanently	Statutory requirement
Register of Graves	Permanently	Statutory requirement
Register of Fees	Permanently	Cemetery management
Exclusive Right of Burial Registers	Permanently	Cemetery management
Burial Applications	Permanently	Cemetery records
Memorial Applications	Permanently	Cemetery records
Memorial Inspection Records	Permanently	Public safety
Interment Registers	Permanently	Statutory record
Cemetery Plans	Permanently	Management
Allotment Registers	Permanently	Management
Allotment Tenancy Agreements	6 years after tenancy ends	Contract law
Hall Booking Records	6 years	VAT
Hall Letting Invoices	6 years	VAT
Members' Register of Interests	6 years	Local Government legislation
Complaints Files	6 years after closure	Administration
Correspondence (Routine)	2 years	Good practice
Correspondence (Significant)	6 years	Governance
Election Documents	1 year unless subject to challenge	Electoral law
Website Records	Superseded plus 2 years	Administration
Social Media Records	2 years	Administration

5. Permanent Records

The following shall be retained permanently:

- Council Minutes
- Annual Accounts
- AGAR
- Asset Register
- Cemetery Registers
- Burial Registers
- Registers of Exclusive Rights of Burial
- Cemetery Plans

- Register of Graves
 - Historical photographs
 - Deeds
 - Land ownership records
 - Leases
 - Title documents
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6. Disposal of Records

When records reach the end of their retention period they shall be:

- securely shredded,
- confidentially destroyed by an approved contractor,
- permanently deleted from electronic systems,
- removed from backups where appropriate.

A destruction log should record:

- description of records,
 - date destroyed,
 - method of destruction,
 - officer authorising disposal.
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7. Electronic Records

Electronic records shall be:

- backed up regularly,
 - stored securely,
 - protected by passwords and encryption where appropriate,
 - retained for the same period as paper records.
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8. Data Protection

Personal information shall only be retained where there is:

- a legal obligation,
- a contractual requirement,
- a legitimate business need,
- or the consent of the individual where appropriate.

The Council will comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every **three years**, or sooner if legislation or operational requirements change.
