

HUGGATE PARISH COUNCIL

DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

1. Introduction

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

This policy establishes a framework for the retention, storage, archiving and disposal of Council records. It applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Council in the course of carrying out its functions.

Records may be held in paper or electronic form. Both formats are subject to the same retention requirements.

The Council will retain records only for as long as necessary to fulfil statutory, operational, financial and historical requirements and will dispose of records securely when they are no longer required.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Local Government Act 1972
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Limitation Act 1980
- Accounts and Audit Regulations
- Employment legislation
- HMRC record-keeping requirements

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Council records
- Financial records
- Personnel records
- Contracts and agreements
- Property records
- Planning consultation records
- Electronic documents and emails
- Photographs, recordings and digital media

- Archived historical records

4. Responsibilities

Parish Council

The Council is responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for the management of records.

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

The Clerk shall:

- Maintain records in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure records are stored securely.
- Arrange for records to be archived or destroyed when appropriate.
- Maintain awareness of statutory retention requirements.
- Suspend destruction where litigation, investigation, audit or Freedom of Information requests are pending.

5. Storage and Security

Records shall be:

- Stored securely.
- Protected against unauthorised access.
- Backed up where held electronically.
- Retained in accordance with data protection legislation.

Confidential records shall be shredded or otherwise securely destroyed when disposal is authorised.

Electronic records shall be permanently deleted from systems and storage devices where appropriate.

6. Archiving

Certain records have permanent historical value and shall be retained indefinitely or transferred to an appropriate archive service.

Examples include:

- Signed Council minutes
- Historic photographs
- Documents relating to significant parish events
- Records relating to Council-owned assets and land

7. Disposal of Records

Records may only be destroyed:

- At the end of the approved retention period;
- Where there is no outstanding audit, investigation, legal action or information request;
- By secure and confidential means.

The Clerk shall maintain a record of significant disposals where appropriate.

8. Retention Schedule

Governance and Administration

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Signed Council minutes	Permanent	Archive
Agenda papers and supporting reports	6 years	Destroy
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (superseded versions)	6 years after replacement	Destroy
Policies and procedures (superseded versions)	6 years after replacement	Destroy
Register of Members' Interests	Current plus 6 years	Destroy
Election documentation	Current term plus 6 years	Destroy
Complaints records	6 years after closure	Destroy
Correspondence of routine value	2 years	Destroy
Correspondence of significant value	Permanent or archive	Archive

Financial Records

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Annual accounts and audit records	Permanent	Archive
Cash books	6 years	Destroy
Invoices paid and received	6 years	Destroy
VAT records	6 years	Destroy
Bank statements	6 years	Destroy
Payroll records	6 years	Destroy
Asset register	Permanent	Archive
Insurance policies and claims	6 years after expiry/settlement	Destroy
Grant applications and supporting records	6 years after completion	Destroy

Employment Records

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Personnel files	6 years after employment ends	Destroy
Payroll and pension records	6 years after employment ends (longer where pension regulations require)	Destroy
Recruitment records (unsuccessful applicants)	6 months	Destroy
Health and safety records relating to employees	6 years after employment ends	Destroy
Accident books and reports	3 years from last entry (or longer where required by law)	Destroy

Property and Assets

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Title deeds and land ownership records	Permanent	Archive
Leases and tenancy agreements	12 years after expiry	Destroy
Building and maintenance records	Life of asset plus 6 years	Destroy
Health and safety inspections	6 years	Destroy

Planning Records

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Planning consultation responses	6 years	Destroy
Significant planning matters affecting Council assets	Permanent	Archive

Data Protection and Information Requests

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Freedom of Information requests	3 years after closure	Destroy
Subject Access Requests	3 years after closure	Destroy
Data breach records	6 years after closure	Destroy

Electronic Records and Emails

Record Type	Retention Period	Action
Routine emails	Delete when no longer required	

Emails forming part of official records	Retain in accordance with relevant category above	
Website content (historic copies)	As required for administrative purposes	Review and delete

9. Litigation Hold

Where litigation, investigation, audit, complaint, insurance claim, Freedom of Information request or Subject Access Request is ongoing or reasonably anticipated, destruction of relevant records shall be suspended until the matter is concluded.

10. Review

This policy shall be reviewed every two years, or sooner if legislation or operational requirements change.

Document Control

Policy Title: Document Retention Policy

Adopted by: Huggate Parish Council

Date Adopted: 15th June 2026

Review Date: 15th June 2028