

## INFORMATION FOR UK ADOPTEES

### 1. What are my rights to information if I was adopted in the UK?

If you are over 18, you are able to access your original birth record to find out the name/s of your birth parent/s. This may enable you to search for a current address for that person and to make contact.

If you were adopted on or before 12<sup>th</sup> November 1975 you will have to undertake a mandatory counselling interview before your original birth certificate will be released to you. This can take place here at the Post Adoption Resource Centre. This is a requirement of the British adoption laws, and is the forum for information from your adoption file to be given to you, but can also be an opportunity to talk about what the search might mean for you and obtain information about searching and reunion. PARC also has an extensive library about adoption issues.

### 2. How do I apply for access to my birth records?

You will need to fill in an application form. PARC holds copies of the form, or you can write to:

The Office for National Statistics  
General Register Office (CA section)  
Smedley Hydro, Trafalgar Road  
Southport  
Merseyside, PR2 2HH  
UK  
Phone: 0011 44 151 471 4252  
Fax: 0015 44 151 471 4359

On this form, you could name the Post Adoption Resource Centre (PARC) as the organisation that you would like to go to for the mandatory counselling interview. Please note that PARC charges a fee for this service. Ask our receptionist or your counsellor for our scale of fees. If you live outside the Sydney area, you can have the interview at an office of the Department of Community Services in your area, or a phone interview with a PARC counsellor.

Send the completed form back to the above address.

The British General Register Office will send to PARC your adoption information and some paperwork for your counsellor to complete at the end of the interview. When PARC receives this information from the General Register we will contact you to come in for the mandatory counselling session.

In the interview, the counsellor will be able to tell you:

- your original name
- the name of your birth mother, and possibly the name of your birth father.
- the name of the court where the order was made.

Following this interview, you will be able to apply for a copy of your original birth certificate on the form that will have been sent to you.

### 3. What other information am I entitled to?

There may be several files about your adoption. The principle ones are:

- the Adoption Agency file
- those of the Social Services office that supervised the placement; Welfare Supervision Records and the *Guardian ad Litem* report
- the Moral Welfare/Welfare or church Diocesan Social Work department records
- the Mother and Baby Home records (very few survived closure)

If you do not know the name of the agency that organised your adoption, you should fill in an **authorisation to ask the court for the name of the adoption agency/local authority**. This authorisation form can be obtained from the Registrar General, whose address was given earlier.

Many Adoption Agencies have merged or closed. The British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) [www.baaf.org.uk](http://www.baaf.org.uk) has produced a book showing where the records of closed agencies are now held, called *Where to Find Adoption Records*, compiled by Georgina Stafford, and now available online on AAA-NORCAP's website (see information below).

Not all agencies will have kept their records. Some records are very brief and may not contain the information that you were hoping to find.

In the case of a privately arranged adoption, information will be hard to find, but you or your counsellor can write to the Local Authority which covers the area of the Court which made the adoption order and they may still have a record.

The court can be asked about the special report concerning you, called the *Guardian ad Litem* report. However, as it is the property of the Court, your counsellor is more likely than anyone to gain access to information in the report. As a last resort your counsellor may be able to enlist the help of the Lord Chancellor's Department to gain access to the report.

### 4. Is there a British Contact Register?

Yes. The Adoption Contact Register allows birth family members and adopted people to leave messages for each other, and is located at the General Register Office. Only if both the adopted person and the birth relative register will the adopted person be supplied with the name and address of the birth relative. Birth relatives will only be told that their name and address have been sent to the adopted person; they will not be given the adopted person's name and address. Birth relatives are able to

leave a "care of" address. Since the end of 2005, it is also possible to apply for no or specific contact.

AAA-NORCAP hosts a separate adoption contact register, which actually has more entries than the official Contact Register. NORCAP also accepts registrations from people who wish to record that they do not want contact as well as those who are seeking contact.

## 5. What searches can I do from Australia?

See our Information Sheet 33 *Searching British Registers of Births, Deaths & Marriages* for more information

Once you have the name of your birth relative, there is a certain amount that you can do here. If your search is unsuccessful, you may need the name of a search agency in the UK. This can prove expensive, so it can be helpful to start your search with information available here.

## 6. Can I ask a professional searcher to look for my birth relative?

There are a number of search organisations and individuals in the UK who will undertake your search for you and may also be accredited as intermediaries if you choose to seek contact. Their fees are high, usually starting at approximately \$600+, although AAA-NORCAP's fees are lower. Agencies in the UK recommend:

### **Ariel Bruce**

[www.arielbruce.com](http://www.arielbruce.com)  
24 Stanley St,  
Southsea,  
Hampshire. PO5 2DS  
001144 22392 614583  
[arielbruce@aol.com](mailto:arielbruce@aol.com)

### **Adopt-A-Link**

Mrs Pat Peacock  
3 Mulberry Court,  
Meadow Way,  
Petworth,  
West Sussex. GU28 OEP  
001144 1798 342897  
[Pat@peacock46.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Pat@peacock46.fsnet.co.uk)

### **Families In Time**

[www.familiesintime.co.uk](http://www.familiesintime.co.uk)  
36a / 37a Myddleton St,  
London. EC1 1UA  
001144 7741 190000  
[search@familiesintime.co.uk](mailto:search@familiesintime.co.uk)

### **Searchline**

[www.search-line.co.uk](http://www.search-line.co.uk)  
001144 1202 693102 or  
001144 1202 650337  
[Reunions@searchline.ltd.uk](mailto:Reunions@searchline.ltd.uk)

### **My Folks Website**

Searchers are Debby Wilson and  
Joan Allan.  
Debby: 001144 8709 913769  
[debby@myfolks.co.uk](mailto:debby@myfolks.co.uk)  
Joan: 001144 1454 615031  
[Joan@myfolks.co.uk](mailto:Joan@myfolks.co.uk)

**AAA-NORCAP** (National Organisation  
for the Counselling of Adoptees & their  
Parents)

[www.norcap.org.uk](http://www.norcap.org.uk)  
112 Church Road  
Wheatley  
Oxfordshire OX33 ILU  
Ph. 001144 1865 875000  
[enquiries@norcap.org](mailto:enquiries@norcap.org)

The Benevolent Society  
ABN 95 084 695 045

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## 7. Will PARC act as a mediator to birth relatives in the UK?

You are within your rights to make direct contact yourself. If, however, you choose to use a mediator, PARC may be able to take on this role for you or recommend someone in the UK. Please feel free to discuss this with one of our counsellors.

## 8. I'm finding the search/reunion experience difficult. Where can I go for counselling?

PARC provides face to face or telephone counselling, but can also often refer you to counsellor or support group in your area, or put you in touch with another adopted person who has dealt with similar issues.

## 9. Are there some other web sites which could be useful in finding my birth mother?

Some electronic databases to investigate are: [www.tracesmart.co.uk](http://www.tracesmart.co.uk) and [www.192.com](http://www.192.com). Telephone directory enquiries can be made using [www.BT.com](http://www.BT.com)

## 10. Can PARC put me/my birth relative in touch with support organisations in the UK?

PARC has the details of a number of organisations in the UK. The British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) keep the most comprehensive and up-to-date list of organisations at [www.baaf.org](http://www.baaf.org). These are:

### **AAA-NORCAP** (see details above)

After Adoption North West  
Manchester Office  
001144 1618 394932  
Lancashire Office  
001144 1772 258893  
[preston@afteradoption.org.uk](mailto:preston@afteradoption.org.uk)

### **Post Adoption Centre**

[www.postadoptioncentre.org.uk](http://www.postadoptioncentre.org.uk)  
5 Torriana Mews,  
London. NW5 2RZ  
001144 2072 840555  
[advice@postadoptioncentre.org.uk](mailto:advice@postadoptioncentre.org.uk)

After Adoption Wales  
001144 2920 666597  
[southwales@afteradoption.org.uk](mailto:southwales@afteradoption.org.uk)

### **After Adoption**

[www.afteradoption.org.uk](http://www.afteradoption.org.uk)  
After Adoption London  
001144 2076 283443  
[london@afteradoption.org.uk](mailto:london@afteradoption.org.uk)

### **South West Adoption Network**

[www.swan-adoption.org.uk](http://www.swan-adoption.org.uk)  
The Park  
Daventry Rd  
Knowle  
Bristol. BS4 1QD  
001144 8456 012459  
[admin@swan-adoption.org.uk](mailto:admin@swan-adoption.org.uk)

The Benevolent Society  
ABN 95 084 695 045

After Adoption Yorkshire  
001144 1132 302100  
[info@afteradoptionyorkshire.org.uk](mailto:info@afteradoptionyorkshire.org.uk)

After Adoption Liverpool  
001144 8000 568578  
[merseyside@afteradoption.org.uk](mailto:merseyside@afteradoption.org.uk)

After Adoption North East  
001144 1914 788396  
[northeast@afteradoption.org.uk](mailto:northeast@afteradoption.org.uk)

**Adoption Support**  
[www.wasgap.org/wmpas](http://www.wasgap.org/wmpas)  
Albany House  
Hurst Street  
Birmingham B5 4BD  
001144 1216 666014  
[adoptionssupport@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@tiscali.co.uk)

**Nottingham After Adoption Support**  
[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk)

County Hall  
West Bridgford  
Nottingham. NG2 7QP  
001144 1159 787376  
[support.afteradoption@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:support.afteradoption@nottscc.gov.uk)

**Birthlink**  
[www.birthlink.org.uk](http://www.birthlink.org.uk)  
21 Castle St  
Edinburgh. EH2 3DN  
001144 1312 256441  
[mail@birthlink.org.uk](mailto:mail@birthlink.org.uk)

**Natural Parents Network**  
[www.n-p-n.co.uk](http://www.n-p-n.co.uk)  
18 Bishops Way  
Stradbroke, Eye  
Suffolk. IP21 5JR  
001144 8454 565031  
[administrator@n-p-n.co.uk](mailto:administrator@n-p-n.co.uk)

Post Adoption Resource Centre  
PO Box 239  
Bondi NSW 2026  
T 02 9365 3444  
F 02 9365 3666  
E [parc@bensoc.org.au](mailto:parc@bensoc.org.au)  
[www.bensoc.org.au](http://www.bensoc.org.au)

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