

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

BRADFELD 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 and these will be lodged with Essex County Council Records Office or the Local History Village Recorder (where one exists) and details of which documents have been forwarded to them retained on Council files for future reference only.

The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Proper Officer of the Council.

The Proper Officer must ensure that records for which they are responsible are accurate, and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council's records management guidelines (detailed below) and that they take account of the council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

The Proper Officer will give guidance for good records management practice and will promote compliance with this policy.

There are no firm guidelines for the retention of general correspondence in any format. However, a regular review of all documentation should be carried out by the Proper Officer which should be at least quarterly but can be more often, with ephemeral items marked for destruction and the remainder being considered for archiving as detailed above. This will be carried out at the discretion of the Proper Officer of the Council in accordance with current Standing Order 15 (xi and xvi)

The following list indicates appropriate retention periods and the reasons for retention and refers to all records regardless of the media in which they are stored:

<u>DOCUMENT</u>	<u>MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD</u>	<u>REASON</u>
Meetings		
Minute Book	Indefinite – Minutes over 6 years old will be lodged with Essex Records office.	Archive
Meetings agendas	Last completed audit year	Audit
Finance and Payroll		
Scales of fees and charges	5 years	Management
Receipt and payments books	Indefinite – over 6 years old will be lodged with Essex Records Office	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements including deposit and savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	12 years	Statute of limitations
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Online Payment authorisation	Last completed audit year	Audit
VAT Records	6 years	VAT
Petty cash books	6 years	Tax VAT Statute of limitations
Time Sheets	2 years	Audit and Working Time Regulations
Wages books and payroll records	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance		
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Insurance Schedules	40 years	Management

Certificate of Employer's Liab.	40 years	Management
General Management		
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit Management
Cemetery		
Register of Burials	Indefinite	Management
Register of purchased graves	Indefinite	Management
Register/plan of grave spaces	Indefinite	Management
Register of Memorials	Indefinite	Management
Scales of fees and charges	5 years	Management
Risk Assessments	3 years from last assessment	Management
Recreation Grounds		
Equipment Inspection Records	25 years	Management
Risk Assessments	3 years from last assessment	Management
Planning		
Applications and Decisions Notices – all consultative documents including plans	Not retained	Held by Planning Authority
Miscellaneous		
Reports, newsletters etc. from other people or bodies	Destroy ASAP – Retain only as long as useful (Maybe archived at discretion of Proper Officer)	Management/Data protection
Routine correspondence, notes, papers and e-mails	Destroy ASAP – Retain only as long as useful (Maybe archived at discretion of Proper Officer)	Management/Data Protection
Formal Complaints	5 years after closure	Management
List of archived records and place where held	Indefinite	Archive and Management
Members		
Declaration of Acceptance of Office	Term of Office plus 1 year	Management
Register of member's interests	Term of Office plus 1 year	Management
Members allowance register	6 years	Tax, Statute of Limitations
Personnel/Human Resources		
Application forms (not interviewed or interviewed and unsuccessful)	6 months	Management and Data Protection
Personal Files	6 years after ceasing employment	Management
Disciplinary records	Retain for period of employment	Management and Data Protection

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Last review 3rd May 2022