Isle of Man Public Record Office Service Guide

The Isle of Man Public Record Office preserves records of the Isle of Man Government and other Manx public bodies that are of historical and cultural significance. Our holdings include records from:

- Tynwald
- Isle of Man Government departments and their predecessors, such as the Boards
- Other organisations which are part of government, including General Registry
- Local authorities
- Courts
- Other local public bodies included in the Public Records Act 1999

Public bodies create a vast number of records in their day-to-day business. Not all public records are selected for transfer to the Public Record Office; we preserve only those records that merit permanent preservation as part of the Island's national memory. The earliest records here date from 1800, although most originate from the Twentieth Century.

Before the Public Record Office was established (in the 1990s), public records were preserved by Manx National Heritage Library and Archives. This means that some public records can be accessed at the Manx Museum Reading Room.

Private Businesses and Individual's Records

We do not hold the papers of businesses or private individuals – for these records, please contact the Isle of Man National Archive at the Manx Museum (email: enquiries@mnh.gov.im). If you require government records from within the last 25 years, please contact the department or body concerned directly.

Planning Applications

Planning Application files are split between the Public Record Office and the Planning and Building Control Division which is based at Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas.

The Public Record Office holds most of the planning applications dated 1921—1984 in paper and/or microfilm format. Scanned index maps and registers for the planning applications are also available. A member of our team will be on hand to help you to use the indexing system.

Planning Applications created from 1984 onwards are accessible through the Planning and Building Control Division's public counter. We advise you to contact them in advance to enquire about access to records. They can be contacted by telephone +44 1624 685950 or by email: planning@gov.im.

For further information, please ask a member of staff for our Collection Guide to planning applications.

Viewing Records

We are open to the public every Thursday and Friday but we recommend that you contact us in advance of a visit to make a viewing appointment.

We are continuously working on cataloguing our collections, and making the resulting catalogues available on both our website and in our Reading Room.

Some records may be covered by access restrictions if they have not yet been fully transferred to us and listed, or if they contain confidential information covered by one of the special closure periods laid out in the Public Records Order 2015. Access may still be possible but, to make the best use of your time, it is important to contact us in advance to ensure that all necessary arrangements are in place.

Opening hours:
Thursday: 9.30am to 1.00pm; 2.00pm to 5.00pm
Friday: 9.30am to 1.00pm; 2.00pm to 4.30pm

How to find us

The Public Record Office is 2.5 miles outside Douglas on the Spring Valley Industrial Estate, Unit 40A. There is free parking available and it is close to bus routes 4, 4A and 4B. For further details of public transport, please visit: http://www.gov.im/categories/travel-traffic-and-motoring/bus-and-rail

Your visit

On arrival, you will be greeted by a member of our team and asked to provide a suitable form of personal identification, such as a driving licence, passport or other photographic ID. Please contact us for advice if you are unsure about which forms of identification are suitable.

We ask all visitors to place their coats, bags and other personal possessions, such as umbrellas and laptop cases, in a locker before entering our reading room. We will also ask you to sign our visitor register and observe our short list of Reading Room rules.

All records are consulted in our Reading Room and are not available for loan. Our Reading Room is equipped with a microfilm/microfiche viewer, a small library of local interest reference publications, and preservation equipment such as book rests and document weights. A member of our team will be present to advise you on correct handling of records, and to give general assistance as required.

Copying records

We offer a number of methods for copying records for private research purposes, including photocopying and scanning (for which a fee is charged) and self-service photography using your own camera. More details can be found in our information sheet 'Copying records'.

Copies can only be supplied in line with copyright legislation and, where applicable, with the permission of the department that controls the records. Where copies are supplied to you by the Isle of Man Public Record Office, you may be asked to sign a copyright declaration form.

We may not be able to copy records if we believe it is likely to damage them and we reserve the right to use the copying method that will minimise the risk of damage. If surrogate records are available, we will create copies from these in order to preserve the originals.

If copies are required for publication, discuss this with the archivist on duty as soon as possible.

Payment for scans and photocopies can be made in cash or by cheque payable to 'Isle of Man Government'. Unfortunately we are not able to accept payment for scans or photocopies by debit/credit card

Contact details

We are happy to receive enquiries about our services and holdings. If you would like further information, please contact the IOMPRO on 01624 693569 or email us at public.records@gov.im.

Isle of Man Public Record Office
Unit 40A Spring Valley Industrial Estate, Braddan, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM2 2QS
Website: www.gov.im/pro