

Frequently Asked Questions

This document is provided by the Central Registry to give guidance only and is not, and should not, be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. Please note that staff members are prohibited from giving legal advice or offering opinions and therefore if you are in any doubt about your rights or of the procedures to follow you should seek legal advice.

How do I change my name by Deed Poll?

If you want to change your own name and you are not comfortable preparing and executing such a document yourself you may wish to seek advice from an Advocate.

The staff in the Deeds Registry are not legally qualified so cannot advise you nor offer an opinion on any document presented to them.

Please note that the Deeds Registry does not provide any form or 'off the shelf' standard wording in order for a person to change their name by deed poll.

How do I change my child's name?

Please be mindful that it may be necessary for you to obtain the consent of the other parent before changing a child's name, however whatever the circumstances this is a question you will need to seek your own legal advice on.

The staff in the Deeds Registry are not legally qualified and therefore cannot advise you.

Please note that the Deeds Registry does not provide any form or 'off the shelf' standard wording in order for you to do this.

How can I find out who owns a property?

To find out who currently owns a property, you should start your search in the Land Registry - <https://www.gov.im/landregistry>. If the property is not registered in the Land Registry, you will need to search in the Deeds Registry.

Although some deeds may be searched using an address, the majority are indexed by names and therefore you may need the name of a previous or who you believe to be the current owner to successfully search ownership of a property. In order to obtain a name to start searching with, you may want to:

- ask someone who lives near the property/land. In some areas it can be a good idea to speak to local Commissioners or a farmer who may own land nearby
- enquire at [Planning & Building Control](#) to see whether any planning applications have been submitted on the land from which owner/contact details might be obtained
- contact the Rates Section as it holds details of the owner(s)/occupier(s) of all properties with a rateable value. They can be contacted via [e-mail](#) or by telephoning 01624 685661.

How do I go about changing the names on the deeds to my property?

Original deeds cannot be altered once they have been recorded. If you believe, or have been told, that this is necessary, a new or additional deed will have to be prepared, executed and registered. Unless you have the necessary legal

knowledge to do this, we would suggest you speak to a suitably qualified person such as an Advocate to obtain legal advice.

Please note that staff in the Deeds Registry are not legally qualified and are not able to advise you how you can draft your own deed or whether it is even necessary to do so.

My partner has just died and our property was in joint names on the deeds - do I need to do anything?

This is a question you will need to seek your own legal advice on. The staff in the Deeds Registry are not legally qualified and therefore cannot advise you.

Will the deeds relating to my property/land show exactly where the boundaries lie and who owns them, e.g. to help settle a dispute with my neighbour?

It is very unlikely that a deed will provide such conclusive proof of a boundary or who owns it. While a deed may include a plan, there is no legal requirement for it to do so and no set standard to which plans must be prepared. Some deeds refer to plans attached to historic deeds to identify the property while others, particularly in towns and villages, may contain a verbal description, e.g. '*...abutted to the west by number 8 and to the east by number 4...*'.

Who is responsible for the upkeep of boundary walls/fences between my property and my neighbour?

In the first instance, check your Abstract of Title. Unless the deeds specify otherwise, most boundary structures are considered 'party boundaries' with responsibility falling equally on adjoining owners. If a wall or fence is the sole responsibility of one or the other this would be set out in the deeds. However, as responsibility may have been determined in a historic deed it may not be specifically set out in the most recent deeds.

Will the Registry staff undertake searches on my behalf?

No. The Registry does not have the resources to undertake searches on behalf of customers.

Can I get a copy of the Abstract of Title my Advocate gave me when I purchased by property/land?

The Abstract of Title is a collection of deeds that the Advocate's firm join together into one bundle to show how the property you purchased transferred from one owner to another right up until when you bought it.

You can either make up your own copy by searching and purchasing copies of the relevant deeds from the Deeds Registry yourself, or alternatively you can ask the Advocate's firm who acted for you when you purchased the property for a copy.

How do I apply for Probate?

Information about applying for Probate in the Isle of Man can be viewed at: <https://www.courts.im/court-procedures/probate-and-admin-of-estates/probate-introduction/>.

The Probate Registry is responsible for the safe-keeping of the documents after the grant has been issued by the Court.

Can I inspect the Will of a person who is still alive?

The Probate Registry does not hold Wills in respect of individuals still living.

Can I find out where public footpaths and rights of way are?

The Deeds Registry holds a copy of the Public Footpaths and Rights of Way Definitive Maps and the Public Rights of Way Definitive Statement for customers to view upon request at its public counter. In accordance with the Highways Act 1986, the maps and the Public Rights of Way Definitive Statement are maintained by the [Department of Infrastructure](#) and if further information is required, the [Department of Infrastructure](#) holds detailed records relating to each public footpath and right of way.

What documents are held in the Deeds & Probate Registries?

All deeds recorded from 1911, and all Grants of Probate from 1950, to the present day are kept in the Deeds & Probate Registries.

All deeds and Grants of Probate recorded prior to 1911 are housed in the [Manx Museum](#).

Grants of Probate from 1911 to 1949 (inclusive) are housed off site and can be ordered. The record will normally be available within 3 working days.

What is the difference between the Land Registry and the Deeds & Probate Registries?

The [Land Registry](#) creates and maintains a map-based Title Register which gives details of interests in land in the Isle of Man. The Title Register includes details of the owner, charge burdens (i.e. mortgages) and any rights affecting or benefiting the land. In addition, the [Land Registry](#) may show details of interests in land such as cautions against first registration, cautions against dealing, priority searches or entries in the register of transactions giving rise to first registration. In accordance with the Land Registration Act 1982 (as amended), registered land is guaranteed.

The Deeds Registry creates and maintains indices of deeds recorded or enrolled in accordance with the Registration of Deeds Act 1961. Title to unregistered land is not guaranteed.



www.gov.im/deedsregistry