

Martin Parish Council

Data Retention Policy

1. Introduction

This Data Retention Policy sets out how the Parish Council manages, stores, and disposes of information it holds. The Council is committed to complying with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and all relevant statutory requirements.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Information is retained only for as long as necessary
- Legal and regulatory obligations are met
- Data is securely disposed of when no longer required
- Risks associated with holding unnecessary data are minimised

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All data held by the Parish Council, in any format (digital, paper, audio, CCTV, email)
- Councillors, employees, contractors, and volunteers who handle council data
- All council systems, devices, and storage locations

3. Principles

The Council follows these key principles:

- Data minimisation – only keep what is necessary
- Storage limitation – delete or anonymise data when no longer needed
- Security – protect data throughout its lifecycle
- Accountability – maintain clear records of retention decisions

4. Responsibilities

- The Clerk is responsible for day-to-day data management and ensuring retention schedules are followed.
- Councillors and staff must handle data in accordance with this policy.
- The Council oversees compliance and approves updates to the policy.

5. Retention Schedule

5.1 Governance Records

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
Minutes (approved)	Permanent	Historical record
Agendas	5 years	
Councillor declarations of interest	Duration of term + 6 years	Legal requirement
Policies & procedures	Until superseded	

5.2 Financial Records

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
Invoices, receipts, accounts	6 years	Required for audit
Bank statements	6 years	
Annual returns & audits	Permanent	Historical record

5.3 Staff Records

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
Employment contracts	6 years after employment ends	
Payroll & pension records	6 years	
Recruitment records (unsuccessful applicants)	6 months	

5.4 Resident & Public Correspondence

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
General enquiries	2 years	
Complaints	6 years	
FOI/EIR requests	3 years	

5.5 Mailing Lists

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
Email addresses for newsletters	Until consent withdrawn	Consent must be recorded

5.6 Contracts & Suppliers

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
Contracts & tenders	6 years after contract end	
Supplier contact details	6 years	

5.10 Website & Social Media

Data Type	Retention Period	Notes
Website analytics	26 months	Typical analytics default
Social media messages	2 years	

6. Secure Disposal

When data reaches the end of its retention period, it must be securely destroyed. Methods include:

- Shredding paper documents
- Secure deletion of digital files
- Ensuring backups are also removed
- Using approved disposal contractors where necessary

7. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- New systems or processes are introduced
- The Council identifies improvements

8. Approval

This policy was approved by the Martin Parish Council on: [Insert Date]

Next review due: [Insert Date]