

## WITHAM AND HUMBER DRAINAGE BOARDS

*Four independent statutory Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management Authorities working in partnership.*



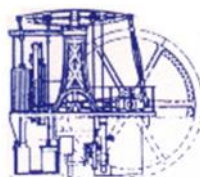
Witham First District IDB

[www.witham-1st-idb.gov.uk](http://www.witham-1st-idb.gov.uk)



Upper Witham IDB

[www.upperwitham-idb.gov.uk](http://www.upperwitham-idb.gov.uk)



Witham Third District

[www.witham3idb.gov.uk](http://www.witham3idb.gov.uk)



North East Lindsey

[www.northeastlindsey-idb.org.uk](http://www.northeastlindsey-idb.org.uk)

### Records Retention & Destruction Policy

<b>Background</b>	Records and data are vital assets which need careful management to enable the 4 Boards to conduct business and comply with statutory obligations. The purpose of this this policy is to set out the arrangements for records management, in terms of the storage and retention of data and good practice in the maintenance, archiving and destruction of those data/records.
<b>Statement</b>	This policy aims to ensure records are created, used, retained, and destroyed effectively and in compliance with good practice guidance.
<b>Responsibilities</b>	Chief Executive for Implementing the scheme and ensuring that employees have necessary information. Senior Management Team, Line Managers, officers and other employees to ensure compliance. HR Lead and Senior management team to review and revision of the policy
<b>Training</b>	HR Lead to offer support, guidance and training in the most appropriate approach
<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	This policy aims to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and ensure that no employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, transgender, civil partnership/marital status, appearance, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion/belief or no religion/belief, disability, age, carer, pregnancy or maternity, social status or trade union membership.
<b>Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA)</b>	Local Policy in Line with ADA Lincolnshire Branch White Book of Wages and Salaries and Conditions of Service, 2020
<b>Dissemination</b>	Boards' Websites
<b>Version</b>	V2
<b>Approval Date</b>	Joint Services Committee 20.07.20
<b>Review Date</b>	Within 3 years of approval or as policy/ good practice guidance changes.

## 1. Introduction

Records are a vital asset which need careful management to enable the 4 Boards to conduct business and comply with statutory obligations. This policy sets out the arrangements for records management.

The effective management of records and data in all formats depends as much on their efficient disposal as well as their long-term preservation. The untimely destruction of records may adversely affect service delivery but so will the unnecessary retention of outdated and potentially inaccurate records. Disposal is necessary not only to reduce administrative burdens but also to ensure that information is not retained for longer than necessary and that accurate records are maintained for appropriate periods to satisfy applicable operational and legal requirements [e.g. particular HMRC timeline requirements on retention].

This policy is important to contribute to compliance with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

The Data Protection Act 1998 requires that personal data must be:

- adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- accurate and where necessary kept up to date.
- not kept for longer than is necessary for its purpose.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides rights of access to information held by public bodies and the link between that Act and effective records management will be immediately apparent. The quality of the records which are held will affect the ability to respond to requests under the Act. If records are not created and managed effectively then they will not be found when needed.

## **2. Retention Periods**

The Retention Schedule which forms part of this policy sets out the length of time that records should be retained, irrespective of the media on which they are created or held including:

- paper.
- electronic files (including databases, Word documents, spreadsheets, webpages and e-mails).
- photographs and videotapes.

Retention periods are determined based upon the nature of the information held, not the medium in which it is maintained. For example, information which is held in electronic form should only be retained for the same period as it would be kept if it were in paper form. However, it is not necessary to retain both paper and electronic versions of the same record, nor to retain duplicate copies of records. Retention arrangements for electronic records should ensure that they will remain complete, unaltered and accessible throughout the retention period.

The value of information tends to decline over time, so most records should only be retained for a limited period of time and eventually be destroyed. A recommended minimum retention period, derived from operational or requirements, is provided for each category of record and applies to all records within that category.

During their retention period, operational needs may require records to be held in different locations and on different media, but they should always be properly managed in accordance with this policy.

A small proportion of records which are of permanent historical significance will be preserved in the archives. The Chief Executive is responsible for the selection of records for permanent preservation and the maintenance of the archives.

No data file or record should be retained for more than six years after it is closed unless a good reason for longer retention can be demonstrated. It may well be appropriate having regard to the nature of the record to opt for a shorter period.

Reasons for longer retention will include the following:

- Statute requires retention for a longer period.
- the record contains information relevant to legal action which has been started or is in contemplation.
- whenever there is a possibility of litigation, the records and information that are likely to be affected should not be amended or disposed of until the threat of litigation has been removed.
- the record should be archived for historical or research purposes, e.g. the record relates to an important policy development or relates to an event of local or national purpose.
- the records are maintained for the purpose of retrospective comparison.
- the records relate to individuals or providers of services who are judged unsatisfactory. The individuals may include employees who have been the subject of serious disciplinary action

### Schedule of Contractual Records

#### General Notes:

- Destroy records relating to contracts worth less than £5,000 when they are two years old.
- Keep records relating to contracts worth more than £5,000 relating to goods, in accordance with the model schedule below.
- Retain those relating to services for two years after payment of the last account.
- Assess records for further retention, where they relate to contracts for periods of more than ten years, when those records are five years old.
- Re-assess those retained records five years later.

#### Records Management retention scheduling of Contractual records

Type	Item	Description	Disposal (maximum period)	
Policy matters	1	Policy on contracts, normally contained in a separate registered file series	First and second review	
Initial proposal	2	End user requirement	Six years	
	3	List of approved suppliers	An active document – updated regularly	
	4	Statements of interest	One year from date of last paper	
	5	Draft specification	Destroy when specification has been agreed	
	6	Agreed specification	Six years from end of contract	
	7	Evaluation criteria	Six years from end of contract	
	8	Invitation to tender	Six years from end of contract	
	Tendering	9	Unsuccessful tender document	One year after date of last paper
		10	Successful tender document	Six years from award of contract
		11	Background information supplied by department	One year after date of last paper

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	12	Interview panel – report and notes of proceedings	One year from end of contract
	13	Commissioning letter	One year from end of contract
	14	Signed contract	Six years from end of contract
Contract operation and monitoring	15	Reports from contractors	Two years from end of contract
	16	Schedules of works	Two years from end of contract
	17	Bills of quantity (building contracts)	Sixteen years
	18	Surveys and inspections a. equipment and supplies b. buildings	a. Two years from date of last paper b. Second review
	19	Records of complaints	Six years from end of contract
	20	Disputes over payment	Six years from end of contract
	21	Final accounts	Six years from end of contract
	22	Minutes and papers of meetings	Second review
Amendments to contracts	23	Changes to requirements	Six years from end of contract
	24	Forms of variation	Six years from end of contract
	25	Extensions to contract	Six years from end of contract

Some contractual records will be associated with major policy developments in government departments. During the appraisal process review all the records relating to the same issue using the same criteria, particularly in accordance with The National Archives acquisition and disposition strategy and departmental operational selection policies.

This applies whether they are case papers, policy papers or contractual records. This might mean, for example, that some contractual records are kept with policy files for Second Review.

No.	Board and Legal Records	Disposal (maximum period)
1.	Articles of incorporation	Permanent
2.	Charter	Permanent
3.	By-Laws	Permanent
4.	Agenda, Reports and Minutes of meetings	Permanent
5.	Licenses Active	Permanent
6.	Expired Licenses	6 years after expiration
7.	Deeds and Titles	Permanent
8.	Leases Active	+ 6 years
9.	Policy Statements	Permanent
10.	Contracts Active	+ 4 years

No.	Employee Applications and Employment listings	Disposal (maximum period)
1.	Job announcements and advertisements	2 years
2.	Documentation on individuals not recruited	2 years
3.	Individuals who are hired recruited	+ 5 years
4.	Individual employee files and wage history active	+ 6 years

No.	Personal Files and Payroll Records	Disposal (maximum period)
1.	Employee files and documentation	Permanent
2.	Salary or current rate of pay active	+ 6 years

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3.	Payroll deductions active	+ 6 years
4.	Timesheets and expense claim active	3 years
5.	Employee manuals / handbook	Permanent
6.	Copy of payslips	+ 6 years
7.	End of year payslip, tax and pensions returns	Permanent

No.	Accounts and Financial Records	Disposal (maximum period)
1.	Billing Records	6 years
2.	Tax Returns	6 years
3.	Year Ends accounting records	Permanent
4.	General Ledger	6 years
5.	Account Ledger	6 years
6.	Auditor's report	Permanent
7.	Bank Statement	6 years
8.	Investment Details	Permanent

No.	Rate and Land Records	Disposal (maximum period)
1.	Land Maps	Permanent
2.	Land Valuation	Permanent
3.	Ratepayer active	Permanent
4.	Previous ratepayer	Permanent
5.	Rate account	Permanent

### Storage

All data and records should be stored as securely as possible in order to avoid potential misuse or loss. All data and records will be stored in the most convenient and appropriate location having regard to the period of retention required and the frequency with which access will be made to the record.

Data and records which are active should be stored in the most appropriate place for their purpose. Data and records which are no longer active, due to their age or subject, should be stored in the most appropriate place for their purpose.

The degree of security required for file storage will reflect the sensitivity and confidential nature of any material recorded.

Any data file or record which contains personal data of any form can be considered as confidential in nature.

### Disposal

Records should be reviewed as soon as possible after the expiry of the retention period. It need not be a detailed or time-consuming exercise but there must be a considered appraisal of the contents of the record.

A record should not be destroyed without verification that:

- no work is outstanding in respect of that record and it is no longer required.
- the record does not relate to any current or pending complaint, investigation, dispute or litigation or
- the record is unaffected by any current or pending request made under the Freedom of Information Act or Data Protection Act.

A record must be made of all disposal decisions and destruction should be carried out in a manner that preserves the confidentiality of the record. Confidential paper records should be placed in

confidential waste bins and electronic records will need to be either physically destroyed or erased to the current standard. Deletion of electronic files is not sufficient. All copies of a record, in whatever format, should be destroyed at the same time.

## **Variation**

Information needs are dynamic and therefore this policy is a “living” document which will be amended as the need arises.

Any review of retention periods should take account of relevant statutory and legal requirements and consideration of the overall operational value of records, including:

- on-going operational, accountability and audit needs.
- best practice in the applicable professional field.
- the probability of future use.
- the long-term historical or research value of the record.
- the costs of retention or destruction.
- the risks associated with retaining or destroying the record.

## **Other Records**

Many records have no significant operational or evidential value and are not subject to retention under this policy but may be destroyed once they have served their primary purpose. These include:

- requests for forms and brochures.
- meeting rooms reservation requests.
- compliment slips and similar items which accompany documents.
- superseded distribution or mailing lists.
- drafts of documents.
- working papers which are the basis of the content of other documents.
- notices of meetings and other events.
- invitations and notices of acceptance or apologies.
- magazines, marketing materials, catalogues, directories, etc.

This is not an exhaustive list but merely indicates the types of record which have no significant operational or evidential value and may be destroyed once their effective use has ended.