RECORDS AND ARCHIVES ORDINANCE 2026

AN ORDINANCE to regulate the keeping and preservation of the Records of the Church, and for related purposes.

WHEREAS it has become expedient to repeal the Records and Archives Ordinance 2004-2005 (the Repealed Ordinance),

AND WHEREAS any appointment, regulation, policy, approval, authority, transfer of records or other act made or done under the Repealed Ordinance and in force immediately before the commencement of this Ordinance continues in force, so far as it is not inconsistent with this Ordinance, as if made or done under this Ordinance,

THE SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF BATHURST HEREBY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS.

PRELIMINARY AND DEFINITION

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the "Records and Archives Ordinance 2026". It replaces the Records and Archives Ordinance 2004-2005.

D E F I N I T I O N S

2. In this Ordinance or in any regulation made pursuant to the provisions of this Ordinance unless the context or subject matter otherwise requires:

“Appraisal” means evaluating business activities or functions to determine what records need to be retained and how long they need to be retained in order to meet business needs, and organisational accountability and community needs.

"Archives" means the Records that have been selected in accordance with this Ordinance for permanent retention on the basis of their continuing value for legal, administrative, financial or historical research purposes.

"Committee" means the Records and Archives Committee as constituted by this Ordinance.

"Diocesan Archivist" means the person appointed by the Bishop to provide advice, guidelines and regular management of Diocesan and Parish records and related activities.

"Disposal" (in relation to Records) means the processes associated with implementing records retention, and destruction or archival transfer decisions as documented in a Retention and Disposal Authority.

“Office Holder” means stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy, employed staff of parishes and diocesan organisations, churchwardens, parish councillors, ministry leaders of organisations within the Parish and the Diocese.

“Parish” means a parish of the Diocese.

"Records" means information in any format created, received, or maintained as evidence by a parish, Office Holder or the Diocese , pursuant to any legal obligation or in the conduct of parish or Diocesan business or activities.

"Records and Archives Unit" means the place or places provided or approved by Bishop-in Council where archives are housed.

"Regulation" means a regulation made pursuant to the provisions of this Ordinance.

"Retention and Disposal Authority" means a formal instrument defining the retention periods and consequent disposal actions authorised for classes of records by the Registrar.

APPLICATION OF ORDINANCE

3. The provisions of this Ordinance apply to all parishes, special ministries and organisations listed in Schedule A or as determined by the Bishop.
4. This Ordinance does not apply to records of schools in the diocese.

OWNERSHIP OF RECORDS

5. All Records are the property of the Anglican Property Trust Diocese of Bathurst.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

6. All Records must be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance and any Regulations.

RESPONSIBILITY

7. All Office Holders have a responsibility to ensure that Records are created, retained and kept to accurately reflect the life of the Diocese and its parishes.
8. The Committee has a responsibility to issue guidelines that assist parishes, diocesan organisations and the Registrar in the management of the Records. This includes the creation, storage (both physical and digital), disposal and retention of records as Archives.

DELIVERY OF RECORDS

9. All Records must, within 12 months of ceasing to be in current use (including for entry or for frequent reference by those in authority who use them), be forwarded to the Registrar.
10. The Diocesan Archivist is to determine whether or not such records are to be deposited in the Records and Archives Unit for storage and preservation.
11. Upon the transfer of Records under clause 9, the responsibility for their care and management transfers to the Registrar.

THE RECORDS AND ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

12. The Committee shall consist of:

    (a) A chairperson appointed by the Bishop;

    (b) The Registrar or the Registrar's nominee;

    (c) The Diocesan Archivist;

    (d) The Dean of the Bathurst Cathedral or the Dean's nominee; and

    (e) One other person appointed by the Bishop and up to two other persons appointed by Bishop-in-Council, all in so far as is possible with relevant experience in information management and an understanding of church history and its place in society.

13. The Committee may invite such other experienced persons to attend meetings of the Committee as it considers necessary to assist in the discharge of its responsibilities, but such persons shall not have powers of proposition or vote.

14. The responsibilities of the Committee are to:

    (a) create, amend and recommend for approval by Bishop-in-Council, the policies, the Retention and Disposal Authority, and the associated resources required for best practice in records and archives management;

    (b) oversee the adequate preservation and conservation of Records acquired for the Records and Archives Unit; and

    (c) report annually on the functioning of the Records and Archives Unit to Bishop-in Council and the Anglican Property Trust.

THE DIOCESAN ARCHIVIST

15. The Bishop may appoint a qualified person to be Diocesan Archivist on such terms and conditions as the Bishop deems appropriate.

16. The responsibilities of the Diocesan Archivist are to:

    (a) administer the Records and Archives Unit in accordance with this Ordinance;

    (b) ensure that the recording of all acquisitions of materials from all sources and the preservation, conservation and disposal of Diocesan and Parish records held in the Records and Archives Unit are in accordance with such professional standards usually required of archives and archivists;

    (c) encourage and facilitate access for the purposes of academic and scholarly research into the Diocesan and Parish records held in the Records and Archives Unit; and

    (d) provide advice for the acquisition, preservation, conservation and disposal of records from private sources relevant to the activities of the Church.

17. With the agreement of the Committee, and the prior approval of the Registrar, the Diocesan Archivist may appoint other duly trained person/s to assist in the day to day management of the Records and Archives Unit.

18. The Diocesan Archivist and any person/s appointed by the Archivist shall be responsible to the Registrar for the day to day duties and management of the Records and Archives Unit.

RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

19. The disposal of any Records may be done only in accordance with the current approved Retention and Disposal Authority and such Regulations and procedures as may from time to time be in force pursuant to this Ordinance.

20. A summary of the Retention and Disposal Authority for all parishes, as at the date of this Ordinance, is found in Schedule B.

REGULATIONS

21. Bishop-in-Council may from time to time adopt policies and make, amend or repeal regulations not inconsistent with this Ordinance, providing for all or any of the purposes set out in this Ordinance.

22. Regulations providing for access to Diocesan and Parish records shall not be contrary to any law in force from time to time in the State of New South Wales, and in the case of records other than Diocesan and Parish records may not be contrary to any expressed direction given by or on behalf of any person who shall deposit such records.

APPROVED POLICIES AND FORMS

23. Approved policies, procedures and guidelines are to be published on the Diocesan website. The following documents are essential for maintaining best practice management of the records and archives of the Diocese and parishes and must be applied by Office Holders:

    (a) Archives and Records Management for Diocese and Parishes - Policies and Principles;

    (b) Records and Archives Management Manual;

    (c) Retention and Disposal Authority (available from the Diocesan Office upon request); and

    (d) Parish Records Guidelines.

I certify that this Ordinance was passed by the Synod of the Diocese of Bathurst on this 19th day of September 2026.

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Registrar

I give my assent to this Ordinance.

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Bishop of Bathurst

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE A – PARISHES AND ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH THIS ORDINANCE APPLIES

1. Registry Office of the Diocese of Bathurst.
2. All parishes and special ministries of the Diocese, as defined by the Parishes Ordinance, including all closed and amalgamated parishes and churches.
3. The following diocesan agencies:
    - Brotherhood of the Good Shepherd
    - Company of the Good Shepherd
    - St Michaels Home, Kelso
    - St Johns Hostel, Forbes

SCHEDULE B – WHAT RECORDS MUST BE KEPT

The Diocese has a Retention and Disposal Authority which outlines all records which need to be created and how long they need to be kept. A summary of what Parish records need to be retained is listed below.

For records with a **Permanent/Temporary** retention, consultation with the Registrar is required before disposal.

Record Types	Titles	Retention period
Registers	Baptismal, confirmation, burial, marriage, service and Banns	Permanent
Official Records	Parish Council, Building Committee, Churchwardens, Trustees, Sub-committees, Churchwardens - minute books, contracts, plans, lists of office bearers, etc.	Permanent
Accounting records	Audited Financial Statements.	Permanent
Accounting records	Financial transaction records.	7 years after Audit, then securely destroyed
General correspondence	Inward and outward including backed up emails.	Permanent/Temporary
Official Correspondence	Episcopal and from the Registrar: inward and outward including backed up emails.	Permanent
Annual Reports	At least one hard copy.	Permanent
Parish organisations	Sunday school/club, Youth, Men's, Women's - minute books, correspondence, lists of office bearers.	Permanent/Temporary
Parish organisations	Attendance registers and church worker rosters for all Parish activities for minors (under 18-year-olds)	Permanent
Inventory: buildings and contents	Inventory of all furniture, service books, muniments, records and vessels belonging to the church, including photographs of items, and update/correct the inventory from time to time.	Permanent
Orders of Services, pew sheets, Newsletters, etc	Printed and bound, if possible, but electronic copies saved.	Permanent/Temporary
Personal	Clergy records, memorabilia, reminiscences, etc.	Permanent/Temporary
Photographs	Clergy, office bearers, buildings, functions, etc. - named and dated if possible.	Permanent/Temporary
Artifacts and donations	Record their provenance – where and from whom. Deed of gift documentation if possible.	Permanent