



Stamfordham Parish Council – Document Retention and Disposal Policy - May 2026

Version: May 2026 **Adopted:** May 2026 **Review Date:** May 2027

1. Introduction

Stamfordham Parish Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with legal and regulatory obligations and to support effective governance.

This policy provides a framework for the retention, storage and secure disposal of records to ensure:

- Compliance with statutory requirements
- Protection of personal data in line with UK GDPR
- Efficient access to information
- Transparency and accountability

2. Scope

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of its business.

Records include:

- Paper documents
- Electronic records (including emails)
- Scanned documents
- Audio/visual recordings
- Cloud-based and shared drive files

Records are defined as all documents that facilitate the business of the Council and provide evidence of its transactions or activities.

3. Responsibilities

The Parish Council has overall responsibility for ensuring records are managed appropriately.

The Clerk to the Parish Council is responsible for:

- Implementing and maintaining this policy
- Ensuring records are stored securely
- Ensuring records are retrievable in a timely manner
- Managing retention and disposal processes

All Councillors must ensure that any Council-related records they hold are managed in accordance with this policy.



4. Relationship with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Freedom of Information Policy
- Data Protection Policy

5. Data Protection and GDPR

The Council will comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

Personal data will:

- Not be kept longer than necessary
- Be securely stored and protected
- Be disposed of securely once no longer required

Retention periods in this policy represent the maximum period records should normally be kept, unless there is a valid legal or operational reason to retain them longer.

6. Retention and Disposal Principles

Records must only be kept for as long as necessary

Once retention periods expire, records must be:

- Securely destroyed (paper: shredding; electronic: permanent deletion), or
- Archived where appropriate
- A record of disposal should be maintained for significant records, including:
 - Description of records
 - Date of destruction
 - Method of disposal
 - Authorised by

7. Retention Schedule

The following table sets out the minimum retention periods for Council records.

FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE

DOCUMENT	Minimum Retention	Reason
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Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Scale of fees and charges	6 years	Management
Annual return	Indefinite	Management
Receipts and payments accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	VAT
Bank statements (including savings accounts)	Last completed audit	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit	Audit
Quotations and tenders	6 years	Audit
Paid invoices	6 years	Audit / VAT
VAT records	6 years (20 years for VAT on rents)	Audit / VAT
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Tax / VAT
Wages books	12 years	Tax
Insurance policies	While valid	Management
Certificate of Employers' Liability Insurance	40 years	Legal requirement
Investments	Indefinite	Audit
Assets register	Indefinite	Audit
Deeds, leases, licences	Indefinite	Archive / Legal
Playground inspection reports	40 years	Insurance
Members' allowances register	6 years	Tax
Applications for co-option	Term of office + 1 year	Management
Declarations of acceptance of office	Term of office + 1 year	Management
Members' register of interests	Term of office + 1 year	Management
Employee records	Employment period + 6 years	Tax / Employment law
Complaints	Resolution + 1 year	Management
Magazines, journals, general information	3 months	Management

Routine correspondence and emails	6 months after issue completed	Management
Council documents (superseded versions)	6 years	Audit / Management
Risk assessments	6 years	Audit / Management

PLANNING PAPERS

DOCUMENT	Minimum Retention	Reason
Planning permission granted	Until development completed	Management
Planning permission granted on appeal	Indefinite	Management
Planning permission refused	Until appeal period expires	Management

ALLOTMENTS

DOCUMENT	Minimum Retention	Reason
Register and plans	Indefinite	Audit / Management

DOCUMENTATION FOR LEGAL PURPOSES

DOCUMENT	Minimum Retention	Reason
Negligence	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Defamation	1 year	Limitation Act 1980
Contract	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Sums recoverable	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Leases	12 years	Limitation Act 1980
Personal injury	3 years	Limitation Act 1980
Recovery of land	12 years	Limitation Act 1980
Rent	6 years	Limitation Act 1980
Breach of trust	No limit	Limitation Act 1980

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- Guidance from NALC or ICO is updated
- Council practices change