DOCUMENT RETENTION SCHEME

1. Introduction

1.1 Lytchett Matravers Parish Council ("the Council") recognises the importance of maintaining accurate and accessible records. Proper record management:

- Supports effective governance and decision-making
- Ensures transparency and accountability
- Enables compliance with statutory and audit requirements
- Protects the Council's legal and financial interests

1.2 This Document Retention Scheme sets out the minimum retention periods for documents created or held by the Council. It reflects guidance issued by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and DAPTC and accords with current legislation.

1.3 This scheme applies to paper and electronic records, including emails, scanned documents, and digital files.

2. Legislative Framework

In adopting this scheme, the Council has had regard to the following current legislation and guidance:

- Local Government Act 1972 (ss. 225–229 and s.234)
- Local Government (Records) Act 1962
- Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
- Public Records Act 1958
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records (2016)
- Limitation Act 1980
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Regulations 1998
- Pensions Act 2014
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977

3. Legal Retention Considerations

3.1 Many records are retained to ensure the Council can defend or pursue legal claims. The Limitation Act 1980 specifies time limits for bringing claims.

Lytchett Matravers Parish Council
clerk@lytchettmatraversparishcouncil.gov.uk

Type of Claim	Limitation Period
Contract	6 years
Negligence / tort	6 years
Personal injury	3 years
Defamation	1 year
Recovery of land	12 years
Leases	12 years
Rent arrears	6 years
Breach of trust	No limitation

3.2 Where more than one limitation period applies, records will be retained for the longest relevant period.

3.3 Trust deeds and documents relating to charitable or public trusts will be retained indefinitely, in line with NALC guidance.

---

4. Data Protection and Disposal

4.1 Records containing personal data will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, ensuring data is:

- Adequate, relevant, and not excessive
- Kept no longer than necessary
- Securely stored and securely destroyed

4.2 Disposal will be carried out securely (e.g. shredding, confidential waste, permanent electronic deletion).

4.3 Where appropriate, a record of destruction will be maintained.

---

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Full Council is responsible for approving this scheme.

5.2 The Parish Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer is responsible for:

- Implementing and monitoring the scheme
- Advising on retention where uncertainty exists
- Ensuring secure storage and disposal

---

6. Document Retention Schedule

(Aligned with NALC and DAPTC model schedules)

6.1 Corporate, Governance and Financial Records

Document	Retention Period
Minutes (Council and committees)	Indefinite
Draft / handwritten minute notes	Until minutes approved
Agendas and supporting papers	6 years
Standing Orders, Financial Regulations	Current + 3 years
Superseded policies and procedures	3 years
Annual accounts	Indefinite
Audit reports	Indefinite
Asset register	Indefinite
Income & expenditure records	6 years
Bank statements	6 years
Paying-in books, cheque stubs	Last completed audit year
Invoices and receipts	6 years
VAT records	6 years
Quotations and tenders	6 years after contract completion
Contracts, leases, title deeds	Indefinite
Investments	Indefinite

6.2 Staffing and Employment Records

Document	Retention Period
Personnel files	6 years after employment ends
Payroll records	6–12 years
SSP / SMP records	6 years
Pension contribution records	6 years
Employers' liability insurance certificates	40 years

6.3 Health, Safety and Insurance

Document	Retention Period
Accident book	3 years
Risk assessments	Current + 3 years
Asbestos and hazardous materials records	Indefinite
Insurance policies	While current

6.4 Correspondence and Communications

Document	Retention Period
General correspondence and emails	1 year
Correspondence with legal or financial significance	6 years or longer if required

---

6.5 Service-Specific Records

Allotments

Document	Retention
Allotment registers and plans	Indefinite

Burial Grounds

(Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977)

All the following records are retained **indefinitely**:

- Registers of burials
- Registers of fees
- Registers of purchased graves
- Grave space plans
- Memorial registers
- Applications for interment
- Applications for memorials
- Disposal certificates
- Exclusive rights of burial certificates

Halls, Pavilions and Recreation Grounds

Document	Retention
Hire applications	6 years
Lettings diaries	6 years
Invoices to hirers	6 years

---

7. Records Not Listed

7.1 Where a document is not listed in this scheme, retention will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, having regard to:

- Legal requirements
- Business need
- Audit considerations
- Data protection principles

7.2 Where uncertainty exists, advice will be sought from the Parish Clerk or, if necessary, DAPTC.

---

8. Review

This Document Retention Scheme will be reviewed:

- At least every three years, or
- Earlier if legislation, guidance, or Council activities change

---

Adopted by Lytchett Matravers Parish Council: Full Council 25th February 2026

Minute Reference: 5.3

Date of next review: March 2029

Lytchett Matravers Parish Council
clerk@lytchettmatraversparishcouncil.gov.uk