

Below is a general list of the records relating to Official Bodies other than the Council. Please see our catalogues for more detailed information:

- The Archives catalogue is hosted by South West Heritage Trust as part of the [Somerset Archives catalogue](#).
- We additionally have a number of finding aids that are only available at the Record Office when you visit.

Note that access to sources, including details of individuals who may still be alive or sensitive material, may be restricted under the Data Protection Act 2018.

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## Court and police records

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We have records of four main courts relating to the City of Bath: Quarter Sessions, Petty Sessions (Magistrates), Coroners, and the civil Bath County Court. County Assizes court records are held at The National Archives.

Some records have been transcribed and indexed on to the Bath Ancestors database. Newspapers used to publish summaries of all court proceedings. These can be accessed up to 1950 on the British Newspaper Archive in the Record Office. The Petty Sessions are often listed under 'Bath Police' after 1834.

More recent records may be closed to the public due to Data Protection Act 2018 restrictions.

### Quarter Sessions

Quarter Sessions sat quarterly with a Chairman, magistrates and a jury. The Chairman was not necessarily legally trained and was often the Mayor in Bath. Established in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, they were combined with the Assizes in 1972 to create the Crown Courts.

The court sat on felony cases requiring a jury trial – though the most serious cases were 'committed' for trial at the next Assizes. The court also held a civil administration role until the Local Councils Act 1888, which included overseeing the Poor Laws until 1836. The records include:

- QS/2 Bath Quarter Sessions Court minute books, 1682-1793, 1837-1941 - proceedings of the court, including summaries of cases being tried which may include some early Petty Sessions records. (Some of the minute books have been transcribed on to Bath Ancestors),
- QS/3 Quarter Sessions papers, 1776-1971 - various documents relating to the operations of the courts. (These are currently being catalogued in detail)

- QS/6 Commitments in Felony 1799-1859 – prisoners sent to gaol to await trial at the Assizes for a felony. (Some have been transcribed on to Bath Ancestors),
- QS/7 Commitments to the House of Correction 1836-1859 – prisoners sent to gaol by the court for crimes committed or non-payment of fines. (Some have been transcribed on to Bath Ancestors),
- QS/8 Alehouse Recognizances 1776-1789, 1806-1814 – bonds for good conduct by publicans and licensed victuallers. Earlier records within Session papers, later licenses within Petty Sessions records.
- QS/9 Poor Law Settlement examinations 1763-1866 – records of paupers' rights to settle in a parish and claim Poor Relief.
- QS/12 Declarations of Oaths of Allegiance taken by councillors, justices, the mayor, and others 1754-1798

## Petty Sessions

Created in the 1730s, these courts are now known as Magistrate Courts but were also unofficially called Police Courts. They are the first court to which cases are taken: more serious cases were tried under 'indictment' at the Quarter Sessions (and may go to the Assizes), and lesser misdemeanours were dealt with at this court. The courts also dealt with bastardy examinations, arbitration, asylums and, later, public house and other entertainment licenses.

This sequence of records is poorly catalogued within ref 0136 so please check with staff for available records. Some of the earliest Bath Petty Sessions records are included within the Quarter Sessions minutes. This series includes records such as Court Registers, Summonses relating to School Boards or rates, and licensing registers between 1870s-1970s. There are also some records of the Keynsham, Kilmersden & Weston Division Courts (c.1900-1970s).

## Bath City Police

The City of Bath Police was created in 1836, became part of the Somerset & Bath Constabulary in 1967, then grew into the Avon & Somerset Constabulary in 1974. Before 1834 policing duties were part of the parish or Improvement Commissioners' duties (see Rate Books for details). Records include:

- 0661/2/1 Registers of Officers and Constables c.1841-c.1970
- 0661/3 Operational records 1931-c.1968 – including some station diaries, standing orders and general record book.
- 0661/4/1 Bath City Police 'Prisoners' Portrait Books', 1892-1950. (The first of these volumes, covering the period 1892-1909 is included in our Bath Ancestors database).

0661/5 Records relating to civil administration 1919-1983 - including files relating to licensing

0661/7 Photographs c1873-1980

## Coroner's Court

The Coroner conducts inquests into the deaths of individuals. Historically these were often held at a location close to the actual death, often an inn or pub as these were the only places large enough. The Coroner and jury would decide on a cause of death and whether a prosecution should ensue. Inquests were often reported in the newspaper. The records are split in various series':

BC/4/1 Bath City Inquests 1776-1835 – includes some details as well as verdict (Included in Bath Ancestors database)

CR Bath Coroner's records 1900-1988 – includes registers of deaths reported to the Coroner, correspondence, and inquest files (with some gaps).

QS/2 Quarter Session minutes 1837-1914 – may include Coroner's summary of cases with names and verdicts only. (Included in Bath Ancestors database)

QS/3 Quarter Sessions papers 1776-1971 – there are some Coroner's reports included in this series which can be found through the catalogue.

Bath Record Office does not collect records of Coroner's inquests beyond 1988 as records beyond this date are held at Bristol Archives. Records under 75 years are restricted and can only be accessed by permission of the Coroner for Avon.

## County Court

Bath County Court was the main civil court for the borough. It was the court to which debt-recovery claims were taken, including bankruptcy cases relating to individuals and businesses. Records are closed for 85 years after the date of the case.

0325/1 Summons to Court 1829-1969 – including some minute books

0325/2-3 Bankruptcies 1927-85 – only selected records after 1973. Includes personal and business bankruptcy proceedings.

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## Records of Poor Relief

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If you find you have ancestors who fell on hard times, they may have had to apply for Poor Relief. Before 1836, Poor Relief was administered locally by each parish, overseen by the Quarter Sessions. After 1836, Poor Relief was administered by poor law unions, consisting of a number of parishes. Each poor law union was run by an elected Board of Guardians.

### Records of parish Poor Relief before 1836

Before 1836, parish officers, called overseers, were responsible for giving out the relief, either as money payments or in kind (for example, loaves of bread). The overseers and other parish officers kept records relating to their work, but unfortunately many of these records have not survived. The Record Office holds only a small number of records of parish Poor Relief, as follows, held in the QS series:

	<b>Abbey</b>	<b>St James</b>	<b>Walcot</b>
Lists of paupers in receipt of relief, or in workhouse	1785-1791, 1822-1835	1792-1807, 1826-1836	1793-1798
Bastardy bonds	1762-1817	1773-1836	
Pauper apprenticeship indentures	1712-1816	1752-1836	
Settlement and Removal papers	1742-1839	1694-1880	

We also hold Settlement Examinations for city parishes, 1758-1774 and 1811-1866.

Note that some of these records have been transcribed and indexed and are included in our Bath Ancestors database.

### Board of Guardians Records

The Bath Poor Law Union included all the parishes in Bath and some from the surrounding area. A complete set of the minutes of the Board of Guardians is held by the Record Office, but unfortunately the survival of other records is very patchy. No workhouse admission and discharge registers have survived, apart from Registers of Casuals (vagrants who were allowed to stay only for one night), 1915-1934.

A full catalogue of the records can be found on our online catalogue at reference BGB.

Some of the records which are of particular interest to family historians are:

BGB/1/42	Printed 'List of Paupers', 1894
BGB/2/7	Registers of baptisms in the workhouse 1846-1963
BGB/2/9	Registers of burials in the workhouse 1847-1899
BGB/1/26	Register of persons ordered to the workhouse, 1878-1886
BGB/2/10	'Addresses of Paupers' Friends', 1897-1906
BGB/1/32	Pauper Removal Registers, 1845-1863
BGB/1/34	Maintenance Case Books, 1891-1927
BGB/1/35	Maintenance Payments Ledgers, 1877-1881
BGB/1/37	Register of Orders in Bastardy, 1844-1885
BGB/3/1	Cottage (Children's) Homes Indoor Relief Lists, 1896-1917
BGB/3/2	Cottage (Children's) Homes Creed Registers, 1896-1901
BGB/3/4	Cottage (Children's) Homes Health Record Books, 1911-1918
BGB/1/30	Registers of Children Boarded Out, 1869-1918 (with gaps)
BGB/1/28	Register of Young Persons Hired from Bath Workhouse 1851-1897
BGB/1/29	Register of Visits to Apprentices sent from Workhouse, 1869-1918
BGB/1/22	Register of payments for people sent to other institutions, 1903-1918
BGB/8	Various registers relating to caring for children for payment, 1872-1930

Note that some of these records have been transcribed and indexed and are included in our Bath Ancestors database.

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## School registers

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School admission registers can be a useful source of information for family historians. However, only a small number of registers have been deposited in the Record Office. This is a list of admission or attendance registers we hold:

Bathforum Free School	1856-1900
Bathford Church School	
Bluecoat School	1711-1868 (with gaps)
Combe Down Mixed Evening School	1910-1919
Compton Dando C of E School	1892-1959
Corston National School	1895-1983
Englishcombe Council School	1927-1984
Kingsmead Junior Mixed	1942-1943
Oldfield Council Infants	1935-1956
St Paul's Non-Provided School, Avon Street	1889-1912
Twerton East Board School	1882-1898

Tytherington Council School	1941-1984
East Walcot / Walcot Infants School	1890-1972
Walcot Central Boys School	1890-1931
West Central Girls School	1904-1921
West Harptree Voluntary Aided Primary School	1907-1926
Weymouth House Boys	1824-1839, 1884-1896

The registers for Bathforum and Bluecoat Schools have been transcribed and indexed and are included in our Bath Ancestors database.

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## Hospital and health authority records

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We hold records for a number of hospitals in the Bath area and for those which were within the Bath District Health Authority. We also hold records of the Bath Hospital Management Committee [1948-1974], Bath District Health Authority [1974-1994] and Bath Community Health Council [1974-2003]. We are now collecting records of the NHS Trusts in Bath: RUH NHS Foundation Trust and the former RNHRD NHS Foundation Trust.

Hospital records include admission and discharge registers, operation records, birth and death registers, baptisms, annual reports, photographs, financial records and press cuttings. In addition, some hospitals kept staff and training records. Health authority records mainly concern the administration of hospitals and health services within the district and cover the period 1948-1994 when Bath was merged into a larger authority with Wiltshire.

Please note that records under 100 years old are restricted under the Data Protection Act.

The following hospital records are held at Bath Record Office, and are fully catalogued:

Bath Ear Nose and Throat Hospital [HOS4]	1950s
Bath and Wessex Children's Orthopaedic Hospital [HOS6]	1924-1970 (no patient records)
Bath Eye Infirmary [HOS2]	1811-1973
Claverton Down Isolation Hospital [HOS5]	1879-1986
Forbes Fraser (Private) Hospital [HOS7]	1924-1980
Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases (Royal Mineral Water Hospital)	1747-1985 (no patient records from 1752-1914)

[HOS1]	
Royal United Hospital, Bath [HOS3]	1823-1982
St Martin's Hospital, Bath [HOS8]	1948-1988