

**Records Management Service
Knowledge and Web Services
ICT**

General Records Retention Schedule

November 2009

When to use the retention schedule

- When **creating records**, this retention schedule will act as a guide to the conditions under which that record should be managed, stored and ultimately disposed of.
- When **designing filing systems**, this retention schedule will give a clear understanding of the legal and business requirement for record keeping,
- When **managing offices**, this retention schedule will give a clear understanding of which records should be transferred to the Modern Records Unit and/or the Herefordshire Record Office, and which records should eventually be destroyed, thus maximizing office space.
- When **destroying records**, this retention schedule will minimize the risk that records are destroyed before they should be, or kept for longer than they need to be kept.

Records Management

This retention schedule lists the **minimum length of time** to keep the records generated as a result of the service's business processes. Descriptions of each process are found in the Corporate File Plan for the service area. This schedule is updated according to:

- Acts of Parliament; Statutory Instruments; Approved Codes of Practice; Current Council practices and financial regulations. (The scheme follows the Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities produced by the Records Management Society of Great Britain)

The **retention period is taken from the date of file closure**, and applies to records stored in all media (including paper and electronic versions)

Using the retention Schedule

Within the schedule, the

- **Storage format** shows the medium in which the record is held.
- **Special processes** show if any changes are made to the class of record throughout its life, such as if it is scanned or microfilmed at a certain point.

- **Retention period** is the **minimum length of time** for which the class of record should be kept, whilst the action is to destroy, archive or review the records once they reach the end of their retention period, and Herefordshire Council has no further business use for them.
- **Reason for retention** includes any legislative or regulatory reason on which the retention period is based.

Adhering to the retention schedule is a requirement of Herefordshire Council's Records Management Policy, found on the Intranet Document Library under "*Records Management*". The schedules also give consistent instruction to all staff dealing with records.

Disposal

When **records** are **destroyed** at the **end of their retention period**, all **backup copies must also be destroyed** as far as possible, in order to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

- Except in **cases of investigation** by Police, Internal Audit, or the Audit Commission all **destruction** procedures on the information concerned **must cease immediately** regardless of storage format.
- Equally, no records should be destroyed once they are **known** to be the subject of a **Freedom of Information Act 2000 request**.

Records for **permanent preservation** should be passed to the **Herefordshire Archive Service**.

- Contact the Senior Archivist for information on transfer procedures.
- The Archive Service may choose to keep a sample of certain classes of record for permanent preservation, but this will be agreed beforehand with depositing departments.

Updates to the schedule

The schedules will be regularly reviewed to incorporate any changes to business practice.

If you have any comments or queries regarding this schedule, please contact: Tel: (01432) 260500 or Email: rms@herefordshire.gov.uk

Property		Storage Format	Special Processes	Retention Period	Action	Reason for Retention
	- Property Management File	Paper	None	Retain as long as the building is owned or rented by the Council	Pass on to next owner if transferred, or destroy if building is demolished	Operational, guided by Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its associated Regulations

Finance		Storage Format	Special Processes	Retention Period	Action	Reason for Retention
	Accounts and Statements					
	- Cancelled Cheques	Paper	None	2 Years + Current Year	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
	- Journals	Electronic	None	6 Years	Destroy	
	Asset Management					
	- Leasing	Paper	None	2 Years + Current Year	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
	Audit					
	- Audit Files	Paper	None	Retain until the next audit	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations

	Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring 	Electronic	None	6 Years	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
	Expenditure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invoices - Petty Cash 	Paper	None	6 Years (original copy); 1 Year (copies)	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
	Funding Bids <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant Claims - European Grant Claims <p>West Midlands Structural Funds Programmes: <i>Rechar II 1994-1999 (closed 2003)</i> <i>Objective 2 1994-1996 (closed 2004)</i> <i>Urban Hillfields 1997-1999 (closed 2004)</i> <i>Objective 2 1997-1999</i> <i>The Marches Objective 5b 1994-1999</i> <i>Urban Sparkbrook 1994-1999</i> <i>Leader</i> <i>Leader II</i> <i>Leader +</i></p>	Paper	None	3 Years after the European Commission has closed a programme and paid the final balance (unless otherwise decided in bilateral administrative arrangements, or if interrupted by legal proceedings, or at the duly motivated request of the Commission)	Destroy	Article 38(6) of Regulation 1260/1999 (supersedes Article 23 of Regulation 4253/88)

	Income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank Paying-in Slips - Credit Notes - Instructions to Raise Invoices - Receipt Books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper Paper Paper Paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None None None None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Years 6 Years 1 Year (originals kept by Revenues Office) 2 Years + Current Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroy Destroy Destroy Destroy 	<p>Herefordshire Council financial regulations</p>
	Payroll <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional Pay Claims - Timesheets - Travel Claims (copies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper Paper Paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None None None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Year (originals kept by Payroll Office) 6 Years 1 Year (originals kept by Payroll Office) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroy Destroy Destroy 	<p>Herefordshire Council financial regulations</p>
	Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 Years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destroy 	<p>Herefordshire Council financial regulations</p>

	Taxation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Taxation - VAT Claims 	Paper	None	6 Years	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
--	--	-------	------	---------	---------	---

Health and Safety		Storage Format	Special Processes	Retention Period	Action	Reason for Retention
	Accidents and Incidents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accident and Incident Monitoring - Accident Forms 	Paper	None	30 Years	Destroy	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its associated Regulations

Human Resources		Storage Format	Special Processes	Retention Period	Action	Reason for Retention
	Absence Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sickness Absence 	Paper	None	6 Years	Destroy	Operational
	Personnel Files <Name and ID>	Paper	None	12 Years	Destroy	Operational
	Personnel Files <Name and ID> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leave - Annual Leave 	Paper	None	2 Years	Destroy	Operational

	Personnel Files <Name and ID> - Recruitment	Paper	None	6 Months	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
	Personnel Files <Name and ID> - Sickness Monitoring	Paper	None	6 Years	Destroy	Operational

Management		Storage Format	Special Processes	Retention Period	Action	Reason for Retention
	Business Plans	Electronic, Paper	None	Permanent	Send one copy to Archives Service; Destroy other copies once plan has been renewed and after any administrative use for it has ceased	Common practice
	Complaints - Complaint ID	Electronic, Paper	None	6 Years after resolution of complaint	Destroy	Operational

	Correspondence - Correspondent ID	Electronic, Paper	None	6 Years after resolution of correspondence (2 Years for routine enquiries)	Destroy	Operational
	Meetings (<i>original sets of minutes</i>)	Electronic	None	2 Years + current year for routine meetings where no key decisions are made 6 Years for meetings where key decisions affecting the section are made	Destroy Retain until decision is changed or revoked for strategic and policy decisions affecting services	Operational
	Policies and Procedures	Electronic	None	Permanent	Send one copy to Archive Service; Destroy other copies once policy or procedures have been renewed and after any administrative use for it has ceased	Common practice

Procurement	Storage Format	Special Processes	Retention Period	Action	Reason for Retention	
	Contract <Name and ID>	Paper	None	6 Years (12 Years if signed under seal) after completion of contract work	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
	Purchase Orders - Copy Orders - Delivery Notes	Paper	None	2 Years + current year	Destroy	Herefordshire Council financial regulations
		Paper	None	2 Years + current year	Destroy	