

## Useful Information

### General Register Office

[www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content](http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content)

### Gov.UK

[www.gov.uk/adoption-records](http://www.gov.uk/adoption-records)

### Adoption Contact Register for ENGLAND

[www.gov.uk/adoption-records/the-adoption-contact-register](http://www.gov.uk/adoption-records/the-adoption-contact-register)

### Adoption Contact Register for NORTHERN IRELAND

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/parents/adoption-fostering-and-children-in-care/adoption.htm](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/parents/adoption-fostering-and-children-in-care/adoption.htm)

### Adoption Contact Register for SCOTLAND:

[www.birthlink.org.uk](http://www.birthlink.org.uk)

### CoramBAAF (British Association for Adoption & Fostering)

[www.corambaaf.org.uk](http://www.corambaaf.org.uk)

### Adoption Search Reunion

[www.adoptionsearchreunion.org.uk/Channels](http://www.adoptionsearchreunion.org.uk/Channels)

### Barnardo's Family History Service

[www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)



In 1927, the official registration of adoptions was introduced in England, with similar systems brought into Scotland in 1930 and Northern Ireland in 1931.

[For more detailed information:](http://www.mlfhs.uk/research/getting-help/research-guides)

[www.mlfhs.uk/research/getting-help/research-guides](http://www.mlfhs.uk/research/getting-help/research-guides)

Archives +

Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society

3rd Floor, Manchester Central Library,  
St. Peter's Square, Manchester, M2 5PD  
Email: [office@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:office@mlfhs.org.uk)



## Adoption

If you were adopted through a court in England or Wales and are aged 18 or over, you can apply for a certificate of your original birth entry and seek out more information about your birth.

### Birth Certificates

Your birth should have been registered within 42 days by law and registered within the registration district where the birth took place. This may not necessarily be the district where the birth mother normally resided. A birth certificate will be issued with the date and place of birth, child's name, parent(s) name(s) and address. If the father's name is shown, his occupation will also be given.

At adoption, an entry is made in the General Register Office (GRO) Adopted Children's Index. The adoptive family are then issued with a replacement birth certificate which supersedes the original birth certificate for legal purposes. This certificate will show the adoptive first name (which may or may not be the same as the birth name), adoptive surname, adoptive parents' name(s), the date of adoption and the court that processed it. The Registrar General issues an instruction to the Superintendent Registrar where the original birth entry was made and an annotation is added to the original birth entry. If you now purchase a birth certificate either from the GRO or the local registrar, this annotation will appear on the right hand side. However, there is no way to link to the original birth entry in the GRO. If you do not have a copy of your original birth certificate you will need to apply for one. If you were adopted before 12 November 1975, and do not know your name at birth you will need to apply to the Registrar General for Access to Birth Records. You will also need to meet with an adoption advisor so that arrangements can be made for the Register General to send them the information needed to apply for a copy of your original birth certificate.

If you were adopted on or after 12 November 1975 and before 30<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and do not know your birth name you can apply to the General Registrar for the information to assist you in order to obtain a copy of your original birth certificate.

## **I have already got a copy of my original birth certificate, so how can I find out more information?**

### **Adoption Records**

You may wish to find out more information than is included on your original birth certificate. You should endeavour to gather as much information as you can about your adoption and family background. You may already have information provided by your adoptive parents. If this is the case then you could write directly to the agency that arranged the adoption (if your adoption was not arranged privately) and arrange to have access to the records of your adoption. The amount of information available will vary depending on when the adoption took place and whether records still exist. If there are records available then the adoption agency is usually able to provide the adopted person with information about their family background and the reasons for the adoption. The adoption agency will expect to meet with you to confirm your identity before sharing any information from their records. If you do not know the name of the agency that arranged your adoption, you may obtain this information from the General Register Office. The GRO may also be able to tell you if you have been adopted privately.

### **Private Adoptions**

These were private arrangements made through such individuals as doctors, lawyers or the clergy. Such adoptions were legal until 1984. If you were privately adopted it may be difficult to find out details of your adoption. The General Register Office should be able to provide the name of the court where the Adoption Order was made. It may also be helpful to write to the Local Authority that covers the area of the Court, as it would have undertaken your welfare supervision pending the adoption and may still hold a record. It may also have a copy of the '*Guardian ad Litem*' report which would have been prepared for the Court.

## **I have my birth certificate and adoption records information now what?**

### **Adoption Contact Register**

Created in 1991, the Adoption Contact Register exists to put adopted people and their birth relatives in touch with each other if that is what they both wish. If you were adopted or if you're a birth relative of an adopted

person, you can add yourself to the Adoption Contact Register to express an interest in finding your family. The Contact Register cannot help an adopted person to discover the whereabouts of a birth relative or to know their birth relative's wishes unless the relative has also chosen to be entered on the Contact Register. Do be aware that a person can place a 'veto' on adoption records if they do not wish to be contacted by the birth family, plus they have the ability to record a 'wish for no contact' on the Adoption Contact Register held by the GRO.

From 30 December 2005 applicants can add themselves to this Register which is held at the General Register Office. The Adoption Contact Register is in two parts and there is a one-off registration fee per entry of £15 for Part 1 and £30 for Part 2.

### **Barnardo's**

You may believe that either you or a relative had been in the care of Barnardo's during childhood. The oldest records available date from the 1870's. Barnardo's do offer a Family History Service with a range of services in order to assist with your family history research (£). It may be useful to note that Barnardo's did not operate an Adoption Agency until 1947.

### **New Legislation 2014**

The UK Government plans to introduce new rules by November 2014 to enable those adopted as children, and the children, grandchildren and other relatives of those adopted, to trace their family history. As the law currently stands, only the person adopted and their birth relatives are able to use specialist adoption agencies to try and make contact with their biological family. They should also be able to find out about important events from their past, as well as make contact with family members if they wish. For example, those who have lost a parent to cancer or a heart problem will be able to discover whether their grandparents or other birth relatives suffered from the same condition, giving them the chance to seek advice and support. It is hoped that these new rules will encourage greater openness in adoption. To obtain further advice you should contact an Adoption Support agency who provide intermediary services.