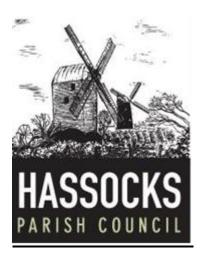
Hassocks Parish Council Document Retention Policy Approved 1 July 2025 (minute ref PC25/19)



DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hassocks Parish Council recognises the need to retain documentation, paper and/or electronic, for audit purposes, staff management, tax liabilities and the eventuality of legal disputes and proceedings.
- 1.2 In agreeing a document retention scheme, the council has addressed these needs, and taken into account its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972, Public Records Act 1958, the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998, the Limitation Act 1980, the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, the Local Government (Records) Act 1962, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records Code 2002, Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

2. Retention of documents for legal purposes

2.1 Most legal proceedings are governed by the Limitation Act 1980. The 1980 Act provides that legal claims may not be commenced after a specified period. The specified period varies, depending on the type of claim in question. The table below sets out the limitation periods for the different categories of claim.

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	10 years	
To recover land	12 years	
Rent	6 years	
Breach of trust	None	

2.2 Some types of legal proceedings may fall into two or more categories. In these circumstances, the documentation should be kept for the longest of the differing limitation periods.

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- 2.3 As there is no limitation period in respect of trusts, the council will never destroy trust deeds and schemes and other similar documentation.
- 2.4 Some limitation periods can be extended. Examples include:
 - where individuals first become aware of damage caused at a later date (e.g. in the case of personal injury);
 - where damage is latent (e.g. to a building);
 - where a person suffers from a mental incapacity;
 - where there has been a mistake or where one party has defrauded another or concealed relevant facts.
- 2.5 In such circumstances, the council will weigh up (i) the costs of storing relevant documents and (ii) the risks of:
 - claims being made;
 - the value of the claims; and
 - the inability to defend any claims made should relevant documents be destroyed.

3. Document retention schedule

3.1 Hassocks Parish Council has agreed a minimum document retention schedule, based on the obligations under the previously named acts, codes, orders and regulations as set out below:

DOCUMENT	MINIMUM RETENTION PERIOD	REASON	
Finance			
Insurance policies	While valid	Management	
Bank statements, including savings/deposit accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit	
Bank paying-in books Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit	
Timesheets	3 years	Limitation Act 1980	
Scale of fees and charges	6 years	Management	
Receipt books of all kinds, including ledgers	6 years	VAT	
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT	
Paid cheques	6 years	Limitation Act 1980	
VAT records, P60s and P45s	6 years	VAT, Tax	
Petty cash books	6 years	Tax, VAT, Limitation Act 1980	
Salary Records	6 years	Superannuation	
Certificates for insurance against liability for employees	40 years from date on which the insurance commenced or was renewed	Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998, Management	
Receipt and payments account(s)	Indefinitely	Archive	

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Insurance company names and policy numbers	Indefinitely	Management			
Investments	Indefinitely	Audit, Management			
Annual accounts and asset registers	Indefinitely	Archive			
Personnel					
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates	6 months	DBS Checks: Guidance for Employers (Dec 2024)			
Unsuccessful application forms & reference requests	1 year	Limitations Act 1980 Management			
Members allowances register	6 years	Tax, Limitation Act 1980			
Pension contribution records	6 years	Pensions Act 2014			
Personnel records, including SSP and maternity records	For duration of employment + 6 years	Limitations Act 1980 Management			
Corporate					
Unsuccessful tender	Until final payment of contract let is	Limitations Act 1980			
documentation	made				
Successful tender documentation & contracts	6 years from date of final payment	Limitations Act 1980			
Minutes & Agendas	Indefinitely	Archive			
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts (Land/Assets)	Indefinitely	Audit, Management			
	Health & Safety				
Accident book	21 years	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Act 2013 Potential Claims			
Play Equipment Inspection Reports	21 years	Potential Claims			
Asbestos and hazardous materials records	Indefinitely	Asbestos Regulations			
	Additional				
General Correspondence	Records should be kept for as long as they are needed for reference or accountability purposes, to comply with regulatory requirements or to protect legal and other rights and interests.	Data Protection Act 2018 Limitation Act 1980			

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Allotment Tenancy Agreements	Length of Tenancy + 3 years	Management Limitation Act 1980
For Community Sports Pavilion and Recreation Grounds/facilities	6 years	VAT Management
For Allotments Register. Plans & Legal Papers	Indefinitely	Audit, Management
For Burial Grounds All burial records & associated documentation	Indefinitely	Archives, Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977

3.2 The need to retain any documents not included in the above schedule should be considered on an individual basis. As a guide, and in the absence of any prevailing act, code, order or regulation to the contrary, documents may be destroyed if they are no longer of use or relevant. If in any doubt, advice should be sought from the Parish Clerk.