

KENNINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Records Retention Policy

This Policy was adopted by Kennington Community Council (the “Council”) at its meeting held on 08 May 2024.

1. Retention Guidelines for the Council

The Schedule accompanying these guidelines displays the main types of records which may be kept by the Council. These may be in many different forms such as paper records, photographs, or electronic documents. Many of these are required to be preserved for long periods or indefinitely, for legal, financial or historical purposes, and may ultimately be deposited with the county archive service, Kent Archives. Others may be destroyed when there is no longer an administrative requirement. It is therefore important to establish guidelines for common document types to help management of retention.

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

2. Records identified for permanent preservation

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

2.2. Documents earmarked for permanent preservation are usually identifiable if they have been stored as discrete groups. When no organised filing system is employed this process can be challenging. Other record series are complicated regardless of their filing, e.g. correspondence and planning files. In these cases clerks are often best placed to evaluate which documents relate to significant local issues. Such records should be identified prior to their transfer to the Kent Archives.

2.3. Typically the only financial records recommended for deposit are the payment and receipt books or the annual audited accounts if the former has not survived. These are often filed with receipts and payments that are not necessary for preservation and should be weeded prior to their transfer to the Kent Archives.

3. Records to be reviewed by Kent Archives

3.1. Records in this category should be transferred to Kent Archives after the minimum retention period or once they become inactive. An archivist will then review the collection and select documents to preserve. Those records not selected may be safely destroyed by the Clerk, or retained locally.

4. Records to be destroyed by the Clerk

4.1. A large number of Council records can be destroyed once they become inactive or the minimum retention period expires. Financial records account for the majority of this category. Typically these must be kept for a minimum of 6 years after the last entry (Limitation Act 1980, 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 you are unsure whether a document or series of records should be destroyed then please contact Kent Archives for further guidance.

4.2. To protect confidential information, all records assigned for disposal should be securely destroyed. Paper records containing confidential information should 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.

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4.3.

RECORDS	RETENTION PERIOD	ACTION	REASON
ADMINISTRATIVE			
Signed council and committee minutes	Transfer to Kent Archives after 6 years or once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Draft minutes	Until the date of confirmation of the minutes	Destroy	Operational
Agendas	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Reports and other documents circulated with agendas	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement. Destroy these reports if copies are already included with signed minutes	Review	Common practice
Audio and video recordings of meetings	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement.	Review	Common practice
Register of electors	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Copies already in existence
Grouping orders	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Byelaws and Orders	Preserve one of each copy and transfer to Kent Archives once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Policy documents	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Title deeds more than 100 years old	Transfer to Kent Archives once they become inactive. Kent Archives will not accept deeds still needed to prove title	Preserve	Common practice
Title deeds less than 100 years old	Transfer to Kent Archives for review once they become inactive. Kent Archives will not accept deeds still needed to prove title	Review	Common practice
Property registers and terriers	Transfer to Kent Archives once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Maps, plans, and surveys of property owned by the council	Transfer to Kent Archives once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice

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Correspondence and papers on important local issues or activities	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Village/parish appraisals, plans, millennium projects and supporting papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Planning applications and related papers for major controversial developments	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review with the view to destroy	Operational
Planning applications for minor works where permission is refused	6 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980
Leases, agreements, contracts and wayleaves	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Quotations and tenders (successful)	12 years	Destroy	Limitation Act 1980
Quotations and tenders (unsuccessful)	2 years	Destroy	Operational
Routine correspondence and papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review with the view to destroy	Operational
Scale of fees and charges	Until superseded by new charges	Destroy	Operational
Employers' liability insurance policies	40 years after expiry date	Destroy	Employers' Liability Act 1969 Employers' Liability Regulations 1998
COUNCILLORS			
Application to be elected, co-opted or non-Councillor - successful	Next council election or until they vacate office, whichever is earlier	Destroy	Operational
Application to be elected, co-opted or non-Councillor - unsuccessful	6 months after decision	Destroy	Operational
Councillor's declarations of office	4 years or until they vacate office	Destroy	Operational
PERSONNEL			
Personnel files	6 Years plus 6 Years for summary for non-management staff; 12 Years after termination of service for management staff	Destroy	Risk of investigation regarding any future litigation

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Personnel files – annual leave	2 years	Destroy	Operational
Personnel files – sick leave	2 years after return from sick leave	Destroy	Operational
Recruitment data Successful	9 Months after recruitment finalised	Destroy	Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986, Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations
Unsuccessful	1 year after recruitment finalised plus current year		
FINANCIAL			
Receipt and payment books	Transfer to Kent Archives once they become inactive	Preserve	Financial regulations
Rate books	Transfer to Kent Archives	Preserve	Common practice
Annual audited accounts	6 years.	Destroy, but Preserve if the receipt and payment books have not survived.	Financial regulations
Accounts and statements	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
Vouchers before 1950	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
Cash and petty cash books and rent books	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
Receipt books of all kinds	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
Postage and telephone books	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
Bank statements including deposit/saving accounts	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
Bank paying-in books	Last completed Audit year	Destroy	Financial regulations
Cheque book stubs	Last completed Audit year	Destroy	Financial regulations
Paid invoices	6 years	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
Paid cheques	6 years	Destroy	Financial regulations
VAT records	6 years	Destroy	VAT Act 1994
VAT claims	6 years	Destroy	VAT Act 1994
Time sheets	Last completed Audit year	Destroy	Financial regulations
Wage books	12 years	Destroy	Statute of Limitation

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RECORDS	RETENTION PERIOD	ACTION	REASON
Members' allowances register	6 years	Destroy	Statute of Limitation
Records relating to parish halls, centres and recreation grounds, applications to hire, letting diaries, copies of bills to hirers and records of tickets issued	6 years	Review with the view to destroy	Financial regulations
MISCELLANEOUS			
Maps created under the provision of the Rights of Way Act 1932	Transfer to KENT ARCHIVES once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Papers concerning Rights of Way	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Destroy	Operational
Community magazines or newsletters	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Social media posts	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Charity papers	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Press cuttings book	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Photographs	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational
Any records predating the establishment of Parish Councils (1894), e.g. poor law, surveyors of the highway, tithe maps and apportionments, enclosure awards etc.	Transfer to Kent Archives immediately	Preserve	Common practice
Records of other bodies such as burial boards, charities, fire brigades, Home Guard unit, local society or ad hoc committee	Transfer to Kent Archives once they become inactive	Preserve	Common practice
Reports, guides, handbooks etc received from other organisations	Until there is no longer an administrative requirement	Review	Operational

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Version	Date	Comments
V1.0	9 May 2019	Adopted
V1.1	19 Jan 2021	Restructured with detailed information and for improved accessibility
V2.00	17 May 2023	Adopted at Annual Council Meeting 17 th May 2023
V3.00	08 May 2024	Adopted at Annual Council Meeting 08 May 2024