



DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY

Review Date: 17th August 2026

Purpose

Carharrack Parish Council is committed to maintaining accurate, secure and accessible records in accordance with statutory requirements and recognised good practice.

This policy establishes a consistent approach to the retention, storage and disposal of Council records and ensures compliance with:

- Local Government Act 1972
- Local Government Act 2003
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Limitation Act 1980
- NALC Model Financial Regulations
- JPAG Practitioners' Guide

Objectives

The Council aims to:

- comply with legal retention requirements;
- protect important historical records;
- dispose of records securely when no longer required;
- reduce unnecessary storage;
- protect personal information;
- ensure records remain available for operational, legal and audit purposes.

Scope

This policy applies to all records created or received by Carharrack Parish Council regardless of format, including:

- paper files;
- electronic documents;
- emails;
- photographs;
- maps;
- audio and video recordings;
- scanned records.

Responsibilities

Full Council

The Council is responsible for approving this policy and ensuring compliance with legal requirements.

Responsible Financial Officer / Clerk

The Clerk is responsible for:

- maintaining Council records;
- implementing this policy;
- authorising secure disposal;
- maintaining disposal records where appropriate;
- reviewing retention periods.

Principles

The Council will ensure records are:

- accurate;
- secure;
- accessible when required;
- retained only for as long as necessary;
- disposed of securely.

Records containing personal information shall be processed in accordance with the Council's Privacy Notice.

Disposal of Records

When records have reached the end of their retention period they shall be:

- securely shredded if paper;
- permanently deleted if electronic;
- confidentially destroyed where personal or sensitive information is involved.

Where records are considered to have historical value they shall be retained permanently or transferred to the appropriate archive.

Litigation and Investigations

No records shall be destroyed where:

- litigation is pending;
- a complaint or investigation is ongoing;
- a Freedom of Information request is outstanding;
- an insurance claim remains unresolved;
- the Council has been advised to preserve records.

Retention periods shall be suspended until the matter has concluded.

Electronic Records

Electronic records shall be:

- securely backed up;
- protected against unauthorised access;
- deleted in accordance with this policy.

Email records shall be retained according to their business purpose rather than their format.

Historical Records

The Council recognises that certain records have permanent historical value.

These include:

- signed minutes;
- title deeds;
- property records;
- historic photographs;
- significant correspondence;
- byelaws;
- council newsletters.

Where appropriate these shall be deposited with Cornwall Archives.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changes.

Disposal Register

The Clerk should maintain a register recording:

- description of records destroyed;
- date of destruction;
- method of destruction;
- authorising officer.

This register provides an audit trail demonstrating compliance with this policy.

Document Retention Schedule

Record	Minimum Retention
Signed Council Minutes	Permanent
Agendas	Permanent with minutes
Committee reports	5 years
Council policies (superseded)	6 years
Standing Orders & Financial Regulations	Permanent record of superseded versions
Councillors' Register of Interests	Term of office
Declarations of Acceptance of Office	Term of office + 6 years
Elections	Current term + 6 years

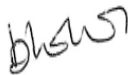
Planning consultation responses	6 years
Planning applications (copies)	Until decision unless required longer
Contracts under seal	12 years after expiry
Other contracts	6 years after expiry
Successful tenders	6 years
Unsuccessful tenders	2 years
Insurance policies	7 years after expiry
Risk assessments	Review current versions; retain superseded copies for 6 years
Accident books	3 years after last entry (or longer where legislation requires)
Health & Safety records	6 years minimum
Asset Register	Permanent record
Title deeds	Permanent
Leases	Duration plus 12 years
VAT records	6 years
Accounting records	6 years after audit
Bank statements	6 years
Invoices	6 years
Payroll records	6 years
Pension records	Permanently where required by legislation
Playground Inspection Reports (where applicable)	21 years
Employee personnel files	6 years after employment ends
Job applications (unsuccessful)	6 months
Complaints records	6 years after closure
Freedom of Information requests	3 years
Subject Access Requests	3 years after completion
Cemetery records (where applicable)	Permanent
Allotment tenancy agreements	6 years after tenancy ends
Photographs of historical significance	Permanent
Website archives	As required for administrative purposes

Updates to This Policy

This policy was last updated on 6th August 2026 and reviewed at Council Meeting 17th August 2026 as detailed in meeting point 19

Implementation

This policy takes effect from 17th August 2026 .

Name	Position	Signature	Date
Cllr Bettina Holland	Chairperson		17.08.2026