

**BRYMPTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY**

**Retention Schedule for Council Records**

The Retention Schedule includes the main types of Council records. Each entry lists the record series along with the proposed action, the retention periods and reasons for the action. Further information can be sought from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and, in particular, Legal Topic Note LTN 40.

The following information provides an explanation for each of the three action terms used within the schedule.

**Records identified for permanent preservation**

Records in this category have been identified for permanent retention. These should be deposited with the Somerset Heritage Centre once there is no longer an administrative need for them to be kept locally.

The only financial records recommended for deposit are the annual audited accounts and should be transferred to the local Somerset Heritage Centre after the minimum retention period or once they become inactive.

**Records to be destroyed**

A large number of the Parish Council records can be destroyed once they become inactive or the minimum retention period expires. Financial records account for the majority of this category. These shall be kept for a minimum of 6 years after the last entry (Limitation Act 1980 (as amended), VAT Act 1994 etc.), but may be retained for longer depending on local circumstances. Records not given a minimum retention period can be destroyed once there is no longer an administrative requirement for their custody. If the Council is unsure whether a document or series of records should be destroyed, then please contact the local Somerset Heritage Centre for further guidance.

To protect confidential information, all records assigned for disposal shall be securely destroyed. Paper records containing confidential information shall be shredded or pulped, and not simply thrown out with other classes of records. Electronic or machine-readable records will require a two-step process for assured confidential destruction:

- Deletion of the contents of digital files, and
- The use of commercially available software applications to remove all residual data from the storage device. These processes may be outsourced to credible commercial companies who specialise in confidential destruction of records.

The Limitations Act 1980 (as amended) provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. The table below sets out the different limitation periods for different categories of claim. (Please see the NALC Legal Topic Note 40 for further information):

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

RECORD	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD
<p><b>Administration</b></p> <p>Signed Minutes of Council Meetings                      Reports &amp; other documents circulated with agendas not attached to signed Minutes                      Agendas                      Councillors' Declarations of Office and copy of DBS form                      Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities                      Quotations &amp; tenders for major works                      Quotations &amp; tenders for minor works                      Routine correspondence, papers &amp; e-mails</p> <p>Personnel records                      Health &amp; Safety records</p> <p>Planning applications &amp; related papers                      Insurance policy</p>	<p>Transfer to Somerset Heritage Centre as soon as practicable</p> <p>Retain as long as useful                      Indefinite                      Term of office plus two years</p> <p>Indefinite                      12 years                      12 years                      Retain as long as useful                      3 months after ceasing employment                      Indefinite                      Retain until appeal period has expired                      Retain certificate for 40 years</p>
<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Financial Return to External Auditor                      Bank Statements                      Bank paying-in book &amp; cheque book                      Paid invoices                      VAT records                      Members Allowances Register</p>	<p>Keep for 10 years                      Keep for 3 years                      Keep for 3 years                      6 years                      6 years                      6 years</p>
<p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <p>Newslink                      Reports, guides, handbooks etc received from other bodies</p>	<p>5 years</p> <p>Retain as long as useful</p>

Review date: June 2019