



Southwark Archdiocesan Archive Record Keeping Advice for Parishes

Contents

	Page number
A. Introduction	1
A.1 What are parish records and archives?	2
A.2 The importance of caring for parish records	2
B. Caring for parish records	3
B.1 Digital records	3
B.2 Paper records	4
B.3 Access to parish records	5
B.4 Listing	5
B.5 Parish archivist	6
B.6 How to archive websites	6
C. Records retention (how long records should be kept for)	6
C.1 What format should records be kept in?	6
C.2 Record retention scheduling	6
C.3 How long should parish records be kept for?	7
C.4 Secure shredding	7
C.5 Data protection and GDPR	7
D. Diocesan Archive	7
D.1 Role	7
D.2 What parish records are held in the Diocesan Archive?	7
D.3 Can the Diocesan Archive take parish records?	7
E. Further advice and resources	8
E.1 Diocesan contacts and resources	8
E.2 Catholic Archive Society (CAS)	8
E.3 Other resources	8
E.4 Preservation resources	9
E.5 Funding	9
Appendix 1: Retention schedule	10
Appendix 2: Paper Record Disposal Form	15
Appendix 3: Diocesan Archive Access policy	16

A. Introduction

This guide gives advice and guidance on how parishes should care for their paper and electronic records. It relates to both current records still in use by the parish and historical records that are no longer in current use.

A.1. What are parish records and archives?¹

“In each parish there is to be an archive, in which the parochial books are to be kept, together with episcopal letters and other documents which it may be necessary or useful to preserve.”

Canon 535 §4

Canon law explicitly mentions the keeping of certain types of records:

- baptism, marriage and death registers (Canon 535 §1 and 895)
- register of foundation Masses and other obligations (Canon 1307 §2)
- parish account books (Canon 1284 §7)
- register of catechumens (Canon 788 §1)
- title deeds, insurance policies and other papers relating to temporal goods (Canon 1284 §9)
- papers relating to marriage preparation (Canon 1066-1070)

Other records that might be held by a parish include:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| - Notice books | - Priests' official correspondence | - Parish magazine/ newsletter |
| - General property records | - Parish publicity material | - Service sheets and liturgies |
| - Parish committee records | - Parish correspondence | - Newspaper cuttings |
| - Committee records | - Photographs | - Records relating to schools |
| - General finance records | - Annual account books | - Marriage paperwork |
| - Parish statistics | - Parish staff personnel records | - Architectural plans and drawings |
| - Audio & visual recordings of parish events | - Records of parish organisations | - Priests' writings and sermon notes |
| - Records relating to bequests, legacies etc | - Records documenting parish events | - Priests' personal correspondence |
| | - Records of religious orders in the parish | - Documents relating to the parish's foundation |

The Diocesan Archive does not hold parish records; if your parish does not have any records then the probability is that they have been lost.

A.2 The importance of caring for parish records

In 1997, the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church published a document, “The Pastoral Function of Church Archives.”² This document sets out in detail the importance of church records. Records are a valuable resource for a parish and part of its cultural heritage. The priest and the parish, as custodians under Canon Law, have a duty of care for the records and are responsible for their safekeeping and for preserving the patrimony of the parish.

Below are a few key reasons for caring for church records and archives:

- Without proper organisation the sheer volume of records (paper and electronic) can become overwhelming. Well managed records ensure that the right information is available to the right people at the right time.

¹ In this paper, ‘records’ refers to all documents, electronic or paper, historic or current, produced, used or held by a parish. ‘Archives’ refers to the small proportion of these records which have been identified as having long-term historical value and therefore which have been selected to be kept permanently in the parish archive.

² “The Pastoral Function of Church Archives,” Archbishop Francesco Marchisano, Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Patrimony of the Church, 1997, can be accessed at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_commissions/pcchc/documents/rc_com_pcchc_19970202_archivi-ecclesiastici_en.html (21 June 2016).

- Many areas of parish activity are subject to external regulation, for example, child protection and finance, which makes it essential to maintain proper records.
- Good record keeping increases the parish's accountability to its members, the Diocese, and the wider community.
- Good management of records ensures that records that will have archival or historical value in future are identified and preserved.
- Records help tell the story of the parish and community, and also of individuals and families involved in the church.
- "In the mind of the Church, archives are places of memory of the Christian community and storehouses of culture for the new evangelization."³
- "The registers and other personal documents contain sacramental details and thus from the theological viewpoint can be seen as evidence of God's grace working in individuals and in the local community. Parish records are also essentially evidence of church administration, while in the wider context they show the part played by the parish in the life of the community."⁴
- "Often informal and ostensibly ephemeral records such as parish magazines and notices books can be of crucial importance in describing the social, cultural and institutional milieu of particular parishes."⁵

B. Caring for parish records

"All documents concerning the diocese or parishes must be kept with the greatest of care." (Canon 486 § 1)

B.1 Digital records

Long-term preservation and access

Digital records present challenges in terms of long-term preservation and access. Software and hardware can quickly become obsolete; magnetic media is easily corrupted and data is not always retrievable; and data can be lost when migrating records to a new computer system. As a result, guaranteeing long-term access to electronic records is difficult and requires more management, expertise and cost than guaranteeing long-term access to paper records. For this reason, it is recommended that any parish records that need to be kept for longer than ten years or that have been designated as archives be printed and kept as paper records.

Storage

There should be a regular system of backup for electronic records that are saved on individual computers as a precaution against loss in the case of a hard drive failing, theft etc. These backups should be stored away from the computer, ideally in another building. Records stored on portable media such as CDs or USB flash drives should be checked regularly to ensure that they are still accessible.

Management

Electronic records should be managed in the same way as paper records. They should be saved into an organised filing system and subject to retention and disposal. It is important that electronic records are given titles that are understandable, describe what the record is and include its creation date. The record's title and date should be recorded within the document (for example, as a header

³ "The Pastoral Function of Church Archives."

⁴ *The care and administration of parish records*, p.7, Paul Shaw, 2007.

⁵ *The care and administration of parish records*, p.7.

or footer) so that they can still be identified when printed. As electronic records are easily altered it is helpful to identify different versions of a document by including version numbers or 'draft', 'copy' etc in the title and in the document itself.

Email

Emails are also electronic records and need to be managed and subject to the retention schedule. Transitory emails such as out-of-office replies should be deleted immediately; emails with short-term value such as notices of upcoming meetings should be kept in folders under the inbox and deleted when obsolete; records of value to the parish should be saved into the folder system alongside other electronic records and the email deleted from the inbox; emails which have archival value or which need to be kept for more than ten years should be printed.

B.2 Paper records

Storage

Parish paper records should be stored on church premises rather than in private homes. They should be kept in boxes or filing cabinets. The storage area should be as fire proof as possible; free from damp and mould; well ventilated; and unlikely to be affected by flooding, insect or rodent activity. Therefore, attics, basements, garages and outhouses are not suitable. All records should be kept where they are safeguarded against unauthorised access. Confidential, sensitive or important records should be stored, alongside parish registers, in locked filing cabinets or safes and must be disposed of in a secure manner e.g. through shredding.

Preservation

Any records that have been designated as archives should be printed and kept as paper records (although a digital copy may also be kept).

For records that are to be kept long-term as archives, some simple preservation measures should be taken:

- Ideally all archive records should be kept in archival, acid free boxes or folders (see Section 5: Further advice and resources for information on where such equipment can be purchased).
- Brass or plastic paperclips should be used rather than metal paper clips and staples which corrode and cause damage to documents.
- Do not use rubber bands on documents as these perish and cause damage to paper. Bundles may be tied with white archival tape.
- Storing documents in plastic wallets/ folders should be avoided as the plastic can cause a reaction which results in the ink sticking and lifting off the documents.
- Biro's should not be used when completing registers, since the ink is unstable and fades over time. Registrar's black ink is ideal (for example, http://www.registrarsink.co.uk/registrars_ink.html).
- Registers should not be covered with brown paper or sticky-back plastic, both of which are highly acidic and will rot the covers over time.
- Registers and other documents should not be repaired with sellotape as this will not last and will leave a sticky residue. A professional bookbinder or conservator should be consulted if repairs are required.
- Keep all items unfolded and as flat as possible; folding weakens paper.
- Files with metal fastenings such as lever arch folders should be avoided.
- Photo albums and scrapbooks where items are permanently glued down or laminated should not be used.

- Photographs should ideally be stored in archival standards polyester pockets.
- Newspaper disintegrates quickly and can damage the paper around it. Newspaper cuttings should go into their own folder or be separated by a blank sheet of paper from the papers around them.
- Handling of documents should be kept to a minimum. However, there is no need to wear gloves when handling them.

B.3 Access to parish records

Parish archives are private archives and therefore there is no automatic right of access to them. However, the parish priest may, if he wishes, facilitate access to the parish's historic records. As a general rule, the Diocesan Archive does not allow researchers to access material less than 30 years old unless it was originally produced for public distribution. It is recommended that parishes follow this advice. While parishes may choose to allow access to their records, records must be consulted on parish premises and may not be loaned out to researchers. Researchers should be carefully supervised when using records.

Material contained in parish registers is subject to data protection legislation which ensures that no personal information about living individuals is revealed to a third party. To ensure that the Church works within this legislation, the Bishop's Conference has ruled that no information contained in parish registers is to be given out to researchers until it is 110 years' old. The exceptions to this rule are extracts requested by the person themselves, information required for any canonical purpose, and if it can be shown that the subject/s of the record is dead.

Data protection legislation should be borne in mind when allowing access to other archive material. However, historical archives are not the main concern of the legislation which is intended primarily to regulate the use of relevant active data. Data protection should not therefore be used as an excuse to destroy material of potential archival value as retention of personal data for archival purposes is specifically permitted under section 33 of the Data Protection 1998 Act.

B.4 Listing

"An inventory or catalogue is to be made of documents kept in the archive, with a short synopsis of each document." (Canon 486 § 3)

Having a list or catalogue, however simple, of the parish records is a very important tool in managing them. It will help the parish to know what records it holds and where to find them. It will help ensure that records are not kept for longer than required and enable parishes to be in control of their records.

It is not necessary to list every individual document. Rather the list may give one description for the contents of a folder, box or even filing cabinet drawer. For example, an entry might read "1 folder containing correspondence between the parish and Archbishop's House, 1990-1993." Ideally each item on the list should be given a unique reference number which should be written on the item (but not on the records themselves). The title, date, description and quantity of material should be listed.

For example, records listed on shelf A (where the shelves have been each clearly marked with their reference) might be listed as such:

Ref	Title/ description	Date	Quantity
A/1	Finance Committee minutes	1990-2000	3 folders
A/2	Audio cassette recordings of homilies	1982-1989	1 box – 20 cassettes
A/3	Large framed photograph of Archbishop Michael Bowen		
A/4	General parish correspondence	1973-1976	1 box file

Archival cataloguing software, both freeware and commercial software, is available. However, it is possible to use existing parish software such as Excel or Word for listing.

B.5 Parish archivist

“Where historical material continues to be held in the parishes, there is a strong argument for making a single individual ... designated as ‘parish archivist,’ responsible for the care of the historic archive. This person would then be answerable to the parish priest, who is the responsible person under Canon Law, for the historical material.”⁶ Many parishes already have a parish archivist who cares for the parish records on behalf of the parish and priest. Parishes without an archivist should consider whether it would be of benefit to appoint a volunteer to this role.

B.6 How to archive websites

The UK Web Archive (<http://www.webarchive.org.uk/ukwa/>) offers an easy way for parishes to archive their website. The Web Archive takes six monthly ‘snapshots’ of a website and makes them available via its website for free. The main Diocesan website is archived in this way. For more information, contact the Web Archive using the form on their site.

C. Record retention and disposal

C.1 What format should records be kept in?

Any records that have been designated as archives, or need to be kept for more than ten years, should be printed and kept as paper records (although a digital copy may also be kept) to ensure that they are accessible long-term.

C.2 Retention scheduling

“The archival procedure for contemporary documents is just as important as the collection of old documents and the conservation of historical archives. In fact, tomorrow’s historical archives are kept in today’s archives for current affairs.”⁷

A records retention schedule is a list of how long different sorts of records should be kept for and when and how they can be disposed of either by recycling or by being put in the archive.

Retention schedules are important as they set out how long records must be kept for operational, legal, historical and other purposes. Retention schedules identify records with archival value and help ensure that they are preserved for posterity. Retention schedules also identify when records can be disposed of which helps prevent a build-up of obsolete records taking up valuable storage space and causing other problems.

⁶ *The care and administration of parish records*, p.15.

⁷ “The Pastoral Function of Church Archives.”

C.3 How long should parish records be kept for?

A detailed retention schedule for parishes can be found in appendix 1 of this guide. All parishes should aim to follow this advice which will enable parishes to know when they can get rid of obsolete records and help to ensure that important records are preserved.

C.4 Secure shredding

Parishes are responsible for organising their own secure record shredding and are free to choose which company they wish to use and the time and method that best suits the parish.

When carrying out secure shredding, please adhere to Diocesan records management rules:

1. Please follow the record retention guidance in this document and in the Finance Office Retention Schedule (this can be found on the Finance Office website) when determining which records to dispose of.
2. Please complete a Record Disposal Form (available in Appendix 2 of this document and on the Finance Office website) for each group of records that are shredded. The Disposal Form must be kept permanently by the parish as evidence of which records were disposed of.
3. Please ensure that you receive a certificate of destruction from the shredding company. This certificate needs to be kept for six years after the date of destruction.

C.5 Data Protection and GDPR

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection regulations make it clear that archives are to be protected. This means that personal data already in parish archives should not be removed, destroyed or changed in any way and that personal data worthy of permanent preservation should be safeguarded and added to the parish archive rather than destroyed. For more information on GDPR and parish archives, please see the paper on “Data Protection, GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and Parish Archives” found on the Diocesan Archive’s website (<http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/Archives.html>)

D. Diocesan Archive

Website: <http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/Archives.html>

D.1 Role

One of the roles of the Diocesan Archive is to support and advise parishes in caring for their records. Parishes are most welcome to contact the Archive to ask for advice and guidance.

D.2 What parish records are held in the Diocesan Archive?

The Diocesan Archive does not hold any parish records. These should all be held in the parish. However, for most parishes, the Archive does hold at least one large box file of records relating to that parish. These contain records of the interaction between Archbishop’s House and the parish and include photographs, visitation forms, statistical returns, correspondence and parish histories.

D.3 Can the Diocesan Archive take parish records?

The Diocesan Archive does not currently accept any parish records. However, it is possible that in future the Diocesan Archive may begin to accept older sacramental registers or records.

E. Further advice and resources

E.1 Diocesan Contacts and Resources

Diocesan Archivist:

Jenny Delves
020 7202 8193
archives@rcaos.org.uk

Records Management and GDPR Assistant:

Alison Forsey
020 7960 2506
recordsmanagement@rcaos.org.uk

The Diocesan Archive website: <http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/Archives.html> and the Diocesan Finance Office website: <http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/finance.html> both contain record keeping guidance and resources.

E.2 Catholic Archive Society

The Catholic Archive Society (<http://catholicarchivesociety.org/home>) offers support to those caring for Catholic archives. Annual membership is only £20 per year. They have produced some useful resources including:

- *The care and administration of parish records*, Paul Shaw, 2007: £4.00. This is highly recommended.
- 13 advice leaflets on keeping archives which are aimed at non-professionals. These are free to download: <https://catholicarchivesociety.org/advice-leaflets-occasional-papers/>

E.3 Other Resources

- The National Archives has a guide to record keeping for non-archivists, *Archive Principles and Practice: an introduction to archives for non-archivists*, at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/archive-principles-and-practice-an-introduction-to-archives-for-non-archivists.pdf>

Other churches and dioceses have produced record keeping advice for parishes. However, please bear in mind that their practices may vary somewhat from those in the Diocese of Southwark:

- Church of England, *Keep or Bin...? The Care of Your Parish Records*, http://www.lambethpalacelibrary.org/files/Parish_Records_0.pdf
- United Reformed Church advice, "URC Churches Archives and Records Advice (2014)" can be found at <https://www.urc.org.uk/urc-archive.html>

Advice on caring for paintings

- http://www.si.edu/mci/English/learn_more/taking_care/care_painting.html
- <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/caring-for-paintings-and-frames-in-museums/>

Advice on caring for photographs

- http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archivesconservation_photo.pdf
- <http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/photo.html>
- <https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/advice/collections/caring-for-photographic-collections/>

E.4 Preservation resources

There are several companies which sell preservation equipment such as archival folders and boxes. These include:

- Conservation by Design: <http://www.conservation-by-design.com/home.aspx?pagename=home>
- Preservation Equipment: <http://www.preservationequipment.com/>
- Conservation Resources: <http://www.conservation-resources.co.uk/>
- Secol: <https://www.secol.co.uk/>

The Diocesan Archives uses:

- Boxes: <http://www.conservation-by-design.com/productdetails.aspx?id=41&itemno=BXSMBG3182>
- Folders: <http://www.preservationequipment.com/Catalogue/Archival-Storage/Envelopes/Juris-Expansion-Folders> (legal size)
- Folders: <http://www.conservation-by-design.com/productdetails.aspx?id=173&itemno=FDPSCF1201>
- Polyester photograph pockets (Conservation by Design): <http://tinyurl.com/hj8wyuw>

E.5 Funding

There are various funding bodies who give funding for archive work. The National Archives has a helpful webpage giving advice on seeking funding: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-funding/>

Appendix 1: Retention schedule

Notes

- This retention schedule can be applied to both the records currently being produced and used in the parish and to historical records or archives which are no longer used for business purposes.
- “Key” correspondence or documents are records which help to tell the story of the parish, its work or its relationships; documents which contain historically significant information or official statements; documents expressing direction, support or approval for projects, contracts, policies, actions or a particular activity or decision, including dissenting views; documents which give information on a dispute or situation; correspondence with significant people.
- Records that have been designed as archives, or need to be kept for more than ten years, should be printed and kept as paper records.
- Records that are closed may be accessed by parish staff for work, pastoral or canonical purposes. Closed records may not be accessed by parishioners or members of the public.
- Records that are open may be accessed by anyone at the discretion of the parish priest.

Church buildings and property

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Architectural drawings, photographs, and plans for property including church	Permanently (unless property is sold)	Transfer to parish archive (If sold, transfer to new owner)	Open	No
Records documenting major maintenance and development works on property	Permanently (unless property is sold)	Transfer to parish archive (If sold, transfer to new owner)	Closed for 30 years	No
Property Deeds – originals	These should be held by the Diocesan solicitors	Pass to the Diocesan solicitors. Contact the Finance Office for information		No
Property Deeds - copies Originals are held by the Diocesan solicitors; contact Finance Office for information	For as long as the property is owned by the parish	Destroy	Open	No
Records documenting the purchase, disposal or leasing out of properties	Disposal of property + 12 years	Destroy	Open	No
General correspondence related to property	Last action on correspondence + 6 years	Destroy	Closed	No
Graveyard: Plans, registers of graves, and accompanying records	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Open	No

Parish personnel

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Records relating to the appointment of parish clergy	Not kept by parish.			Yes
Parish lay staff personnel records Full staff records must be kept	Termination of employment + 6 years	Destroy securely	Closed	No
Parish lay staff summary record of employment details (Employee's name, dates of employment, positions held)	(Kept after the termination of employment) Until age 100	Destroy securely	Closed	No
Personal papers and correspondence of clergy	Priest's personal property to manage as he sees fit.	Priest's personal property to manage as he sees fit.	Closed	No
Writings and sermon notes of clergy	Duration of appointment	Transfer a sample to the parish archive with priest's permission	At discretion of parish	No

Parish finances

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Parish Finance Committee minutes and papers	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	No
Finance records including: cash books, bills, bank statements, financial returns, budgets, accounting records and other subsidiary financial records	Current financial year + 6 years	Destroy securely	Closed	No
Insurance policies	Date of expiry + 6 years	Destroy securely	Closed	No
Records relating to bequests, legacies etc	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	
Records documenting the negotiation, establishment, and alteration of contracts and agreements	End of contract + 6 years	Destroy securely		
Gift aid records	Last payment + 6 years	Destroy		
Mass intention envelopes – not gift aided	Do not keep	Destroy		No
Mass intention envelopes –gift aided [Gift Aid rules apply]	Last payment + 6 years	Destroy		No

Diocesan, deanery, parish and civil administration

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Documents relating to Parish's foundation and dedication	Permanently	Keep permanently in parish archive Store in a safe	Open	No [some parishes' records may be held by the Finance Office]
Pastorals and Ad Clerum	Current year + 2 years	Destroy	Closed	Yes
Papers of Diocesan Commissions, Synods etc	Current year + 2 years	Destroy securely	Closed	Yes
Deanery Papers	Current year + 2 years	Destroy parish copies Deanery copies to be sent to Diocesan Archive	Closed	Yes
Marriage paperwork	Permanently [Please note that this retention period is under consideration and this advice may be updated]		Closed	Yes
Baptism applications	Baptism date + 1 year	Destroy	Closed	No

Sacramental and other registers

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Sacramental and other registers [Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage, Catechumens, Death, and any others kept by the parish]	Permanently	Transfer to parish archives	Entries are closed for 110 years	No
Civil Marriage Registers and indexes	Permanently	Transfer to parish archives	Open	No Held by local Register Office

Parishioners

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Status animarum (parish family book)	Permanently	Transfer to parish archives	Closed for 30 years	No
Sick Call Books	Permanently	Transfer to parish archives	Closed for 110 years	No
School application church attendance forms	School application process complete + 1 year	Destroy	Closed	No

Church services and events

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Service sheets and liturgies	Current year + 2 years	Transfer to parish archives	Open	No
Photographs of parish activities, events, people and property	End of the event	Print a sample and transfer to parish archives Ensure that event, date and those in the photographs are recorded.	Open	No
Visual and audio recordings of parish activities and events	End of the event	Transfer to parish archives. Ensure that event, date and those in the recording are noted.	Open	No
Records documenting parish events	End of the event + 2 years	Transfer key documents such as reports and programmes to parish archive. Destroy ephemeral records.	Open	No
Parish notice books	Permanently	Transfer to parish archives	Open	No

Parish administration

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
General and routine correspondence (priest's and parish's)	Last action on correspondence + 2 years	Destroy	Closed	No
Official/key correspondence (priest's and parish's)	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	No
Parish Committees minutes and papers	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	No
Databases, mailing and contact lists	Keep most up-to-date version	Destroy when no longer required	Closed	No
Pastoral Statistics and Parish Register Returns	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	No
Parish Profiles	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	No
Other organisations', churches' and Diocesan publications, minutes and other material	Keep as long as required for working purposes	Destroy	Closed	No
Record Disposal Forms for records sent for shredding	Permanently	Keep in parish office		No
Certificates of destruction from shredding companies	Date of destruction + 6 years	Review and then destroy if no longer required		No

Parish publications

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Parish magazines and newsletters	Permanently	Transfer 1 copy to parish archive	Open	No
Parish publications including parish histories	Permanently	Transfer 2 copies to parish archive Transfer 1 copy to Diocesan archive	Open	Yes (if transferred by parish)

Parish organisations

Type of record	How long to keep it for	What action to take after this time	Access	Held by Diocesan Archive?
Minutes and papers	Permanently	Transfer to parish archive	Closed for 30 years	No
Correspondence	Current year + 2 years	Transfer key correspondence to parish archive. Destroy other correspondence.	Closed for 30 years	No

Appendix 2: Record Disposal Form



Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark c/o

PAPER RECORDS DISPOSAL FORM

Parish/Agency Name:	
Name of Person Completing Form: (please print clearly)	
Date:	

CAUTION: A record may not be destroyed if any litigation, claim, negotiation, audit or data protection request involving the record is initiated before the expiration of the retention period. The record must be retained until the completion of the action and the resolution of all issues that arise from it, or until the expiration of the retention period, whichever is later.

Record Title:	
Description of Records:	
Date Range (yyyy-yyyy):	
Reason for Disposal: [Refer to the Retention Schedule]	
Date of Disposal:	

DISPOSAL AUTHORITY DECLARATION*:

I certify that these OFFICIAL RECORD COPIES are past the retention period specified by the Retention Schedule and that all audit and administrative requirements have been satisfied.

I certify that these records ARE NOT required as part of any litigation, claim, audit, or data protection request and all administrative requirements have been satisfied.

I certify that this document will be retained PERMANENTLY as evidence of the approved destruction.

Authority:			
Name		Date:	
Signature			

*The manager or nominated deputy are the only authorities who can sign off on disposal

Appendix 3: Diocesan Archive Access policy

Introduction

The Diocese seeks to encourage the use of its archives both within the Diocese and by outside researchers. Access is open to anyone who can demonstrate a reasonable need to consult the material we hold. The following guidelines on access are in place to ensure the security, preservation and continued availability of the Diocese's unique and irreplaceable archives.

Enquiries

The Archivist is happy to respond to simple email, postal or phone enquiries, free of charge. In the case where an enquiry takes some time to respond to, the enquirer will be invited to make a donation to the Diocese in recognition of time spent on the enquiry. Please note that it is not possible for the Archivist to undertake detailed research on behalf of enquirers. Where more detailed research is required, enquirers are invited to visit the archive or to make their own arrangements to carry out the research. Please allow five working days for a response to enquiries.

Visits

Researchers are most welcome to use the archive although please be aware that there is no automatic right of access to the Diocesan Archive and the Diocesan Archivist reserves the right to refuse admission.

The Archive is open to readers, by prior appointment, on Mondays and Tuesdays 8.30am-1pm and 2pm-5.00pm. All readers must complete an Archive User Agreement form before being granted access to the archive material. By signing this form readers are agreeing to its terms.

Record closure

While the Diocese aims to provide as wide access as possible to the material held in its Archive, some restrictions are inevitable due to the nature, content or physical condition of the material. Records become available as soon as possible after a 30 year closure period. However, some records may be closed for a longer period in consideration of personal, confidential or sensitive information contained within the records. During the closure period records will be unavailable for research or other purposes.

Archive reading room rules

Archival material is made available to readers in accordance with the following regulations:

Identification

- On their first visit to the archive, a researcher must register as a reader. In order to do this, one form of photographic identification is required:

Or

A letter of introduction from someone known to the researcher in a formal capacity related to their research such as an academic supervisor, archivist, employer or parish priest.

- Readers should sign the visitors' book on every visit.

Security

- Bags must be placed in the locker provided and not taken to the reading desk.
- No archive material should be removed from the reading desk and all material must be returned before leaving Archbishop's House.
- Readers are not permitted in the archive office and store.
- Damage or theft of archive material is an offence and those responsible will be prosecuted.

Handling

The materials held in the Archive are irreplaceable. The following handling guidelines help to ensure their preservation:

- Readers are responsible for the care of the archives that they are consulting.
- Readers should have clean hands before using the archives.
- Documents should be kept in order and no clips or fasteners removed.
- The archives should not be marked, annotated or altered in any way.
- Book supports and weights are available if required. No other weight should be placed on archive material - do not lean on it, use improvised devices to prop volumes open or put notes or laptops on documents.

Conduct

- Pencils, not pens, should be used at the reading desk.
- No food or drink (including water) is permitted at the reading desk.
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere in Archbishop's House.
- Mobile phones must be kept in 'silent' mode. Please go outside to make or receive calls.

Infringement of these conditions may result in the withdrawal of the privilege of access.

Copying archives

All items held by the Archive are subject to copyright law. Researchers must complete a copyright declaration form and agree to our terms and conditions before making or obtaining copies.

- Researchers are usually welcome, having obtained the Archivist's permission, to take photographs (without a flash) of the records for their own research purposes. There is no charge for this service, however, researchers are welcome to make a donation to the Diocese if they wish.
- For preservation reasons, it may not be possible to photocopy documents from the Archive. The Archivist will make the decision as to whether a document can be photocopied. There is a charge for this service: please see Archive Charges for details.
- The Archive can supply digital images, either scans (if a document can be scanned without damage) or digital photographs. Please note that these images are intended for study and are not of publication quality. There is a charge for this service: please see Archive Charges for details.

Publishing

Images of items in the Archive may be published with the approval of the Archivist. To apply for permission to publish an image, a Request to Publish form should be completed and returned to the Archivist. A publication charge will be levied depending on what sort of work the image will be reproduced in. Please see the Archive Charges for details. Where the Diocese does not hold the copyright, it is the responsibility of the researcher to seek appropriate copyright permissions.

Where an image or content from the Archive is used, an appropriate citation must be included.