

Walton Parish Council Data Retention Policy

1. Introduction

Walton Parish Council is committed to managing information responsibly and in compliance with its legal obligations. This policy sets out how long various categories of personal data and council records are retained, and the processes for their secure disposal.

2. Purpose of the Policy

- To ensure the council retains necessary records to fulfil its functions and meet legal and regulatory requirements
- To prevent unnecessary retention of data in line with the principles of data minimisation under UK GDPR
- To provide clear guidance to councillors, staff, and volunteers on how long data should be kept and how it should be disposed of safely

3. Legal Context

This policy supports compliance with the following legislation and guidance:

- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Local Government Acts
- ICO guidance on retention and disposal of data

4. Scope

This policy applies to all data held by Walton Parish Council, whether digital or physical, including but not limited to:

- Correspondence (including email)
- Financial records and invoices
- Planning consultation responses
- Meeting minutes and agendas
- HR and employment records
- Electoral roll information
- Records of public complaints or queries

5. Retention Schedule (Summary)

Record Type: Minutes, agendas, policies

Retention Period: Permanently

Notes: For historical and legal reference

Record Type: Finance records (invoices, receipts, accounts)

Retention Period: 6 years

Notes: Required by statute

Record Type: Personnel files (ex-employees)

Retention Period: 6 years after departure

Notes: Or longer if legal claim may arise

Record Type: Planning documents

Retention Period: 1 year (unless appealed)

Notes: Archived with planning authority if needed

Record Type: Correspondence (general)
Retention Period: 2 years
Notes: Reviewed annually

Record Type: Email communications
Retention Period: 2 years, subject to storage capacity
Notes: Retained by subject category

Record Type: Contracts and agreements
Retention Period: 6–12 years
Notes: Per Limitation Act 1980

Record Type: Complaints
Retention Period: 3 years
Notes: From date of resolution

Record Type: Insurance documents
Retention Period: 40 years
Notes: For liability purposes

Record Type: Electoral roll data
Retention Period: Until updated
Notes: Superseded copies securely destroyed
A detailed retention schedule may be maintained as an appendix if required.

6. Storage and Security

- Digital data is stored securely using encrypted systems and strong passwords
- Paper records are kept in locked cabinets with limited access
- Only those with a legitimate need should have access to council records

7. Disposal and Deletion

- Paper documents are shredded or incinerated securely when no longer required
- Digital files are permanently deleted from all systems and backups where feasible
- Deletion logs may be maintained where necessary to evidence compliance

8. Roles and Responsibilities

- The Clerk is responsible for records management and advising councillors and staff
- All councillors and staff must follow this policy and identify records for review or disposal

9. Breaches and Queries

Breaches of this policy, especially involving personal data, must be reported immediately to the Clerk or the Council's Data Protection Officer. Serious breaches may be reported to the ICO.

Questions relating to data retention should be directed to the Clerk.

Adopted on: 3rd July 2026
To be reviewed: July 2027