



RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY

Policy Adopted April 3rd 2018

Last Review Date 13/01/2026 Minute Ref: M.295

Next Review Date – January 2029

Introduction

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 policy provides a framework through which this effective management and retention of public records can be achieved and properly audited. It covers:-

Scope

Responsibilities

Retention Schedule

Scope of the Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council. Records are defined as all those documents which relate to the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its communications, transactions and activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically. Some 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 requirements. The person with overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and she is 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 Councilors 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 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 record they hold and destroy hard copy documents. Councilors should be aware that records that they hold may be subject to the provisions of the GDPR; the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Retention Schedule

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the types of records which it creates or holds in the course of its business. The retention schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained for 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 for the different retention periods when creating new record keeping systems.

The retention schedule refers to all the Parish Council's records, irrespective of the media in which they are stored.

Please see the Retention Schedule at Appendix 1.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Cropwell Bishop Parish Council to ensure that is relevant to working practice.

Adopted by Cropwell Bishop Parish Council
3rd April 2018

APPENDIX 1

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCILS

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
• Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
• Correspondence/papers On important Local Issues/Activities regardless of the media it is stored on	Indefinite	Archive
• Routine Correspondence, papers & Emails	1 year	Management
• Scales of Fees and Charges	6 years	Management
• Receipts and Payment Account(s)	Indefinite	Archive
• Annual Return & Audited Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
• Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
• Bank Statements, including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
• Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
• Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
• Bacs Authorisation Forms	Last completed audit year	Audit
• Quotations & Tenders	6 years	Limitations Act 1980 (as amended)
• Paid Invoices	6 years	VAT
• Paid Cheques	6 years	Limitations Act 1980 (as amended)
• VAT Records	6 years generally but 20 years on VAT rents	VAT
• Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitations Act 1980 (as amended)
• Timesheets	Last completed Audit Year 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal Injury (Best Practice)
• Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
• Insurance Policies	While Valid	Management
• Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998 (SI.2753), Management

• Equipment Inspection Records	15 years	Management
• Premises Inspection Records	15 years	Management
• Risk Assessments	3 years from Last Assessment	Management
• Assets Register	Indefinite	Audit, Management
• Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
• Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
• Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
• Register of Members Interests	18 Months after individual ceases to be a member.	Management
• Declarations of Acceptance	Term of Office + 1 year	Management

Personnel/Human Resources

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
• Application forms (unsuccessful)	6 months	Management
• Applications forms (successful)	Period of Employment + 6 months	Management
• Disciplinary Records	Period of Employment + 6 months	Management
• Personal Files (appraisals/pay reviews etc.)	Period of Employment + 6 months	Management

Miscellaneous

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
• Complaints	2 years after Closure	Management
• Information Requests	2 years after Closure	Management
• Press Releases	5 years	Management
• Public Consultation	5 years	Management
• Reports, Newsletters	As long as useful	Management

For Halls, Centre, Recreation Grounds

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
• Application to hire	6 years	VAT, Audit, Management
• Lettings diaries	6 years	VAT, Audit, Management
• Copies of bills to hires	6 years	VAT, Audit, Management

For Allotments

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
• Register, Contract and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management

For Van Diemens Land

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
• Register, Contract and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management

For Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at R.B.C. or N.C.C. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recoded in the Council's minutes and are retained indefinitely. Correspondence received in connection with applications will be retained as per the below.

*General correspondence will be retained for as long as is relevant, the minimum period is 1 year. An annual review of all documentation should be carried out and items that have reached their deletion or destruction date being deleted/destroyed and the remainder be considered for archiving.