

Parish Council of Coleford

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Document Retention & Disposal Policy

To be adopted: 27th May 2025

1. Introduction

This policy sets out how Coleford Parish Council manages, stores, retains, and disposes of documents and data. It applies to all records created, received, or maintained by the Council in the course of its business, whether in paper or electronic form. The Council will ensure that information is **not kept longer than necessary**, while retaining sufficient records to fulfil legal, financial, administrative, and historical obligations.

2. Scope

This policy covers:

- Administrative records
- Financial records
- Personnel records
- Governance documents
- Cemetery, allotment, and property records
- Emails and electronic files
- Website and social media content
- CCTV (if applicable)

A small percentage of records may be selected for **permanent preservation** due to historical value.

3. Responsibilities

- The **Clerk** is responsible for day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Councillors and staff must ensure records are created, stored, and disposed of in line with this policy.
- The Council will maintain a **Retention Schedule** and review it annually.

4. Principles of Retention

The Council will:

- Keep records only as long as necessary for statutory, legal, audit, or operational reasons.
- Store personal data securely and limit access to authorised personnel.
- Review records annually and dispose of those no longer required.
- Offer historically significant documents to the **County Archive**.

5. Secure Disposal

When the retention period expires:

- **Paper records** containing personal or confidential data must be **shredded or pulped**.
- **Electronic records** must be securely deleted so they cannot be recovered.
- Disposal must be logged in a **Destruction Register**.

6. Legal Framework

This policy supports compliance with:

- UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Local Government Act 1972
- Limitation Act 1980
- VAT Act 1994
- NALC LTN 40 (Local Council Documents & Records)

Retention & Disposal Schedule

1 Governance & Administration

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
Minutes	Indefinite	Archive	Original signed copies kept indefinitely; archived every 5 years
Agendas	5 years	Management	Shred
Accident/incident reports	20 years	Potential claims	Confidential waste; disposal list kept
Scales of fees & charges	6 years	Management	Bin
Receipt & payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive	N/A
Receipt books	6 years	VAT	Bin
Bank statements	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Cheque stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	Confidential waste
Quotations & tenders	6 years	Limitation Act	Confidential waste; disposal list kept
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	Confidential waste
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act	Confidential waste

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason	Disposal
VAT records	6 years (20 years for rents)	VAT	Confidential waste
Petty cash / postage / telephone books	6 years	Tax, VAT	Confidential waste

2 Staffing & Payroll

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Timesheets	Audit year + 3 years	Audit, personal injury	Bin
Wages/payroll	12 years	Superannuation	Confidential waste
Insurance policies	While valid	Management	Bin
Insurance policy numbers	Indefinite	Management	N/A
Employers' liability certificates	40 years	Legal requirement	Bin
Staff correspondence	3 years	Legal claims, references	Confidential waste

3 Assets, Property & Equipment

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Equipment inspection reports	21 years	Audit	Confidential waste
Investments	Indefinite	Audit	N/A
Title deeds, leases, agreements	Indefinite	Audit	N/A
Members' allowances register	6 years	Tax	Confidential waste

4 Local Information & Publications

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Local/historical information	Indefinite	Parish benefit	N/A
Magazines/journals	As long as useful	Legal Deposit Act	Bin

5 Record-Keeping Procedures

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Record-keeping procedures	Ongoing	Management	Confidential waste
General correspondence	As long as needed	Management	Shred

6 Legal Matters (Limitation Act)

Category	Retention	Disposal
Negligence	6 years	Confidential waste
Defamation	1 year	Confidential waste
Contract	6 years	Confidential waste
Leases	12 years	Confidential waste
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years	Confidential waste
Personal injury	3 years	Confidential waste
Recover land	12 years	Confidential waste

7 Halls, Centres & Recreation Grounds

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Hire applications, invoices, ticket records	6 years	VAT	Confidential waste
Lettings diaries	Linked to accounts	VAT	N/A
Terms & conditions	6 years	Management	Bin
Event monitoring forms	6 years	Management	Bin

8 Allotments

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Register & plans	Indefinite	Audit	N/A
Minutes	Indefinite	Audit	N/A
Legal papers	Indefinite	Audit	N/A

9 Burial Grounds

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Burial registers, plans, memorial records, interment applications, disposal certificates	Indefinite	LACO 1977	N/A
Exclusive Right of Burial certificates	Indefinite	LACO 1977	N/A

10 Planning Papers

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Applications	1 year	Management	Bin
Appeals	1 year (unless significant)	Management	Bin
Tree applications	1 year	Management	Bin
Local Development Plans	While in force	Reference	Bin
Local Plans	While in force	Reference	Bin
Neighbourhood Plans	Indefinite	Historical	N/A

11 CCTV Records

Document	Retention	Reason	Disposal
Daily notes	Daily	Data protection	Confidential waste
Radio rotas	1 week	Management	Confidential waste
Work rotas	1 month	Management	Confidential waste
Observation sheets	3 years	Data protection	Confidential waste
Stats	3 years	Data protection	Confidential waste
Signing-in sheets	3 years	Management	Confidential waste
Review requests	3 years	Data protection	Confidential waste
Discs	As required	Data protection	Confidential waste
Procedure manuals	Destroy on renewal	Management	Confidential waste
Code of Practice	Destroy on renewal	Management	Confidential waste
Photographs/digital prints	31 days	Data protection	Confidential waste