



BIDBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Retention and Disposal of Records

Overview

The purpose of this document is to provide a policy framework to ensure that particular documents (or sets of documents) are dealt with in the correct manner and are retained and/or disposed of in the correct method and timescale. This policy gives the Council in its roles as councillors and trustees for the Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground, a system for the management of paper and electronic records.

In accordance with The Data Protection Act, information held on anyone will be disposed of in a timely and appropriate manner. Documents of any kind, including minutes, general correspondence, planning applications, accounts or maps will be disposed of in a manner that is safe and environmentally friendly. Paper items will be placed in recycle bins for collection at a later date or taken to a local recycling centre. Paper documents that contain personal data must be shredded before disposal. Electronic information will be disposed of via the 'delete' button.

Under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2001 various documents are required to be available to both members of the public and other groups and organisations. This Publication Scheme aids the Council in keeping track of records and letting the world at large know what we have. The retention schedule below ensures all officers, councillors, and other staff, know exactly what is required to be kept and what requires safe disposal.

Step One

Before disposing of documents, ascertain the following:-

- Is the information available else-where? This may depend on where it originated from. (Borough, District and County Councils have large archive areas and may be able to access the information of others as well)
- Will you need to refer to it on a regular basis?
- Would it make your job easier if you kept a copy or harder if you destroyed it?
- Can the information be précisised in some way and kept in a smaller file?
- Can the information be kept in a different format?

Step Two

Check with other bodies and organisations that send you documents and information. If they keep copies of all their documents you may be able to access their archives.

Check whether something has to be kept by law.

If there are papers, documents or electronic files that have a statute of limitations which state how long you must keep something, this will make the third step much easier.

Step Three

Once you have decided exactly what you are going to keep, the items should be placed in envelopes or files appropriately labelled then sealed and placed in the Parish Council archives. At a later stage, dependent on the amount of information held by the Council, they must be deposited in the County Archives.

Items placed in County Archives still belong to the people who placed them there – you are not handing over ownership.

Remember to keep a list of everything you archive, whether in your own offices or others, this will aid retrieval should the need arise.

The following is a schedule of documents and the procedures for their retention or disposal. This is regularly updated in accordance with any changes to legal requirements.

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minutes of council/committee/ANRG Trust meetings. Reports and other documents circulated with agendas.	Indefinite	Archive. Once a signed copy of the minutes is available, these along with any reports and other documents form a permanent record and are retained. All notes taken at the meeting and any draft copies of minutes should be disposed of, including any recordings taken.
Agendas	6 years	Management. Copies available on Council website.
Receipts and payment/income and expenditure accounts	7 years	Archive
Scale of fees and charges	7 years	Management
Receipt books of all kinds	7 years	VAT
Bank statements for all accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Paid invoices	7 years	VAT
Paid cheques	7 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	7 years	VAT
Timesheets	Last completed audit year 3 years	Audit (requirement) Personal injury (best practice)
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificates for insurance against Employers Liability	40 years from date the insurance commenced or was renewed	Management. The Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1988 (SI. 2753)
Investments	Indefinite	Audit, Management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts.	Indefinite	Audit, Management. Original kept in a fire-proof safe or archived with a copy kept for the office.
Bylaws and orders.	Indefinite	One copy of each is sufficient.
Members allowances register.	7 years	Tax. Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Quotations and tenders	7 years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Community magazines and newsletters.	Indefinite	One copy of each edition. These are a very useful social history account.
Press cuttings book. Photographs.	Indefinite	Useful for social history and showing the changes taking place over time in the area.
Any records dating from before 1894. Parish Councils now tend to hold these and they are from the days of the poor laws, surveyors' records, enclosures & tithes etc.	Indefinite	Due to their valuable history, should be in controlled environment.

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Planning applications and related papers for major or controversial developments; also planning appeal decisions.	While active	All planning paperwork is available from TWBC who are the responsible planning authority.
Cemetery		
Register of fees collected. Register of burials. Register of purchased graves. Register/plan of grave spaces. Register of memorials. Applications for interment. Applications for rights to erect memorials. Disposal certificates. Copy certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial	Indefinite	Archives. Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 204)
Allotments		
Plans and registers	7 years	Audit, Management
Arthur Nicholson Recreation Ground		
Application for use	Retain whilst active.	Management