

Data Retention 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 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 the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council, and the Clerk 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.

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.

Retention of Documents

Document	Minimum Retention	Reason
Minute Book	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank Statements	7 years	Audit/management
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit plus 1 year	Management
Paying in books	Last completed audit plus 1 year	Management
Quotations	7 years	Audit
VAT records	7 years	Audit/VAT
Paid invoices	7 years	Audit/VAT
Salary records	7 years	Audit
Tax and NI records	7 years	Audit
Insurance policies	Whilst valid	Audit
Certificate of Employers Liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Certificate of Public Liability	40 years	Audit/legal
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit
Deeds and leases	Indefinite	Audit
Burial Ground records	Indefinite	Legal

Planning Applications

All planning applications and relevant decision notices are available at Braintree District Council. There is no requirement to retain duplicates locally. All Parish Council recommendations in connection with these applications are recorded in the Council minutes and are retained indefinitely.

Disposal Procedures

All sensitive documents that are no longer required for administrative reasons should be shredded and disposed of. For larger amounts of documents, a secure shredding contractor may be used.

Councillor email accounts will be deleted immediately on leaving office.

Signed: Date: 14th May 2018
Chairman Reviewed: 12th May 2025
Reviewed: 11th May 2026