

GREAT BADDOW PARISH COUNCIL
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The Freedom of Information Act covers all recorded information, including e-mails, microfiche, CCTV, digital, audio. It also covers hand written notes and hand written notes made on documents.

The penalty for not complying with the Act is 2 years in prison for the Chief Executive and/or £5000 fine.

Policy for Retention and Disposal of Documents

The Clerk of the Council has lead responsibility for records management within the Council. Appropriate training and resources will be made available to enable the records management function to be maintained across all the Council's activities.

Records of all the Council's business activities should be complete and accurate enough to allow employees and their successors to undertake appropriate actions in the context of their responsibilities, to facilitate an audit or examination, to protect the legal and other rights of the Council and to provide authenticity of the records so that evidence derived from them is shown to be credible and authoritative.

Records created by the Council should be arranged in a record keeping system that will enable the Council to obtain the maximum benefit from the quick and easy retrieval of information.

An information survey or record audit will help to promote control over the records and provide valuable data for developing appraisal and disposal procedures.

Record Closure

Records should be closed as soon as they have ceased to be of active use other than for reference purposes. As a general rule, files should be closed after five years and if action continues, a further file should be opened. An indication that a file of paper records or folder of electronic records has been closed should be shown on the record itself as well as noted in the index or database of the files/folders.

Record Selection

The Council's selection policy for retention and disposal is as follows:

DOCUMENT	RETENTION PERIOD	ACTION
Minutes	Indefinite	Retain in office and archive at CRO after 25 years
Scales of Fees and Charges	5 years	Destroy after 5 years

Receipts & Payments book	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
Bank Statements	Last completed audit year	Review after 5 years and destroy
Bank Paying in Books	Last completed audit year	Review after 5 years and destroy
Cheque Book stubs	Last completed audit year	Review after 5 years and destroy
Quotations and tenders	12 years/indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Paid Invoices	6 years	Review after 6 years and destroy
Paid Cheques	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
VAT Records	6 years	Review after 6 years and destroy
Petty cash, postage and telephone books	6 years	Review after 6 years and destroy
Time Sheets	2 years	Destroy after 2 years
Wages Books	12 years	Retain in long term storage
Employers Liability Insurance certificate	Indefinite	Retain in office
Insurance Policies	While valid	Review after 5 years and destroy
Investments	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Title Deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Deposit at bank
Members Allowance Register	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
For Halls, Centres, Recreation Grounds		
Application to hire	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
Letting Diaries	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
Copies of bills to hirers	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
Record of Tickets issued	6 years	Destroy after 6 years
For Allotments		
Register of Plans	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
For Burial Grounds		
Register of Fees Collected	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage

Register of Burials	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Register of Purchased Graves	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Register/plan of grave spaces	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Register of Memorials	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Applications for Interment	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Application for right to erect a memorial	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Disposal Certificates	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
Copy of certificates of grant of exclusive right of burial	Indefinite	Retain in long term storage
General Correspondence and Topic Files		<p>The retention time will be marked on all folders. Two years after the last entry, files will be taken out of the office and moved into long-term storage for a further three years. After three years they will be reviewed and will normally be destroyed unless the contents are potentially of interest or of historical significance. Files marked for a longer retention period will normally be stored for 20 years and then disposed of unless they are of interest or of historical significance.</p> <p>Files that are being kept for the longer period are being stored to build up historical perspective. Personal data will be thinned from these files after 5 years and for the remaining 15 years, summary data will be kept. Longer term storage will normally refer to correspondence on actual or potential fixed assets of</p>

		the parish.
Newsletters, newspapers and magazines		These will be kept in the office for one year. After one year The Clerk, County Update, The Groundsman and LCR will be moved into long-term storage. Other items will be disposed of unless there are particular items that need to be kept for reference purposes, in which case they will be placed on the appropriate file
Personnel Files		Information of record will be kept for 7 years after the person has left the employ of the Council. After that, summary data will be kept indefinitely.
Interview and other connected personnel processes		Files will be kept for 6 months after the date of the interview.

Any records not selected for permanent preservation and which have reached the end of their administrative life must be destroyed in as secure a manner as is necessary for the level of confidentiality they bear. A record of their destruction, showing their reference, description and date of destruction should be maintained and preserved by the Clerk of the Council.

This policy is deemed to cover all documents whether in hard copy (e.g. letters etc.), electronic format (e.g. e-mails etc.) or in any other recording medium.

If a record due for destruction is known to be the subject of a request for information, destruction should be delayed until disclosure has taken place or, if the Council has decided not to disclose the information, until the complaint and appeal provisions of the Freedom of Information Act have been exhausted.

This policy statement will be reviewed in March 2010.

Ann C. Wood
Clerk of the Council

10th March 2008