

## Archives office

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Medway Council, Civic Centre,  
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<http://cityark.medway.gov.uk> (NB no www)

## Publications

Available separately are our rules and regulations;

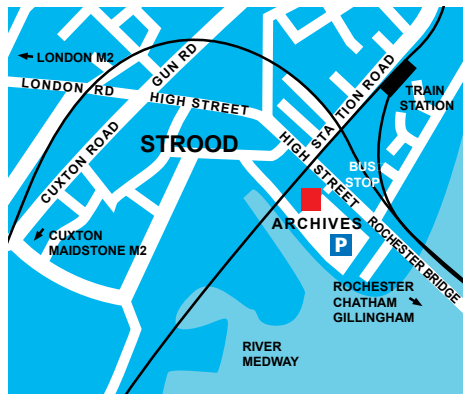
Subject guide and a genealogist's guide to sources for tracing members of the armed forces in the Medway area 1550-1950 price on application.



## Opening hours:

Monday	9am – 5pm
Tuesday	9am – 6pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	9am – 5pm
Friday	9am – 5pm
Saturdays	9am – 4pm

Closed public holidays as advertised



NB Stocktaking closure first full two weeks in November annually

This information is available in other  
formats and languages please contact  
01634 332320

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# Medway archives

An introductory guide



## Introduction to the municipal archives of Medway Council, and to other archives of Medway

The archives office in Strood houses an accumulation of centuries-old local authority records to which have been added modern local authority records, collections from local private sources and archives of official and unofficial Medway origin.

These private collections, many of which are described in this booklet, significantly add to the value of the municipal archives as a local history resource.

This booklet is designed to make it easy to reference the archives by listing collections by subject topic as this is the most convenient method for the majority of searchers. Descriptions of each collection are available in the public searchroom or on CityArk <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk> (NB no www)

You may need to refer to different collections in researching answers to your queries, please ask a member of our staff to help show you how.

### Visiting and registration

Potential visitors are kindly reminded that use of original archives is strictly by appointment. Likewise it is necessary to book microfilm readers in advance. We participate in the County Archive Research Network (CARN) readers' ticket system. If using original archives for the first time, searchers will need to present formal proof of identity containing name and address and signature, e.g. a driving licence, and 2 passport size photographs, in order to obtain a CARN ticket which lasts four years and is valid in other participating archives services nationally. Consultation of original archives is dependent on the searcher holding a CARN ticket. The ticket is left at the searchroom reception desk until departure time.

You will be asked to sign the visitors' book and to accept the searchroom rules and regulations.



Visitors using microfilm readers

### The public searchroom

This area is dedicated to providing a comfortable, safeguarded and specialised research environment containing the following facilities:

- document tables and seats
- manual finding aids, power points
- microfilm or fiche readers
- CityArk computer finding aid
- map table area
- reading areas
- staff reception desk
- microfilm/fiche printer
- local studies collections including Charles Dickens collection, Naval collection, census, IGI, maps, photographs, GRO index and bookable internet access and CD-Roms

Our staff are on hand to advise on sources appropriate to each visitor's needs.

## Visits by school pupils and students

We welcome visits by school parties, students and teachers. However, we request that all such visits are arranged in advance.

## Enquiries

Enquiries should preferably be made in writing or by e-mail. In response to enquiries staff can sometimes make a brief examination of documents if given specific and accurate base information, but are unable to engage in lengthy research. Staff can give no legal advice. A list of record agents is available on application.



The public searchroom

## CityArk: online database and imagebase

<http://cityark.medway.gov.uk> (NB no www)

CityArk is a database comprising electronic lists of our archives and an imagebase containing jpg files of selected series of original documents. The database is organised by category and within category by collection. The building blocks of the database are html files comprising either individual document descriptions, or summary descriptions of, as yet unlisted collections.

The listings can be searched globally, which is the default setting, or within chosen categories, collections or sub-folders. Searching is by means of inputting search text i.e. keywords or an exact phrase, with date parameters if desired.

The database can also produce collection reports for categories, collections or sub-folders, which can then be scrolled as if viewing traditional hardcopy lists.

The CityArk front-end contains explanatory pages, useful links, message pad, educational pages and text only pages for the visually impaired. CityArk conforms to W3C/WAI's web content accessibility guidelines 1.0, conformance level A.



## Copying and reprographics

Documents smaller than A3 can be photocopied by archives staff. Microform printouts can also be supplied. We cannot photocopy archival volumes.

Photocopies can usually be supplied during your visit, but sometimes photocopies may have to be supplied by post.

We regret that customers own film photography is not permitted. However, film photography is available commercially by arrangement with us and we do permit customer's own digital photography. Forms, fees and disclaimers for commercial and digital photography are available on application.

## Finding aids

Full descriptive lists of collections are available at the public search room or on CityArk. Manual card indexes are also available of personal names, subjects, placenames, street names, historic buildings, maps and plans, and names of Freemen of Rochester and Freemen of Rochester upon Medway 1623-1986.

## Document production

You can order documents by using the request slips on the document tables. Each slip is completed with the reference number of the document requested, date of visit, customer's name and seat number. Documents are produced on request throughout the day except in the half-hour prior to closing time. We aim to produce documents within five to ten minutes.

## Printed material

The archive service has its own library. These books chiefly comprise archives reference books and family history and national archive guides. The archivist holds a catalogue of these books.

## Facilities

Public toilets including disabled toilets are located in the hallway and on the first floor landing. There is limited disabled access from the first floor landing into the searchroom. Visitors must make their own arrangements for refreshments off site.

## Public access computers

The local studies service, as part of the libraries, information and museum service, provide several public access desktop computers in the searchroom, giving access to the Internet, outgoing email, Microsoft Office suite, CD-Roms and CD-Rom servers.

These are all subject to appointment. Internet users are required to produce proof of identity and have local library readers' tickets. Customers not holding local library tickets can be logged on by staff.

## List of principal archives held arranged by categories

### Voluntary societies and unofficial

- City of Rochester Society 1967-1995 (DE769, DE779)
- Gillingham Arts Club 1949-1978 (DE15)
- Rochester and District Society of Arts 1949-1956 (DE53/2)
- Strood Institute Elocution Class 1894-1902 (DE53[part])  
(See also Guildhall Museum)
- Medway and Chatham Rowing Clubs 1869-1897 (DE103[part])
- Rochester Bathing Establishment 1835-1842 (DE279)
- Chatham Historical Society 1951-1979 (DE314)
- Medway Barge Sailing Match Organising Committee 1896-1985 (DE331)
- Rochester and District Natural History Society 1879-1980 (DE368)
- Old Roffensian Society 19th. - 20th. Centuries (DE455)
- Rochester Choral Society 1881-1882 (DE487)
- Dickens Country Protection Society 20th. Century (DE520)
- Rochester Book Society 1797-1946 (9S)
- Pinn family of Chatham scrapbook or commonplace book 1795-1833 (DE284)
- Church of England Men's Society, Rochester Diocese 1905-1986 (CH83)
- Rochester Diocesan Girls Friendly Society and Townsend Fellowship 1913-1979 (CH76)

### Judicial

- North Aylesford and Medway Petty Sessions 1754-1989 (PS/NA; PS/Me)

## Trade and industry

- Winget of Strood, engineers 20th. Century (3B)
- Best family of Chatham, brewery business, Chatham, Gravesend and Sheppey 1735-1851 (U480/B/1-901)
- Colonial Financial Services 1939-1992 (DE762)
- Dove, Phillips and Pett of Rochester and Strood, mineral water manufacturers 1902-1968 (U1782)
- Blaw Knox of Rochester, engineers 1930-1990 (U2824)
- Trinity House Thames Pilots' Association 1936-1988 (U2919)
- Doust & Co. of Rochester, ship repairers and general engineers 1902-c.1950 (DE104)
- Hulkes of Frindsbury, brewery business 18th. - 20th. Centuries (DE505, DE528)
- Collis of Strood, ironmongers, engineers and agricultural suppliers 1751-1981 (DE113)
- Port of Rochester shipping registers 1824-1988 (RBS/Ro)
- Medway Navigation Company, Medway Conservancy Board, Medway Ports Authority 1627-20th. Century (S/MN; MPA)
- Rochester City Council Oyster and Flat Fishery 1628-1995 (RCA/Y1-3; MR series)
- Medway labour archive comprising: Co-operative Society SE 1889-1994 (DE543; U1645); Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU), various Rochester and Medway Anti-Poll Tax Union and Medway Branch Labour Party Young Socialists 1981-1995 (DE630); and Workers Educational Association SE 1923-1996 (DE508)
- Kidwell and Son of Rochester, estate agents and auctioneers 1900-1955 (DE106, DE121)
- Rochester Printing and Stationery Co. and Summers 20th. Century (DE436)
- H. & R.L. Cobb of Rochester, auctioneers 1894 - 1955 (DE175)
- William Cory & Son of Rochester, coal factors c.1881-c.1950s (DE497)
- Local authority minutes and officers' topical files
- H.J. Cobb of Rochester, tailor 19th. - 20th. Centuries (DE458)
- Medway Towns Area Butchers' Association 1915-1929 (DE103[part])

## Records of the physical environment

- Municipal deposited building plans series (Rochester 1876-1974 RCA/BP, Chatham 1848-1948 CBA/BP, Strood Rural District Council 1897-1974, Hoo Rural District Council 1897-1935 and Gillingham Borough Council 1893-1948)
- Local authority maps, plans and drawings: buildings, boundaries, rivers, sewerage and drainage schemes 19th. - 20th. centuries (MP)
- Public house licencing records 1872-1958 (PS/NA)
- Family, estate and charity collections containing title deeds, maps, plans, surveys and valuations, 16th. - 20th. Centuries (see families and estates)
- Parish copies of tithe maps with Awards 19th. - 20th. centuries (Parish Lists Section 27)
- Local authority title deeds to clearance areas, Medway Towns, 17th. - 20th. centuries
- Local authority and parish council minutes and topical officers or clerks' files
- Dickens Country Protection Society 20th. century (DE520)
- Wheatley Antiquarian and Archaeological MSS, Rochester and Medway Valley 1684-1950 (DE53/1)
- Chatham Borough Council aerial photographs 1961 (CBA)
- Chatham Borough Council and Rochester upon Medway City Council 35mm slides of locality and council schemes 1961-1977 (CT/ENG/216)
- E.H. Couchman of Strood collection of ephemera, postcards, photographs, drawings, prints, MSS and historical notes on Strood, the Medway Towns and the Hoo Peninsula, arranged by area and street, 17th. - 20th. Centuries (DE402)

## Ecclesiastical

- Records of the Cathedral Priory of St. Andrew the Apostle, Rochester [604] c.1080-1541 (DRc)
- Records of the Cathedral Church of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary Rochester 1541-1994 (DRc)

- Records of the Priory of St. Mary and St. Nicholas, Leeds c1095-1539 (DRc)
- Records of the Hospital of the New Work (Newark) of St. Mary, Strood c1150-1539 (DRc)
- Records of St. Felicity's Priory, Walton, Suffolk c1100-1501 (DRc)
- Records of the Church Commissioners, Rochester Capitular Estates 14th.-20th. Centuries (CC/Rc)
- Common Room Association, Rochester Theological College 1959-1967 (DRc; DE262)

## Local government sources

### ROCHESTER CITY COUNCIL 1227-1974

- Charters 1227-1974
- Court of Quarter Sessions 1607-1971
- Court of Petty Sessions 1924-1966
- Admiralty Court 1565-1929
- Court of Portmote 1530-1835
- Court Leet 1734-1834
- Oyster Fishery 1628-1974
- Council and committee minutes 1621-1974
- Rate books 1840-1974
- Rentals 1555-1926
- Building plans 1876-1974
- Strood Extra parish meeting 1894-1934

### GILLINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL 1903-1998

- Minutes 1903-1998

- Building plans 1903-1948
- Municipal burials, Grange Road Cemetery 1867-1973
- Roll of Honorary Freeman 1904-1998
- Gillingham Urban District Council  
minutes 1895-1903  
building plans 1893-1903
- Gillingham Local Board 1874-1895  
minutes 1874-1895

### THE LOCAL AUTHORITY 1973-1998

(Medway District Council 1973-1974

Medway Borough Council 1974-1979

Rochester upon Medway Borough Council 1979-1982

Rochester upon Medway City Council 1982-1998)

- Council and committee minutes 1973-1998
- Maps, plans and officers' files 1973-1998 (MR series)
- Oyster Fishery 1974-1995

### HOO RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL 1897-1935

- Council and committee minutes 1897-1935
- Building plans 1897-1935

### MEDWAY COUNCIL UNITARY AUTHORITY 1997 -

- Minutes and public agenda papers 1997- date

### STROOD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL 1897-1974

- Council and committee minutes 1897-1974  
(microfilmed 1897-1961 MFs 376-395)
- Rochester Highway Board 1862-1896

- Rate books 1938-1974
- Building plans 1897-1974

### **PARISH COUNCILS (i.e. Minor Local Authorities) 1894 -**

- Rochester Archdeaconry area, minutes and Clerks' files 1894-date

### **CHATHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL 1890 -1974**

- Board of Health 1849-1890
- Court Leet 1756-1891
- Local Board of Guardians 1802-1955
- Council and Committee Minutes 1890-1974
- Rate books 1676-1974
- Building plans 1848-1948
- Kitchener homes 1922-1997
- Sun Pier, Chatham 1863-1974

## **Hospitals and health care**

- St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester 1627-1948 (CH2, MH/Me, DRc/F909-910. MH/Me5)
- St. William's Hospital, Dark Lane, Rochester 1889-1948 (MH/Me)
- Hoo St. Werburgh Isolation Hospital 1899-1921 (G/Ho Wia)
- Sittingbourne District and Memorial Hospital 1928-1941 (MH/Me)
- Strood Rural District Council/ Gravesend Borough Council Isolation Hospital 1916-1950 (SRDC/92-98, 227-244, 892)
- Keycol Hill Hospital, Sittingbourne 1904-1920 (MH/Me)
- Rochester and Chatham Joint Hospital Board 1882-1948 (MH/Me)
- Sittingbourne and Milton Joint Hospital Board 1878-1948 (MH/Me)
- Medway and Swale (west) Community Health Council 1974-2003(DE641; DE885)

- Medway and Gravesend Hospital Management Committee 1948-1971 (MH/Me, (DE119))
- Workhouse Hospitals 19th-20th. Centuries, (G/Me, G/St, G/Ho) [100 year closure may apply]

## **Schools and education**

- Local Education Authority, School Board and Church of England school records, Medway area c.1870-date (C/ES)
- Education board and committee records c.1870-1974 (C/EB)
- Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, Rochester Trustees' minutes and accounts 707-1886 (CH42)
- Chatham Girls Training Home 1932-1947 (CH68)
- Medway Cottage Homes and Schools, Balfour Road, Chatham 1901-1936 (G/Me; C/ES)
- National Union of Teachers, Chatham and Rochester Association 1874-1962 (DE155)
- Old Roffensian Society 19th. - 20th. Centuries (DE455)
- King's School, Rochester 1631-1997 (DRc; DE463)

## **Family history sources**

*The following sources constitute the primary genealogical sources*

### **CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

- Parish records, Rochester Archdeaconry area, baptisms, marriages and burials 16th. - 20th. Centuries; rate books; Parish Poor Law records (P) (MF);
- Rochester Cathedral births 1657-1757, baptisms 1657-1994, marriages 1669-1754, and burials 1633-1890 (DRc; MFs 273, 421)

## NONCONFORMIST RECORDS, MEDWAY AREA

- Methodist Church, Medway Towns Circuit 1768-1996 (N/M5) (MFs 368-374)
- Chatham Memorial Synagogue 1834-1972 (N/J/305; DE202)
- Zion Baptist Church, Clover Street, Chatham, marriage register, 1979-1990 (N/B/85; DE256)
- Ebenezer Congregational Church, Clover Street, Chatham c.18th. century- 1937, including baptisms 1861-1903, (N/C/85; DE415)
- Chatham Unitarian Church 1801-1952 (N/U/85; DE446)
- Microfilm of Nonconformist registers, Medway area 1700-1837, originals held at Public Record Office, MF 160

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES AS BURIAL AUTHORITIES

- St. Margaret's Cemetery, Rochester 1852-1970 (RCA) (microfilmed 1865-1969 MFs 357-362, 382-283)
- Grange Road Cemetery, Gillingham 1867-1973 (MFs 479-480)
- St. Nicholas' Cemetery, Rochester 1855-1991 (RCA; Rochester-upon-Medway) (microfilmed 1873-1991 MF 383)
- St. Nicholas' Cemetery, Strood 1856-1957 (RCA) (microfilmed 1868-1957 MFs 363-364)
- Chatham Cemetery 1868-1910 (CBA) (microfilmed 1869-1910 MFs 355-356)

## Charities and poor relief

- Richard Watts' Charity, Rochester 1579-1979 (CH46)
- St. Catherine's Charity, Rochester 1697-1958 (CH64)
- Hospital of Sir John Hawkins Kt. in Chatham 1500-1987 (CH108)
- Foord Almshouses, Rochester 1922-1987 (CH109)
- St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester 1628-1948 (CH2; DE655)

- Chatham Local Board of Guardians and Chatham Charity Trustees 1802-1975 (LBG)
- Strood Parish Trustees (Strood Poor in Need Charity) 1812-1936 (SPT)
- Guardians of St. Nicholas' Parish, Rochester 1809-1927 (ROZPa2; P306/24/1-11; CH46/A139; GTNR/1-2)
- Sir John Hayward's Charity, Rochester 1741-1942 (CH46/A1/38-45; CH46/L49; P306/25/11; CH46/A12-13)
- Medway Poor Law Union 1827-1936 (G/Me)
- Strood (North Aylesford) Poor Law Union 1833-1937 (G/St)
- Hoo Poor Law Union 1835-1930 (G/Ho)

## Families and estates

- Best family of Boxley and Chatham 1561-1960 (U480)
- Earls of Darnley of Cobham Hall 1537-1940 (U565)
- Winch and Winch of Chatham, solicitors, clients' papers 17th. Century - c.1970 (14E)
- Arnold, Tuff and Grimwade of Rochester, solicitors, clients' papers 18th. - 20th. Centuries (DE547)
- Dean and Chapter of Rochester c.1080-1994 (DRc)
- Church Commissioners, Rochester Capitular estates 14th. - 20th. Centuries (CC/Rc)
- St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester 1628-1948 (CH2)
- Richard Watts' Charity, Rochester 1579-1979 (CH46)
- Hospital of Sir John Hawkins Kt. in Chatham 1500-1987 (CH108)
- Rochester City Council General Purposes and Estates Committee minutes and report books 1793-1974 (RCA/A2/1-23/1; RCA/A4/1-51/2)
- Rochester City Council Cobham Estates Management Committee minutes 1950-1967 (RCA/A2/187)