

BETCHTON PARISH COUNCIL

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS POLICY

This Policy was adopted by Betchton Parish Council on 1st May 2025

Retention of documents

Documents should be retained for audit, staff management, tax liabilities, and the eventuality of legal disputes and legal proceedings. This policy indicates the appropriate minimum retention period.

Retention of documents for legal purposes

The below table lists the limitation periods of time where legal claims may be brought under the Limitation Act 1980 (as amended). The 1980 Act provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period.

Category	Limitation Period
Negligence (and other 'Torts')	6 years
Defamation	1 year
Contract	6 years
Leases	12 years
Sums recoverable by statute	6 years
Personal Injury	3 years
To Recover Land	12 years
Rent	6 years
Breach of Trust	None

Where the limitation periods above are longer than other periods specified in the attached annex, the documentation should be kept for the longer period specified.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information Considerations

The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records issued under section 46 of the

Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies to public authorities and also bodies which are subject to the Public Records Act 1958 (the 1958 Act). Although local councils are not subject to the 1958 Act, they should familiarise themselves with the contents of the Code of Practice so they can formulate their own system of records management.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will be applied from 25th May 2018.

Under the GDPR, the data protection principles set out the main responsibilities for organisations.

Article 5 of the GDPR requires that personal data shall be:

- a) processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to individuals;
- b) collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes; further processing for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes shall not be considered to be incompatible with the initial purposes;

- c) adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed;
- d) accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date; every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that inaccurate personal data, having regard to the purposes for which they are processed, are erased or rectified without delay;
- e) kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed; personal data may be stored for longer periods insofar as the personal data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes subject to implementation of the appropriate technical and organisational measures required by the GDPR to safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals; and
- f) processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE AUDIT OF PARISH COUNCILS

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON
Personnel		
Personnel Records	3 years after employee leaves	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Disciplinary / Grievances	Review 6 years after last action	Management
Recruitment Documents	6 months	Management
Wages Records	6 years	Audit
Pension Records	12 years	Superannuation
Timesheets	Last completed audit year + 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal Injury (best practice)
Members allowances register	6 years + current	Tax Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Audit		
Scales of fees	6 years + current	Management
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books	6 years + current	VAT
Bank Statements	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	6 years + current	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid Invoices	6 years + current	VAT
Paid Cheques	6 years + current	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT Records	6 years + current year generally but 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT
Petty Cash	6 years + current	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Contracts and Procurement		
Unsuccessful Tenders	2 years	Audit
Successful Tenders	6 years + current	Audit
Administration		
Minute Books	Indefinite	Archive
Insurance Policies	While Valid	Management

Certificates for Insurance against Liability for employees	40 years from the date on which insurance commenced or was renewed	The Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance Regulations 1988 (Sl. 2753), Management
Litigation	6 years after folder closure	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Title, deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit, Management
For Halls, Centre, Recreation Grounds		
Application to hire, lettings diaries, copies of bills to hires, record of tickets issued	6 years + current	VAT
For Allotments		
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Plot holder tenancy records	6 years + current	Audit