

## AGE UK BROMLEY & GREENIWCH

### PROCEDURES MANUAL

<b>BS EN ISO 9001 REFERENCE</b>	:	
<b>TITLE</b>	:	<b>Document Retention, Archiving &amp; Destruction Policy &amp; Procedure</b>
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	:	<b>All who handle documents and who record and retain personal data held on computers and/or on paper</b>
<b>SCOPE</b>	:	<b><u>Compliance with the Act - This policy &amp; procedure should be implemented in conjunction with the Confidentiality &amp; the Data Protection Act Implementation policies and procedures.</u></b>

#### **1. Introduction**

The Document Retention, Archiving and Destruction Policy and Procedure sets out the document and data retention processes at Age UK Bromley & Greenwich and defines when and how that information will be confidentially destroyed.

Services managers and coordinators are responsible for implementing the Organisation's Document Retention, Archiving and Destruction Policy and for monitoring compliance. SMT will undertake regular reviews of the policy to verify it is in effective operation.

#### **2. Retention Statement**

Data and records should not be kept for longer than is necessary. This principle finds statutory form in the Data Protection Act 1998, which requires that personal data processed for any purpose "shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose".

#### **3. Record Maintenance and Storage**

All records in physical form are to be maintained by the Records/Respective Department(s) at the respective locations.

Electronic version(s) of all records are to be maintained within the Company's centralised electronic record software databases, which is maintained by the IT Services Department and Charitylog.

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.
- Client cases deemed as 'high risk' - see section below for more information on this.

**4. Disposal of Records**

Physical records disposed of pursuant to the retention periods specified in this document shall be disposed of using a cross-cut shredder.

Services' Managers and Administrators working in collaboration with the PA to the Chief Executive shall adopt appropriate procedures to permanently dispose of any non-paper physical records, such as photographs or audio/video recordings.

In the event that it is necessary to manually dispose of an electronic record, the IT Department shall use the "permanent delete" function to permanently dispose of electronic records.

E-mails and all electronic communication systems as well as all communications and stored information transmitted, received, or contained on the Company's information systems are the property of the Company. Employees using this equipment for personal purposes do so at their own risk. Employees should avoid using Company e-mail for personal purposes. Personal e-mails should be deleted as soon as possible.

E-mails relating to audit work papers and financial controls should be retained for at least 8 years.

All emails to the Organisation relating to complaints on auditing, accounting, frauds or internal controls should be retained permanently.

Any messages exchanged between the Company and third parties (such as consultants and auditors) should be archived, regardless of their content. Instant messages have the same status as e-mails and should be treated identically.

## **5. Client Files Archiving and Destruction Procedure**

The end of the client's case administration procedure covers the administrative steps to be taken when a case is closed to ensure that all relevant administrative issues have been completed and that the file is put into storage for the correct period of time. The Organisation keeps a master log of all closed files, which allow the organisation to keep track of files that become ready for destruction.

- Preparing individual files

When a case is closed the adviser should check the file and ensure that it runs in chronological order. If necessary, the correspondence, case notes, and documents should be secured in separate bundles within the file and duplicates destroyed.

- File Closing Form

At the end of the case, the advice workers/project workers should fill out the file closed section of the relevant Case Management System - Charitylog - record that the case is closed. The adviser should also complete the closing file label including date of file closure and mark the scheduled destroyed date.

Services' Administrators working in collaboration with the PA to the Chief Executive are responsible for sorting closed files, preparing them for retention including completing the master log, archiving files securely and arranging for their safe disposal.

## **6. 'High Risk' Cases Definition and Procedure**

Some case files are deemed to be 'high risk'; if so these documents must be stored for at least sixteen years after the final entry:

- any case that has been subject to insurance claim or other dispute ('other dispute' refers to the Age UK Bromley & Greenwich's handling of the case)
- any case relating to building works or surveyor's reports on the purchase of property or relating to property
- any case which is considered to be substantial, where the sums of money involved are for example in excess of £10,000 or where the advice given was especially complex or where the case is an unusual one
- in cases concerning mortgage arrears the creditor has up to 12 years to bring a claim against a client before it becomes statute barred, as part of advice work, if relevant, we would need to advise clients of this and ideally keep the file to check the advice given, if required, and
- in cases where there is a possibility of litigation

In these cases the adviser should bring the case to the attention of the team manager who should then label the case as 'high risk' and clearly record the disposal date to be sixteen or twelve years after the final entry.

<b>Client Information</b>	
<b>Information</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Client Case Files	6 years after the last activity on the file (typically payment of bill, closure and archive). For clients under the age of 18 the file should be kept for 6 years after the client has turned 18.
Client Enquiry Forms	6 years (unless a full client file was opened in which case in line with that file)
Advice Line Sheets	6 years (unless a full client file was opened in which case in line with that file)
Client Complaints	6 years (with client file)

<b>Staff Information</b>	
<b>Information</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Application form/interview notes for unsuccessful candidates	12 months
Offer letters and acceptance	Permanently
Disciplinary, working time and training	6 years after employment ceases
Redundancy details	6 years from date of redundancy
Documents proving the right to work in the UK	6 years after employment ceases
Health & Safety consultations	Permanently
PAYE Records	6 years
Workplace accidents	6 years after date of last entry. There are specific rules on recording incidents involving hazardous substances
Payroll	6 years after the end of the tax year they relate to
Statutory maternity, adoption and paternity pay	6 years after the end of the tax year they relate to
Statutory sick pay	6 years after the end of the tax year they relate to
Working time arrangements	2 years from date on which they were made

<b>Trustee Information</b>	
<b>Information</b>	<b>Retention Period</b>
Details of Trustees, Directors and Management Committee Members	6 years after they cease to be members
Board Meetings/Management Committee Meetings Agendas, Reports and Minutes	Permanently for historical purposes

Constitutional documents, Resolutions and Special Resolutions	Permanently
Business Plans	6 years
E-mails relating to audit work papers and financial controls should be retained for at least 8 years.	At least 8 years
All emails to the Organisation relating to complaints on auditing, accounting, frauds or internal controls	Permanently

## 7. Destruction and Disposal Statement

All information of a confidential or sensitive nature on paper, card, microfiche, or electronic, media must be securely destroyed when it is no longer required. This ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the duty of confidentiality we owe to our employees, volunteers, clients and customers.

## 8. Destruction and Disposal Procedures

All information, in any format, destroyed from any location must have due regard to confidentiality of our employees, volunteers, clients and customers.

- Confidential data must be disposed of in confidential recycling bins, or in the Age UK Bromley & Greenwich shredders
- All other paper can be disposed of in the boxes or bins provided in offices for environmentally-friendly disposal of non-confidential and non-sensitive paper waste.

The procedure for the destruction of confidential or sensitive waste on electronic media such as tape, disk, cassette/cartridge, hard drives, CD-Rom, DVD and ZIP drive is as follows:

- Media that are being destroyed because they are showing signs of damage or are obsolete should be physically destroyed by being cut into pieces or other ways prior to disposal
- Destruction of back-up copies of such data also needs to be dealt with

## 9. Hold on Record Destruction and Deletion

If a lawsuit or other proceeding involving the organisation is reasonably foreseeable, all destruction of any possibly relevant documents, including e-mail, must cease immediately.

Documents relating to the lawsuit or potential legal issue will then be retained and organised under the supervision of the relevant service manager, and instruction of the Chief Executive.

**The Confidentiality Policy and Procedures** set out the principles as to how Age UK Bromley & Greenwich will ensure confidentiality for staff, volunteers, clients and customers.

**The Data Protection Act Policy** set out how the organisation ensures compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.