



Adoption support

for those approaching 18 years of age and adopted on or after 30 December 2005

Adopt London North (ALN) is a **Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)** covering six London boroughs; Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Islington.

This leaflet will provide support information for young people adopted from one of the ALN boroughs.

If you need support or further information on anything listed in this booklet, please contact us.

alnhistoricrecords@islington.gov.uk

020 7527 4777 (select option 2) or visit the Adopt London North webpage

At eighteen, the law considers you to be an adult and you acquire certain rights under the Adoption Act 2002. There will be changes with regard your letterbox/contact arrangements.

Letterbox Contact

Life story is an important part of adoption and recognises that your dual identity connects you to two families. When you were placed for adoption, your parents and your birth family may have agreed on a letterbox arrangement. This allows adopted children to keep in touch with their birth families. For birth families, this allows them to know about the adopted child's development and to know how they are doing.

Changes to Contact

After your 19th birthday, Adopt London North (ALN) will no longer manage this letterbox contact. If you'd like to discuss how to continue or progress contact with your birth family, contact an ALN social worker. We can offer advice and support with this.

What Information can I get at 18?

If your Adoption Order was granted in England on or after 30th December 2005, you are entitled to information that was shared with your adopters at the time of your adoption. This may include your Life Story Book, your Later in Life letter, and your Child Permanence Report (CPR). A CPR is the report that justifies why adoption was decided to be in your best interest. To receive these documents from your Regional Adoption Agency, you must show some form of identification, such as a passport, driving licence, or bank statement, proving your name and address.

To access any additional information, you will need to file a Subject Access Request to any local authority that holds information about you. Most local authorities have a link on their website for filing a Subject Access Request.

You may need to make separate subject access requests [SAR] with:

- The local authority who placed you for adoption
- The local authority who hosts your RAA (Islington hosts ALN)
- Any other area you may have lived in or where your adopters may have sought support.

Under Section 56 of the Adoption Act 2002, Adoption Agencies within England and Wales have a duty to keep adoption records for at least 100 years from the date of the Adoption Order.



Contacting your Birth Relatives

Many adopted adults choose to contact birth relatives or 'connected people.' If you have your original birth certificate or information about your birth family, you may want to trace birth relatives by yourself. If you want a social worker to trace or make an approach to your birth relative, contact ALN as one of our boroughs organised your adoption. ALN can help you with supported contact. This involves locating your birth family member and making contact with them with a view to establishing a relationship. Currently ALN have a substantial waiting list for this support service.

The General Register Office (GRO) runs an Adoption Contact Register. Adopted people and birth relatives over the age of 18 years can use this register to indicate whether they do or do not wish to have contact with each other. Your birth relative may register their interest before you are 18, however, in order for a connection to be made, both parties must register. Click the link to get more information [Adoption records: The Adoption Contact Register - GOV.UK](#) It costs £15 for an adopted adult to add their name to the register and £30 for a birth relative to add their name to the register.

Reunion

A reunion is where you meet up with someone from your birth family. This can be a one-off meeting or develop into an ongoing relationship. Even if there has been contact with your birth family over the years, reunions can evoke strong and complicated feelings. At ALN, we believe it is beneficial to use a professional person with experience in adoption to help you through this process. Using an ALN social worker can enhance feelings of safety, help establish ground rules and boundaries, and reduce feelings of awkwardness. This article below may be helpful to read for those thinking about records and possible reunions. [Turning 18 - accessing my adoption records - Family Action](#)

What if a Birth Relative wants to Contact me?

Birth relatives or a connected person must approach the Regional Adoption Agency that was responsible for your adoption (this will be ALN) or they can register on the GRO's Contact Register [Adoption records: The Adoption Contact Register - GOV.UK](#) which stores contact details of birth relatives and adopted adults. There is a fee for this service. If your birth relative or connected person has not registered with it, it does not mean they do not want to be in touch. It is not a tracing service but a connecting service for parties who are both registered on it.



When connecting you with a birth relative, your confidentiality will be protected. Any personal information about you (e.g. your adopted name or other identifying information) will not be shared with the birth relative without your knowledge or consent. You can decide if you would like contact or how much information, if any, you wish to share. The Adoption Agency must consider the impact on all those affected when reaching any decision on an application for this service.

Support Groups for Adult Adoptees

If you are an adult adoptee living in any of the Adopt London North boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, or Islington), you may like to attend one of the groups that we currently support for adult adoptees.

These groups are Transitions to Adulthood Group, ALN adopted adults' Group, and Transracial Adult Adoptee Network [TAAN] Group. If you are interested in any of these groups, please contact our duty number on 0207 527 4777 or email us on AdoptionSupportDuty@Islington.gov.uk.

There is also an independent group [How to be adopted](#)

You may find support for adopted adults through the [PAC UK website](#). If you need more information about the support available for people approaching 18, please visit the [Adopt London North](#) support page.

