



Adoption Support Services

Information for adopted adults

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Adoption team offers a confidential information, advice and counselling service to adopted adults who are interested in finding out information about their birth history. If you are over 18, you can contact the Adoption team and we will help you to gain access to your records. If you are interested in making contact with your birth family, we can offer you an intermediary service.

There are five stages in the process of finding out about your birth history and contacting your birth family.

- 1 Accessing your birth records
- 2 Accessing your adoption records
- 3 Accessing an intermediary service
- 4 Contacting a birth relative
- 5 Reunions

Accessing your birth records

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 gives an adopted person the right to apply for their birth records when they reach 18. Adopted adult's birth records are held by the General Register Office (GRO).

You can write to the GRO to ask for a form that contains all of your original birth details. This can then be used to apply for a copy of your birth certificate. You can contact the GRO at:

Adoptions Section

General Register Office
Smedley Hydro
Trafalgar Road
Birkdale
Southport PR8 2HH
Phone: 0151 471 4830
E-mail: adoptions@ons.gov.uk
Website: www.gro.gov.uk

You will need to say that you are an adopted person in your letter. The Registrar will send you an application form which you should complete (as far as possible) and return to the same address. This form can also be downloaded from the GRO website.



Receiving your birth records

The information from the GRO will either be sent directly to you or will be sent to your adoption support counsellor. It will include:

- 1 Application details
- 2 Form CA5 to apply for your original birth certificate. This form will tell you your birth name, your birth mother's name, confirm your date of birth, the date when your birth was registered and the registration district. You will be charged a fee, currently £7, when you apply for your certificate.
- 3 An application form to get the agency details from the Court where you were adopted.
- 4 A leaflet explaining how to place your details on the Adoption Contact Register.



If you were adopted before 12 November 1975

- You will have to attend a counselling session with an adoption counsellor before receiving your birth details.
- You can choose whether to see an adoption counsellor in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Adoption team or the agency that arranged your adoption (if this is known).
- The GRO will forward your birth details to the adoption support service that you have nominated.
- Once you have been informed by the GRO that your details have been sent to the adoption support agency, you can contact the counselling service to arrange an appointment.
- This service is free of charge, but you will need to produce some form of identification such as a driving licence or a passport.
- A relative or friend can attend the appointment with you if you feel that you would benefit from their support.

If you were adopted after November 1975

- The GRO will send your birth details to you directly.
- Counselling is not a requirement but we do still recommend it as it can be very useful to discuss how you feel about your adoption with a counsellor.

The initial counselling session

The adoption counsellor will go through the information provided by the GRO with you. They will describe the options that are open to you and help you to work out what you would like to do next.

As well as providing you with information, this session offers you the opportunity to discuss your feelings about being adopted. It will be useful to look at your expectations and your reasons for starting your search. The counsellor will also help you to consider some of the difficulties that you might experience and think about the impact your search might have on your adopted and birth families.

No one else will have been informed of your enquiries and it is important to remember that only you can take the matter further at any stage. The counsellor will provide you with information and guidance for the future and attempt to trace any adoption records, if that is what you would like them to do. If these records are available, you will be offered another appointment to look at the file.

Please note: Information shared in a counselling session is usually confidential. However, if during the course of our work with you a disclosure of past or present abuse is made, this will need to be referred to our Child Protection Manager for advice and guidance. If any further action is necessary we will discuss this with you and always keep you informed.



Accessing your adoption records

If you wish to take the next step and access your adoption records, we will write to the court where your adoption order was made to find out which adoption agency arranged your adoption (if this is not already known to us). We can approach the agency on your behalf, or you can approach them directly. Your adoption records can then be shared with you by the adoption agency of your choice.

If your records are held by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, an adoption counsellor from our adoption support team will help you to make sense of the information on your records. The law requires us to remove third party information from the file before it is shared with you, to protect the confidentiality of others involved. We can put details of your enquiry on your file, should a birth relative make contact in the future. You also have the right to place a veto.

What is a veto?

To veto something means to forbid or disallow it. Adopted adults have the right to prevent contact from birth relatives by placing a veto on their adoption records. The veto can state that they do not wish to have contact with birth relatives in any circumstances (an absolute veto) or they can specify the circumstances in which they may be contacted (a qualified veto). For example, they may wish to know if important medical information comes to light or may wish to only receive contact from certain members of their birth family.

Intermediary services

Finding out the details of their birth and adoption will be enough for some people. Others will want to know more and will want to trace their birth relatives and try to make contact with them. In the Richmond adoption support team, we are able to provide an intermediary service to people who wish to continue their search.

What is an intermediary service?

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames offers an intermediary service to adopted adults over the age of 18. This means that our adoption support social workers will help adopted adults to access the information they need to trace a relative and will help to arrange contact between them. The intermediary services we offer are designed to safeguard the interests of everyone involved.

We advise people who want to make contact with their birth relatives to put their details on the Adoption Contact Register.



What is the Adoption Contact Register?

The Adoption Contact Register helps to put adopted adults and their birth relatives in touch with each other, if that is what they both want.

Part 1 of the register is for **adopted adults**.

Adopted adults can register their wish for contact with a birth relative or register their wish for no contact, or contact only in specific circumstances.

Part 2 of the register is for **birth relatives**.

Birth relatives can also record a wish for contact or no contact.

If an adopted adult and a birth relative both register their wish for contact then an automatic link is made. The Registrar General will send the birth relative's name and address to the adopted person, with details of the relationship. The birth relative will be told that their details have been sent but **it is up to the adopted person to decide if they want to make contact**.

You will be charged a fee, currently £30.

If you decide to try and trace your birth relatives, you may wish to discuss your decision with one of our team. We can give you advice on searching, but cannot trace on your behalf.

There are registered adoption support agencies that may be able to help you trace your relatives and they are listed at the end of this leaflet. They will make a charge for this service.



Contacting a birth relative

We can write to birth relatives on your behalf and we can offer you support and advice in initially making contact. We will help you to prepare for the different outcomes you might experience in your search. We can also act as intermediaries until you and your birth relatives feel ready to disclose personal details.



Reunions

If you and your birth relative decide that you would like to meet, we can help you to prepare for this reunion. This might include helping you to identify an appropriate venue and discussing any concerns you may have in preparing for this meeting.

Contact from a birth relative

Your birth relatives may wish to contact you.

The Adoption and Children Act 2002 allows birth relatives of an adopted adult to request an intermediary service. The adoption agency will approach you on the birth relative's behalf. You can then decide whether or not you wish to communicate with the birth relative to receive or provide any information.

If a veto is already in place on your records, it would be unlawful for an intermediary to attempt to make contact with you on the birth relative's behalf.

If you wish to proceed with meeting your birth family, we can offer you the support described under Reunions.

For more information please contact us:

The Adoption Team

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
42 York Street,
Twickenham,
TW1 3BW
Phone: 020 8891 7754
E-mail: adoption@richmond.gov.uk
Website: www.richmond.gov.uk/adoption



Other agencies that offer support and information to adopted people and their families:

National Organisation for Counselling Adoptees and their Parents (NORCAP)

112 Church Road,
Wheatley, Oxfordshire, OX33 1LU
Phone: 01865 875000
Web: www.norcap.org.uk
A self-help group for adopted adults and their birth and adoptive families.

Post Adoption Centre

5 Torriano Mews, Torriano Avenue,
London, NW5 2RZ
Phone: 0870 777 2197
Website: www.postadoptioncentre.org.uk
An agency providing information, support and counselling for everyone affected by adoption.

Adoption Search and Reunion

British Association for Adoption and Fostering

Saffron House,
6-10 Kirby Street,
London, EC1N 8TS
Phone: 020 7421 2600
Website: www.adoptionsearchreunion.org.uk
Service run by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering providing information for people who are thinking of searching for birth and adopted relatives.

What did you think of this leaflet? If you have any feedback,
please contact us on: 020 8891 7754

Nese keni veshtersi per te kuptuar kete botim, ju lutemi ejani ne recepcionin ne adresen e shenuar me poshte ku ne mund te organizojme perkthime nepermjet telefonit.

إذا كانت لديك صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور، فنرجو زيارة الإستقبال في العنوان المعطى أدناه حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب لخدمة ترجمة شفوية هاتفية.

এই প্রকাশনার অর্থ বুঝতে পারায় যদি আপনার কোন সমস্যা হয়, নিচে দেওয়া ঠিকানায় রিসেপশন-এ চলে আসুন যেখানে আমরা আপনাকে টেলিফোনে দোভাষীর সেবা প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা করতে পারবো।

اگر در فهمیدن این نشریه مشکلی دارید لطفاً به مین پذیرش در آدرس قید شده در زیر مراجعه نمایید تا ترتیب ترجمه تلفنی برایتان فراهم آورده شود:

જો તમને આ પુસ્તિકાની વિગતો સમજવામાં મુશ્કેલી પડતી હોય તો, કૃપયા નીચે જણાવેલ સ્થળના સંસ્થાન પર આવો, જ્યાં અમે ટેલિફોન પર ગુજરાતીમાં ઇન્ટરપ્રિટીંગ સેવાની ગોઠવણ કરી આપીશું.

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਉੱਪਰ ਰਿਸੈਪਸ਼ਨ 'ਤੇ ਆਓ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਤੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰਿਟਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

اگر آپ کو اس اشاعت کو سمجھنے میں کوئی مشکل ہے تو، براؤزر نیچے دیئے ہوئے ایڈریس کے استقبالیے پر جا کر ملیئے، جہاں ہم آپ کیلئے ٹیلیفون انٹرپرائٹنگ سروس (ٹیلیفون پرتوجہانی کی سروس) کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں۔

Adoption Team, 42 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BW

Please contact the Adoption team on
020 8891 7754 or adoption@richmond.gov.uk
if you need this document in Braille, large
print, audio tape or another language.

Visit us online at www.richmond.gov.uk/adoption

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