



Pre-1975 Adoption Records, Post-1975 Adoption Records and Post commencement 2005.

People adopted before 1975 applying to the General Register Office for access to their birth records can only be given this information by an Adoption Social Worker. This is because birth and adoptive families had previously been told that no identifying information would ever be exchanged. The implications of this are explained through a meeting with a social worker. This meeting provides the adopted person with an opportunity to talk through their hopes and expectations regarding access to their birth record information.

Since 1975 adopted people aged 18 and over in England and Wales have had the right to obtain a copy of their original birth certificate. This legislation was made retrospective so that anyone who was adopted before 1975 could also apply for a copy of their original birth certificate. This change in the law gave all adopted people the means to trace their birth family.

When reading your records please keep the following in mind. Written Pre and Post 1975

We can only share records that have been written by Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council/Hereford County Council that relate to you specifically.

Standards of record keeping were different to those that apply today. Information should be double checked where possible. Ages, dates of birth, spellings of names may not have been recorded correctly. This can be critical when tracing people. Records are not always signed and dated. It is not always clear who is providing information.

The language used and the values expressed in the records reflect the period when the information was collected and might not be acceptable today

Adoption workers and other professionals involved in your adoption would not have expected their records to be seen by the adopted person. The information recorded by professional workers may be someone's opinion rather than fact.

Birth parents would have given information not expecting it to be shared with the adopted child. Many birth parents would have been given the message that it

was in their best interests to try to forget about their child and get on with their lives and we know from subsequent research that many found themselves unable to do so.

Birth parents may have a different view of the circumstances around the birth and placement for adoption of their birth child than that recorded.

Adoption Central England strongly recommends the use of an intermediary service when the adopted adult decides to make contact with birth relatives. This enables both parties to be prepared for a reunion. Sound preparation for both parties can lead to more successful outcomes.

Post Commencement 2005

Post Commencement 2005

The majority of children adopted on or after 30 December 2005 are likely to be children who were removed from their birth family because of safeguarding issues or for complex reasons. Life story books and later life letters should have been provided to the adoptive family by the children's social worker at the time of their placement. There is an expectation that adoptive parents share their child's early childhood experiences with their child to explain why they could not remain with their birth parents. It is likely that the birth relatives and the adopters communicated via an agreed letterbox exchange scheme facilitated by the Local Authority who placed the child.

As adopted adults, they are entitled to have the information contained in their Child Permanence Report (CPR) (all the information given to their adopter/s), and also information from the adoption agency to enable them to apply for their original birth certificate. The regulatory framework directs that this application is made to the adoption agency, not to the Registrar General (unlike in the case of pre-commencement adoptions). For some of this group of adopted adults, there may be issues about their well-being when making contact with their birth family as adopted adults more complex. In a very small number of situations, the adopted person may pose a risk to birth family members or vice versa. The Disclosure of Adoption Information (Post-Commencement Adoptions) Regulations 2005 (AIR) do not provide specifically for intermediary services