

## Manchester Central Library

### Guide to Local Government Records



m52110 Chorlton-on-Medlock Town Hall 1833 [www.images.manchester.gov.uk](http://www.images.manchester.gov.uk)

The aim of this guide is to provide an introduction to the records held at Manchester Central Library for Manchester City Council and its predecessors and for the Greater Manchester Council. It also gives references to published material held in the library

The town of Manchester was granted a charter in 1301 but lost borough status by a court case in 1359. Until the nineteenth century government was largely by manorial courts. In 1792 police commissioners were also established for the improvement of the area of the township of Manchester.

In 1838 the Borough of Manchester was established, comprising the areas of Manchester, Beswick, Cheetham, Chorlton-upon-Medlock and Hulme townships. By 1846 the Borough Council had taken over the powers of the police commissioners. In 1853 the Borough received the title of City and between 1885 -1931 further areas were incorporated into the City of Manchester.

In 1974 the City became a Metropolitan District in Greater Manchester County. Following the abolition of Greater Manchester County Council in 1986, Manchester City Council became a unitary authority.

For further information about the history of local government in Manchester please consult:

- Arthur Redford, *The History of Local Government in Manchester*, 3 volumes (Longmans Green, 1939-1940) (352.042 73 RE (325)).
- Shena Simon, *A Century of City Government 1838-1938* (Allen and Unwin, 1938)
- *The Manchester Municipal Code*, 6 volumes (Manchester Corporation, 1894-1901, 1928 supplement) (q352.042733Ma (181)). This is a digest of local acts of parliament etc. in force within the City of Manchester.
- *How Manchester is Managed – a Record of Municipal Activity*, published annually 1925-1939 (352.04273)
- N. J. Frangupolo, *Rich Inheritance: A Guide to the History of Manchester*, Manchester. Education Committee, 1962
- Alan Kidd, *Manchester: A History*, 2012

### **Access Arrangements**

**Manchester Central Library  
St Peter's Square  
Manchester  
M2 5PD**

**Tel: 0161 234 1979**

**Email: [archiveslocalstudies@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:archiveslocalstudies@manchester.gov.uk)**

Opening hours: Monday-Wednesday: 9am to 5pm

Thursday: 9am to 8pm

Friday and Saturday: 9am to 5pm

Some archive collections are stored off-site and we require 2 weeks notice.

**It is essential to make an appointment to view original archives held onsite at least one working day in advance.**

Please use this [web form](#) to make an appointment.

More information on most collections can be found at our online catalogue [GMLives.org.uk](http://GMLives.org.uk).

Please note microfilms are accessible on open access at Manchester Central Library – no advanced booking required.

*Revised April 2015*

## **CONTENTS**

	Pages
1. MANORIAL AND TOWNSHIP RECORDS	
Court Leet	4
Boroughreeve	4-5
Clarke and Marshall's Charities	5
Manchester Police Commissioners	5
Manchester Board of Health	6
Townships	6-7
2. COUNCIL MINUTES	8-9
3. COUNCIL DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS	
Airport	10
Baths and Wash Houses	10
Building Control	10
Education	10-11
Electricity	11
Engineers and Surveyors	11-12
Fire	13
Galleries	13
Gas	13
General Purposes	13
Health and Cleansing	14
Highways	15
Housing	15
Libraries and Theatres	15
Lord Mayor's Office	15
Markets	15
Parks and Cemeteries	16
Planning / Architects	17
Police	17
Rivers	17
Social Welfare / Social Services	17-18
Town Clerks	18-19
Transport	19
Treasurer	19
Watch Committee	20
Water	21-22
Weights and Measures	22
4. MISCELLANEOUS	23
5. MANCHESTER CENTRAL LIBRARY	24
6. GREATER MANCHESTER COUNCIL	25

## **1. MANORIAL AND TOWNSHIP RECORDS**

### **Court Leet**

The Court Leet was the ancient Court for the Manor of Manchester. It was abolished in 1846.

The Court Leet records of the Manor of Manchester 1552-1846 have been published and copies are available at Manchester Central Library (352.042 M4).

### **Boroughreeve**

A boroughreeve and two constables were appointed annually by the court leet of the manor of Manchester. The boroughreeve was also usually treasurer and chairman of the Police Commissioners, and chairman of the Accounts Committee and Finance Committee, while the senior constable was chairman of the Watch Committee and the junior constable chairman of the Lamp, Scavenging, Fire Engine and Main Sewers Committee. Between them they had a great deal of control over the local government of early nineteenth century Manchester.

We hold papers of the Boroughreeves and Constables (ref [M71](#)). These include: Papers concerning the Administration of Local Government including records of taxation 1831-1834, Public Health 1831-1837 and Law and Order 1826-1834; Organisation of public events including the celebration of George IV's birthday 1828-1830; George IV's funeral 1830, William IV's coronation and birthdays 1831-1837; Proclamation of Victoria's accession to the throne and the funeral of William IV. Non-Royal events include records of a dinner in honour of the Duke of Wellington 1830 and celebrations in honour of the passing of the Parliamentary Reform Bill 1832; Records of the organisation of pressure on central government concerning Manchester Post Office 1806, Sadler's Ten Hours Bill (limiting persons under 18 years of age to working 10 hours a day) 1833 and petitions against a tax on cotton wool 1837

Letter Books (In) for the Boroughreeve, 1819-1838, can be found at reference **M9/61/1/1-3**.

We also hold documents from the Boroughreeve's chest (ref [M91](#)) including: bonds of indemnity against new settlers in the town becoming chargeable 1631-1699; apprenticeship indentures 1668, 1677, 1692-1694; orders of removal 1684-1694; accounts of disbursements of charity money 1644-1655; assessment book of leys levied by order of the High Constable of Salford Hundred for soldiers, hundred bridges etc 1647-1668; tax assessment for poor relief in Manchester 1659; Colledge Barn deeds 1657-1771; abstract of deeds in the Boroughreeve's chest on 1731; reports concerning projected reforms delivered to town meeting including a new local act for the general improvement of the town and purchase of the manorial rights 1808; account of Manchester township's population taken by Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor 1801; population returns 1811, 1821, 1831; books and papers

relating to Nelson's Fund 1805-1806; papers and plans concerning Clark's Charity 1795-1806; account of writings and papers 1690-1801 in Churchwarden's chest 1809; charity invoices 1822-1824; 16th report of the Commissioners inquiring concerning charities 1826; minutes book of Act of Parliament Committee for a new Police Bill 1823-1830 and other committees 1828-1830; constable's accounts 1613-1648, 1743-1785; proceedings of public meetings appointed by the Boroughreeve and Constables 1821-1838; Manchester borough register of electors 1832-1839; poll book 1690.

### **Clarke and Marshall's Charities**

According to the original feoffment of George Clarke of 13th December, 1636 trustees were to collect the rents and profits from Clarke's Charity lands in Manchester, Crumpsall and Tetlow, and deliver them to the boroughreeve and the 2 constables who with the aid of one of the churchwardens were to distribute them to poor, aged, needy and impotent people residing in Manchester. Accounts were to be kept by both the deliverers and receivers of the rents and profits, and the said accounts in books or notes were to be presented to the Court Leet. The occasions when this actually took place, and when new trustees came to be appointed can be studied in the Court Leet Records.

We hold the records of these charities (ref [M5](#)).

### **Manchester Police Commissioners**

The Commissioners were appointed by the Manchester and Salford Police Act 1792 briefly described as for cleansing, lighting, watching, and regulating the streets, lanes, passages and places within the towns of Manchester and Salford.... and for other purposes therein mentioned.

We hold records of the Police Commissioners (ref [M9/30](#) & [M9/62](#)). These include Minute Books 1797-1843; Minutes of the Finance Committee, 1828-1843; Minutes of the Accounts Committee, 1828-1843; Minutes of the Scavenging, Fire Engine and Main Sewer Committee 1828-1843; Minutes of the Watch, Nuisance and Hackney Coach Committee 1828-1843; Stock Book, 1825-1835; Letter Books, 1822-1831, 1936-1872; Tender Books, 1832-1839;

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports submitted to the Police Commissioners for 1829-1942 (352.042 M10)

## **Manchester Board of Health**

This Special Board was formed to prevent as far as possible the introduction and spread of Cholera morbus into the town and neighbourhood, following Orders in Council of 20th October, 1831. We hold minutes of the Board of Health, Nov 1831-Oct 1833 (on microfilm).

We also hold a notebook of copy letters and other documents regarding the foundation and early years of the Manchester Board of Health, 1796-1804 (on microfilm MF 1834).

## **Townships**

The following were separate townships with their own local administration until they were incorporated into Manchester.

**Ardwick** (incorporated into Manchester 1838)  
(ref [M10/1](#))

**Baguley** (incorporated into Manchester 1931)  
(ref [M10/2](#))

**Beswick** (incorporated into Manchester 1838)  
(ref [M10/3](#))

**Blackley** (incorporated into Manchester 1890)  
(ref [M10/4](#))

**Bradford** (incorporated into Manchester 1885)  
(ref [M10/5](#))

**Burnage** (incorporated into Manchester 1904)  
(ref [M10/6](#))

**Cheetham** (incorporated into Manchester 1838)  
(ref [M10/7](#))

**Chorlton cum Hardy** (incorporated into Manchester 1904)  
(ref [M10/8](#))

**Chorlton upon Medlock** (incorporated into Manchester 1838)  
(ref [M10/9](#))

**Clayton** (incorporated into Manchester 1890)  
(ref [M10/10](#))

**Crumpsall** (incorporated into Manchester 1890)  
(ref [M10/11](#))

**Didsbury** (incorporated into Manchester 1904)

(ref [M10/12](#))

**Gorton** (incorporated into Manchester 1890 (part), 1901 (part), 1909 (part))  
(ref [M10/13](#))

**Harpurhey** (incorporated into Manchester 1885)  
(ref [M10/14](#))

**Hulme** (incorporated into Manchester 1838)  
(ref [M10/15](#))

**Levenshulme** (incorporated into Manchester 1909)  
(ref [M10/16](#))

**Moss Side** (incorporated into Manchester 1885 (part), 1904 (part))  
(ref [M10/17](#))

**Moston** (incorporated into Manchester 1890)  
(ref [M10/18](#))

**Newton** (incorporated into Manchester 1890)  
(ref [M10/19](#))

**Etchells** (incorporated into Manchester 1931)  
(ref [M10/20](#))

**Northenden** (incorporated into Manchester 1931)  
(ref [M10/21](#))

**Openshaw** (incorporated into Manchester 1890)  
(ref [M10/22](#))

**Rusholme** (incorporated into Manchester 1885)  
(ref [M10/23](#))

**Withington** (incorporated into Manchester 1885 (part), 1904 (part))  
(ref [M10/24](#))

## **2. COUNCIL MINUTES**

Manchester Central Library holds the published proceedings of the Manchester Borough / City Council, 1838-2014. These consist of minutes of the main Council. There are indexes for the proceedings for 1838-1962.

The proceedings include reports by committees which are from 1903/4 published in additional volumes or 'Appendix to Council Minutes'. Summaries of committee proceedings were published as 'Epitome of Proceedings of Committees' from 1884 to 1988.

We also hold the minutes of the various Committees and Sub-Committees of the Council from 1830s-1980s. Advance notice is required in order to view them. They include:

- Art Galleries Committee, 1882-1970
- Airport Committee, 1929-1984
- Baths and Wash Houses Committee, 1876-1970
- Children's Committee, 1948-1971
- Cleansing Committee, 1948-1974
- Cultural Committee, 1970-1984
- Direct Works Committee, 1960-1986
- Education Committee, 1903-1980
- Establishment Committee, 1911-1974
- Finance Committee, 1839-1984
- Gas Committee, 1824-1949
- General Purposes Committee, 1838-1974
- Health Committee (formerly Sanitary and Public Health Committee), 1868-1875, 1890-1974
- Highways Committee, 1831-1986
- Housing Committee, 1919-1986
- Improvements and Buildings Committee, 1845-1930
- Lamp and Scavenging Committee, 1846-1879
- Libraries, 1852-1970
- Markets Committee, 1846-1984
- Parks and Cemeteries Committee, 1846-1970
- Planning Committee, 1970-1974
- Planning New City Committee, 1974-1990
- Policy Committee, 1970-1989
- Rivers Committee, 1863-1974
- Social Services Committee, 1973-1985
- Social Welfare Committee, 1937-1948
- Town Hall Committee, 1878-1974
- Town Planning and Building Committee, 1912-1970
- Watch Committee, 1845-1968
- Water Works Committee, 1848-1966
- Welfare and Services Committee, 1948-1971
- Wythenshawe Estate Committee, 1927-1951



A more complete list of Council Minutes is available for consultation in the search room and [online](#). Later minutes (mainly post 1986) are held by the Committee Services Team at the Town Hall (Tel 0161 234 3042).

There is also a series of draft minutes (ref M9/63-82). These include:

- Art Gallery Committee, 1885-1888
- Art Gallery House Sub-Committee, 1882-1897
- Finance Committee, 1875-1877, 1893-1984, 1896-1897
- General Purposes Committee, 1852-1863, 1877-1883
- General Purposes Committee (Sub-Committees), 1860-1863, 1865-1867, 1887-1890
- Hospitals Sub-Committee, 1894-1897
- Improvement Committee, 1860-1864, 1871-1874
- Improvement Committee (Sub-Committees), 1866-1871
- Lamp and Scavenging Committee, 1868-1872, 1875-1878
- Lavatories Sub-Committee, 1895-1898
- Nuisance Committee, 1856-1861, 1880-1884
- Public Free Libraries Committee, 1886-1892
- Public Parks (later Parks and Cemeteries), 1857-1860, 1883-1884, 1892-1893
- Public Parks (Sub-Committees), 1878-1880, 1882-1886, 1888-1897
- Watch Committee, 1857-1859, 1864-1866, 1869-1871, 1880-1882, 1891-1892
- River Committee, 1878-1880, 1892-1894
- Sanitary, Audit Committee, 1890-1897
- Sanitary, Audit Committee (Sub-Committees), 1892-1893
- Town Hall Committee, 1929-1930
- Unhealthy Dwellings Committee, 1889-1890

### **3. COUNCIL DEPARTMENTAL RECORDS**

#### **Airport**

We hold aircraft movement log books for Manchester Airport, 1958-1987 (ref [M332](#)).

#### **Baths and Wash Houses**

We hold letter books for the Baths and Wash Houses Committee 1876-1890 (ref [M9/73/1/1-4](#)).

#### **Building Control**

We have a large collection of architectural plans kept by the Manchester City Council's Building Control department. They capture the city's buildings from 1890 to the 1980s. Parts of the collection have been fully indexed by volunteers (from 1890 to 1905 and from 1948 to 1958). To search for these plans on our online catalogue [GMLives.org.uk](http://GMLives.org.uk) enter M900 in the Identifier field and the street or architect's name in the Any Text field. You can then [make an appointment](#) to view the plans at Central Library. For plans dating from 1903-1947 and 1959-1980s please email [archiveslocalstudies@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:archiveslocalstudies@manchester.gov.uk) with your enquiry.

#### **Education**

The Manchester School Board was established in 1870. It was also involved in the provision of education over and above elementary level.

In 1903 the provision of education was passed to the Education Committee of Manchester City Council.

We hold the records of the Manchester School Board (ref [M65](#)). These include: Minutes of the Manchester School Board 1870-1903; Minutes of miscellaneous committees 1870-1873; Finance Committee Minutes 1875-1903; School Management and Organisation Committee Minutes 1873-1875; School Management Committee Minutes 1875-1903; Newspaper Cuttings Books, 1879-1910; General Purposes Committee 1876-1903; Office Committee Minutes 1872-1903; Industrial Schools Committee Minutes 1873-1903; Sites and Schools Buildings Committee Minutes 1873-1903; Managers of Board School Minutes 1873-1874; Fees and Byelaws Committee Minutes 1885-1887; Minutes of Sub Committees 1875-1890; Newspaper Cuttings, 1879-1910; Minute Books of districts incorporated in Manchester after the formation of the School Board (Crumpsall, Levenshulme and Moss Side) 1875-1904.

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports for the Manchester School Board 1871-1881 (379.1 M2, F379.1 M2).

We hold some records for the Education Department (ref M428 box list available). These include: Appointment and resignations of teachers: municipal schools 1919-1949; cookery and domestic subjects 1906-1949; handicraft 1930-1952; special schools 1913-1948; non-provided schools 1915-1947; treasurer's book 1925-1927; Awards of scholarships and maintenance allowances 1945-1948; Clog Fund and Concert accounts 1900-1943; Correspondence of Director of Education 1941-1945; Files of official openings of schools containing notes, and sometimes photographs 1963-1976; Papers relating to the visit of Leningrad schools party to Manchester 1966; Papers relating to catering and schools meals 1940s-1980s; Newspaper cuttings 1960s-1970s; Photographs of schools 1930s-1990; Education Library: Committee minutes 1924-1970, log book 1939-1972

We hold some School Building Grant Plans (ref [M28](#)).

We hold case note for the School Medical Service, Child Guidance Clinic, 1950s-1960s (ref M354 restricted access).

For records we hold of individual schools please consult our [School Records Guide](#).

## **Electricity**

An Electric Light Department was created in 1892. In 1948 the provision of Electricity was nationalised and the North Western Electricity Board was formed.

Unfortunately the minutes of the Electric Light Committee and the Electricity Committee appear not to have survived. It is possible that the minutes were transferred to the North Western Electricity Board following nationalisation.

The only Electricity Department records we hold are some files about land at Clayton Vale, 1917-1941 (ref [M338](#)). Two files on Barton Power Station, 1913-1943, can be found in the City Engineers and City Surveyors files (ref M723/15). Manchester Central Library holds annual reports for the Electricity Department, 1938-1947 (incomplete) (621.3 M25).

The book *Electricity in Manchester 1893-1993* By Roy Frost gives a good account of the provision of electricity in Manchester (q 338.476213 Fr).

We also hold minutes of the North West Electricity Consultative Council, 1949-1989 (ref GB124.A/NWECC)

## **Engineers and Surveyors**

We hold registers of staff in post 1913-1946 for the City Engineer and Surveyors Department (ref [M582](#)).

We also hold the following: City Engineers and City Surveyors files, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> cent; Newspaper cuttings, 1934-1962; Copy Letter Books; 1896-1900; Cost of Works, c.1917-1920s; Air Road Precaution (ARP) Warden Posts 1-5,

correspondence and papers 1939; Semi-Private Shelter 1198-1799, 1939; Particulars of concrete roads 1920s-1930s Particulars of concrete roads 1930s; Drawing of Proposed Heliport - near Victoria Station by R. Nicholas, City Surveyor, 1956; Plan of Proposed Heliport - near Victoria Station by R. Nicholas, City Surveyor, 1956 (ref [M723](#)).

The City Engineers Plan File is a large collection of street, sewer and town planning plans on microcard. It is indexed by street (ref [M723](#)).

We also hold a volume entitled "New Town Hall Competition, 1868" created by the City Surveyor (ref [M296](#)).

The City Engineers and Surveyors Department undertook a lot of photography and many of their photographs can be viewed on our Local Images Collection (<http://www.images.manchester.gov.uk>). Search for "engineer(s)" or "surveyor(s)" under the 'Creator' field in 'Detailed Search'.

This department also held several thousand plans of sewer works dating from 1830 onwards. These were catalogued and microfiched by the Department in 1988. For further details see the article 'Mapping Manchester's Sewers: The Engineering Archives Project' in the Manchester Regional History Review, Volume 2 Number 2, Autumn/Winter 1988/89' ([http://www.mcrh.mmu.ac.uk/pubs/pdf/mrhr\\_02ii\\_john\\_guest.pdf](http://www.mcrh.mmu.ac.uk/pubs/pdf/mrhr_02ii_john_guest.pdf)). These microfiche and catalogue are now held by United Utilities, Wastewater Department, Hathersage Road, Manchester, M13 0EH, 0161 609 7509.

## **Fire**

We hold records of the Manchester Fire Brigade, 1830-1945 (ref [M1](#)). These include: fires record books 1830-1945; fire summaries 1943-1945; fire reports to the Watch Committee, later the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee 1843-1941; lists of fires arranged by trades and types of premises 1851-1940; indexes of names of occupiers of premises where the Fire Brigade attended fires and of streets where fires have occurred 1847-1921; occurrence and duty books 1864-1866, 1868, 1892-1893, 1898-1901; letter books of outgoing letters 1882-1906; Chief Officer's Committee report books 1899-1941; general order books 1871-1920; summaries of statistics and annual reports 1863-1973; monthly reports of fires 1879-1884; estimates 1854-1887; conditions of service 1901-1902; lists of firemen 1870-1878; casual assistance at fires 1862-1866; reconstructed records of fires and incidents due to enemy action 1939-1941; minutes of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee 1900-1937; registers of staff 1893-1940.

Manchester Central Library hold annual reports for the City Fire Brigade, 1958-1972 (352.3 M1)

A good history of the service is *Manchester Fire Brigade* (Archive Publications Ltd. 1988) by Robert F Bonner (q363.378 Bo). The library also possesses a microfilm copy of MS notes for a history of the Brigade written in 1950 by an officer of the Brigade which goes into great detail (MF 444).

In 1974 the Manchester Fire Brigade became part of the Greater Manchester Council Fire Service.

The Greater Manchester Fire Museum also holds some archive material, including photographs, cine film, video, audio tapes and printed material. Their address is Greater Manchester Fire Service Museum, Maclure Road, Rochdale, OL11 1DN, Telephone/Fax No. 01706 901227, [museum@manchesterfire.gov.uk](mailto:museum@manchesterfire.gov.uk)

## **Galleries**

We hold the records of the Manchester Royal Institution (ref [M6](#)).

We hold letter books for the Art Gallery Committee, 1882-1895 (ref [M9/76/3/1-2](#)). The Arts Library at Central Library holds catalogues for Manchester Art Gallery on microfilm.

For the archives of Manchester Galleries please contact Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3JL, 0161 235 8888 (<http://www.manchestergalleries.org>).

## **Gas**

The first Manchester gas works was built in 1817 by the Manchester Police Commissioners at Water Street (closed in 1837) to supply gas for street lamps and police offices on a commercial basis. In 1843 responsibility for the entire Manchester Gas Undertaking was transferred from the Police Commissioners to Manchester Borough Council. It ran the undertaking through the Gas Committee and Gas Department. On Nationalisation in 1949 the gas undertaking became part of the North West Gas Board.

We hold the following records for the Manchester Gas Committee (ref [M27](#)): Directors minutes and committee minutes, 1824-1949 (45 volumes) and typescript history. This collection also includes records for Droylsden Gas Company, Droylsden. Directors and shareholders minutes, 1864-1869 (1 item); Salford Gas Department. Light, Heat and Power Committee minutes and report of gas engineer and manager, 1944-1945 (3 items); Stretford and District Gas Board. Board and committee minutes, 1922-1949 (13 volumes)

Transco plc holds further records of the Gas Department. A catalogue for this collection can be found on the [Access to Archives](#) web site. However at this present time it is not known whether access to these records is being permitted by Transco.

Manchester Central Library has a volume which includes annual reports for the Gas Works 1829-1842 (352.042 M10).

## **General Purposes**

We hold letter books of the General Purposes Committee, 1851-1887 (ref [M9/67/3/1-8](#))

## **Health and Cleansing**

In 1868 the City Council established a Health Committee consisting of the Chairmen of the Committees for Watch, Nuisance, Building and Sanitary Regulations, Lamp and Scavenging, Paving, Sewering and Highways, Markets and Gas, for the townships of Chorlton upon Medlock, Hulme, Ardwick and Cheetham, together with the Mayor and other Manchester councillors.

On 9 November 1890 when the townships of Blackley, Clayton, Crumpsall, Kirkmanshulme, Moston, Newton Heath and West Gorton were added to the City, the Health Department was replaced by the Cleansing Department with responsibility for the enlarged City.

It remained the Cleansing Department until 1990, when it became the Department of Operational Services.

Minutes of the Health Committee 1868-1875; Annual Reports and Accounts of the Cleansing Department 1891, 1949-1968 (incomplete); Estate papers concerning Carrington, Chat Moss and other land and property, 1805-1966; Directors papers 1906-1985; Staff and Wages, 1921-1923; Old Files relating to land and property, 1876-1967. (ref [M595](#)).

We also have a volume containing syllabus for City of Manchester Public Health Department 'Weekend Refresher Course for Health Visitors, Other Public Nurses and Trained Nurses on the Civil Nursing Reserve' and photographs relating to the City of Manchester Health Department (mainly of health visitors and midwives), c.1930s-1950s (ref [MISC/1083](#)).

We also hold letter books of the Lamp and Scavenging Committee, 1872-1878 (ref [M9/64/2/1-2](#)); Unhealthy Dwelling Committee, 1889-1890 (ref [M9/78/2/1](#)); and the Sanitary Committee, 1891-1893 ([M9/79/1/1-2](#))

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports for Manchester Medical Officer of Health, 1868- (614.0942 M4) and *Observations on the History of Public Health Effort in Manchester* (1923) by James Niven (614.094273 Ni1/a).

In addition we hold some **Environmental Health Department** records:

- Canal Boat Inspector's records, 1909-1972 (ref [M487](#)).
- Inspector's Records. Records of cases conducted by sampling officers of Manchester Corporation under the Food and Drugs Adulteration Act, dealt with by the Sanitary Committee and cases brought under the Market Bye-Laws enforced by the Markets Committee, 1890-1937 (ref [M736](#))
- Papers relating to infectious diseases and immunisation 1869-1980s (ref [M371](#))
- Papers relating to smoke nuisance, licensing, inspections and prosecutions 1889-1970s (ref [M515](#))

## **Highways**

In 1843 the powers of the Police Commissioners were transferred to the Corporation. The Paving and Southing Committee became the Paving Committee, while the Improvement Committee retained its former name. Eight years later the Manchester General Improvement Act, 1851 made the council the highway authority. The Surveyors of the Highways were thus absorbed by the new Paving, Sewering and Highways Committee.

We hold some records of the Highways Department, 1825-1893 (ref [M19](#))

We also hold letter books for the Improvement Committee, 1829-1840, 1845-1849, 1852-1890 (ref [M9/63/3/1-25](#)).

## **Housing**

We hold a collection of Housing Department Compulsory Purchase Order (C.P.O) confirmation files and correspondence files, 1953-1983 (ref [M646](#)).

## **Libraries and Theatres**

We hold a large collection of records for Manchester Public Libraries (ref: [M740](#)).

We hold some records for the Library Theatre 1944-1976 (ref [M382](#)). The Theatre Collection in the Arts Library also contains material relating to the Library Theatre.

We hold the records of Manchester Free Trade Hall, 1951-1988 (ref [M619](#)) which was run by Manchester City Council. We also hold some records of the Manchester Festival Office, 1990–2001 (ref [M719](#)) which was part of Libraries and Theatres.

## **Lord Mayor's Office**

We hold the papers of the Lord Mayor's Office (ref [M480](#)). These include Lord Mayor's diaries 1929/30, 1936-1985 (incomplete); Diaries of chairs of the council 1985-1988; Programmes and Invitations 1935-1977; Newspaper cuttings 1979-1981; Consular Appointments 1935-1976; Files concerning ceremonial matters 1893-1951; Speeches 1983-1984.

## **Markets**

We hold a small collection of papers concerning markets held in Manchester. Documents include weekly account of market tolls 1843-1847; Typed extracts of minutes of evidence of the Royal Commission of Market Rights and Tolls 1889; Records of Miller Street Cold Store 1919-1921 (ref [M193](#)).



## **Parks and Cemeteries**

We hold Wages Alteration Books 1915-1957 for the Parks and Cemeteries Department (ref [M722](#)) and letter books 1846-1891 (ref [M9/68](#))

We also hold some records for Heaton Park Golf Links, 1930-1950. These include Weekly summary books, daily receipt books, and other financial records (ref [M603](#)).

For material relating to Heaton Park it may also be worth contacting Heaton Hall, Heaton Park, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 5SW, 0161 773 1231.

The burial registers for Gorton Cemetery, Philips Park Cemetery, Southern Cemetery, Manchester General Cemetery and Blackley Cemetery (opened 1953) can be searched and viewed on-line at <http://www.burialrecords.manchester.gov.uk> [pay per view site administered by Bereavement Services].

In addition burial registers for the following dates can be consulted at Manchester Central Library on microfilm:

### **Gorton Cemetery (opened 1900), Thornwood Avenue, Gorton**

Burial Registers-

All denominations 1900-1910 (MFPR 1101)

Church of England 1910-1985 (MFPR 1102-1105)

Roman Catholic 1910-1988 (MFPR 1106)

Nonconformist 1910-1988 (MFPR 1107-1108)

Burial receipts- 1910-1983 (MFPR 803-806, 845-865)

### **Manchester General Cemetery, Harpurhey (opened 1837)**

Although now a municipal cemetery, it is believed that the cemetery was originally a private undertaking which was taken over by the municipal authority in 1868.

Burial Registers- 1837-1905 (MFPR 1082-1083, 1974)

Monumental Inscriptions- c.1857-1918 (MFPR 1947)

### **Philips Park Cemetery (opened 1866), Hulme Hall Lane, Bradford**

Burial Registers-

Church of England 1867-1964 (MFPR 687-702)

Roman Catholic 1866-1987 (MFPR 703-709 & 1099)

Nonconformist 1867-1987 (MFPR 834-837 & 1100)

Burial Receipts- 1866-1986 (MFPR 758-803, 882-898, 906-934)

### **Southern Cemetery (opened 1879), Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy**

Burial Registers-

Church of England 1879-2002 (MFPR 2135-2146, 2200)

Roman Catholic 1879-2002 (MFPR 2147-2150, 2200)

Nonconformist 1879-1992 (MFPR 2150-2153, 2146-2147, 2201-2202)

## **Planning / Architects**

We hold a collection of plans, press cuttings and maps relating to the City of Manchester and its overspill areas, 1865-c.1980 (ref [M507](#)).

We hold photographic copies of some architects plans: Market Place development 1968-1971; War Memorial, St Peter's Square 1923; Plan by architectonic photogrammetry: City Art Gallery and Athenaeum and Portico Library 1972 (ref [M144](#)). We also hold photocopies of plans concerning the extension of the passenger terminal at Manchester International Airport, 1970 (ref [M174](#)).

We hold some staff records for the City Architects Department, 1889-c.2002 (ref [M771](#) restricted access). Manchester Central Library holds annual reports for the City Architects, 1962-1972 (720.94273 Ma 4).

See also the City Engineers Microcard Plan File which contains many planning documents (ref [M723/84-85](#))

## **Police**

We do not have any records relating to the Manchester Police. Please contact the Greater Manchester Police Museum, Newton Street, Manchester, M1 1ES, 0161 856 3287, [police.museum@gmp.police.uk](mailto:police.museum@gmp.police.uk)

We do hold some copy minutes of the Hackney Coach Sub Committee 1925-1938 includes granting of licences to cab drivers; City of Manchester Police Vehicle Offence Report Forms 1930-1952 includes police reports of drivers speeding, dangerous driving, ignoring traffic lights and unlawful plying for hire (ref [M598](#))

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports of the Chief Constable, 1840- (q352.2 M1).

## **Rivers**

We hold letter books for the Rivers Committee, 1873-1891 (ref [M9/74/2/1-3](#))

## **Social Welfare / Social Services**

Until 1929 social welfare was administered by the Poor Law Unions. The Manchester Board of Guardians was dissolved on 31 March 1930 and its functions transferred to the Public Assistance Committee, later the Social Welfare Committee, of Manchester. In 1938 Public Assistance Committees ceased to exist and their functions were transferred to various Government and Local Government Departments. In Manchester the Welfare and Services Committee was responsible for social care. In 1972 this was replaced by the Social Services Committee.

For records of the Poor Law Unions and the Public Assistance Committee please consult our ['Poor Law and Workhouse Records Guide'](#) to see what we hold.

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports of the Children's Department, 1949-1965 (362.7 M87), Welfare Services, 1965-1968 (369.94273 MA10), Social Services, 1971-1974 (incomplete) (q360.94273 Ma24).

### **Town Clerks**

We hold the following collections for the Town Clerk's Department:

- Town Clerk's Department, Parliamentary Office, acts of parliament and related papers, 1720-1971 (ref M329 box list available)
- Town Clerks' papers relating chiefly to the organisation of public functions concerning the following: Architectural Competition for a New Town Hall 1867; Trial of Town Hall Organ 1877; Judges' Dinner with the Mayor 1877; Opening of the New Town Hall 1877; Osborne Street Baths 1882; Queen Victoria's Jubilee Celebrations 1887; Bishop Fraser's Statue 1888; John Bright's Statue 1891; James Prescott Joule's Statue 1893; Visit of David Lloyd George, Prime Minister 1918; Manchester Civic Week 1926; Inauguration of Partington Gas Works 1929; Visit of James Ramsey MacDonald, Prime Minister 1930; Centenary Meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales 1931; International Congress of Local Authorities 1932; Annual Conference of the Boys Brigade 1932; Visit of King George V and Queen Mary 1934; Opening of City Police Headquarters 1937; British Commercial Gas Annual Conference 1937; Davyhulme and Withington Sewage Works 1938; Charter Centenary Celebrations 1938; Conference of Distress Committees 1909; Visit of Representatives from Parliaments of the Empire 1948; Visit of Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh to Wythenshawe 1949 (ref [M68](#)).
- Letter books for the Town Hall Committee, 1879-1890 (ref [M9/75/2/1-3](#))
- Town Clerks' Papers Re Closed Burial Grounds (ref [M74](#)).
- Town Clerks' correspondence: "Use of Public Halls for Fascist Meetings, 30 Nov 1947-28 Sep 1949 FILE P189 Letters from various trade unions calling on the Manchester City Council "to prohibit the use of Halls, Parks and other Public Places for the propogation of Fascism", with copies of replies; includes Survey of Open-Air Meetings Held by Pro-Fascist Organisations, Apr-Oct 1947; Veneral Disease Act, 1917. File H203. Watch and Public Health Committee. Correspondence and exhibits in the case of King v Fred Phillips and Bessy Unsworth, Manchester City Sessions, 31 Mar 1927 (ref [M602](#))

- Records of the Victoria Park Trust (ref [M99](#)) which were transferred to the Library by the Town Clerk.
- Manchester Corporation Deposited Plans and Sections ["Muniment Room Crates"] Includes plans and sections of railways, waterworks, electricity works, tramways, Manchester Ship Canal, extensions to boundaries, Ringway Airport, street improvements, corporation bills / acts etc. Whenever private enterprise needed public sanction, such as for the creation of turnpike roads, railways and building works, the private company or trust was obliged to deposit with the local authority, a plan of the site showing the current lie of the land (ref M626)

## **Transport**

We hold the records of the Transport Department. They include minutes of the Tramways Sub Committee 1873-1882; Minutes of the Tramways Committee (from 1929 the Transport Committee) 1898-1964; Routes and Permanent Way Sub Committee 1898-1933; Works Sub Committee 1899-1957; Cars, Car Sheds and Staff Sub Committee 1898-1942; Claims Sub Committee 1906-1969; Parcels Sub Committee 1904-1906; Motor Bus Sub Committee 1933-1942; Administrative Sub Committee 1951-1963; Withington Tramway Sub Committee 1900-1904; Miscellaneous papers 1902-1905 (ref [M29](#) partially catalogued).

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports and abstracts of accounts 1902-1969 for the Transport Department (625.6 M11) and cuttings from various newspapers 1898-1955 (f388.4 M1)

Tameside Local Studies and Archives also holds some material relating to Manchester Corporation Tramways (ref GB131.0351). This material includes: newspaper cuttings relating to the municipalisation of the tramways 1897-1898; Various proposals relating to the running of the tramways 1898; Bill and Act to confer further powers upon the Corporation of Manchester and neighbouring authorities in respect of the tramways within and beyond the city and for other purposes 1899; Papers and correspondence relating to the dealings between Denton Urban District Council and Manchester Corporation over the operation of tramways in Denton 1900-1921; Plan of Stockport Road, Denton, showing trolley bus lines 1959; Timetable of diesel services between Manchester, Hayfield and Macclesfield 1964

## **Treasurer**

We hold a collection of registers relating to the raising of mortgages and stock by the City Treasurer, 1853-1973 (ref [M610](#)) and letter books of the Finance Committee, 1858-1892 (ref [M9/66/2/1-5](#))

We hold some Memorandum books Nos. 1, 2 & 3 1873 -1896 for Edward Thackray. (City Treasurer 1897-1909) (ref [MISC/86](#)).

We also some agreements and leases from the City Treasurer's Income Section c.1900-c.1950 (ref M635 box list available).

We also holds City Council Abstract of Accounts, 1879/80- 1973/4 (352.042 M21).

### **Watch Committee**

We hold letter books of the Watch Committee, 1854-1892 and an attendance register for the Watch Audit Sub-Committee Attendance Register, 1893-1898 (ref [M9/70](#))

We hold some records of the Watch Committee (Licensing). These include Register of Licences for Stage Plays, 1889-1934; Registers of Licences Under the Cinematograph Act, 1909, 1910-1934; Register of Persons and Premises Licensed Under the Cinematograph Act 1909, 1912-1974 (ref [M192](#))

See also under "Fire" and "Police" above.

### **Water**

We hold the records of Manchester Corporation Waterworks, 1814-1972 (ref [M231](#)). These include:

#### **Manchester and Salford Waterworks Co.**

Records including Directors minutes, 1836-1843 (1 volume) and revenue ledger, 1814-1815.

#### **Manchester Corporation Waterworks.**

Records including committee minutes, 1848-1966 (103 volumes); minutes of special sub-committees, 1928-1949; committee and sub-committees attendance book, 1880-1891; committee resolutions and instructions, 1894-1947; Thirlmere sub-committee papers, 1878-1908, including petitions against bill and report of owners and ratepayers meeting, 1878 and specifications etc. for pipe-line, 1908; minutes and instruction book of sub-committee for supply of water and proposed new works, 1868-1879 (2 volumes); hydraulic power sub-committee minutes, 1890-1894 (1 volume); Haweswater works and estate executive sub-committee minutes, 1925-1930 (1 volume); agreements for supply of water, 1872-1873 (1 volume); committee resolutions, 1888-1921 (4 volumes); sealing order books, 1910-1929 (2 volumes); newspaper cuttings scrapbooks, 1914-1972 (7 volumes); minutes of evidence given before Parliamentary select committee on Manchester Corporation Waterworks Bills (2 volumes), with related papers, 1879-1919; agreements for hydraulic power supply, 1895-1972 (approximately 4 boxes); agreements for the use of keys for street valves, 1894-1955 (6 volumes); records of premises supplied, 1894-1972 (5 volumes); summary of machines working from hydraulic mains, 19th century-1968; inspectors reports on consumers machinery, 1894-1925 (5 volumes); test certificates and applications for inspection 1894-1959 (5 volumes, 1 file and 1 bundle); well water records, 1909-1933 (2 volumes); night output records, 1928-1944 (2 volumes); change of tenancy books, 1895-

1937; records relating to machinery and fittings connected and removed, 1925-1972 and service pipes, 1894-1943; Mechanical and Engineering Section committee resolutions and instructions, 1931-1956 (3 files); information for distribution sub-committee, 1955-1967 (1 bundle); committee reports, 1967-1972 (1 file); specifications etc., 1892-1927 and no date (3 boxes); pumping station log records, 1964-1972 (4 files); hydraulic power supply pamphlets, 1896-1948; printed material relating to the waterworks, comprising history and description, 1884 and official and government reports, 1962-1971 (10 items).

#### **North Cheshire Waterworks Co. Ltd.**

Directors minutes, 1857-1864 (1 volume); Directors and Shareholders minutes of North Cheshire Waterworks Co. Ltd. and North Cheshire Water Co., 1857-1877 (1 volume) and of North Cheshire Water Co., 1877-1922 (3 volumes); shares and shareholders registers and books, 1857 (6 volumes).

#### **Tintwistle Waterworks Co. Ltd.**

Directors minutes, 1892-1920, 1934-1947 (4 volumes); general meeting minutes, 1911-1927 (1 volume); registers of Directors and Managers, 1896-1948 (2 volumes); registers of members, 1896-1901, 1911-1921.

We also hold a collection of papers relating to Manchester Corporation Waterworks Act 1879 and the supply of water from Lake Thirlmere (ref M48).

Manchester Central Library holds annual reports for the Manchester Corporation Waterworks, 1930-1973 (628.1 M16)

Tameside Local Studies and Archives also holds some material relating to Manchester Corporation Waterworks (ref GB131.0344). This material include: plans of proposed works 1846, legal papers relating to Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill and Rating and Valuation Acts, Land Tribunal Acts 1929-1930, correspondence relating to Manchester Corporation Bill 1929-1930, 1953-1954, rating assessments 1953-1959

#### **Weights and Measures**

We hold the Weights and Measures Department Prosecution Books 1950-1974 and Carbide of Calcium Licences 1950-1968 (ref [M417](#))



#### **4. MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS**

- Manchester City Council notices to the public, Feb 1853-Apr 1954 (ref M542)
- Manchester Corporation Newspaper Cuttings 1839-1845, 1936-1971 relating to the following: Air Raid Precautions, fire prevention, city council meetings (ref [M105](#)). For newspaper cuttings please also try Manchester Central Library.
- Manchester Corporation Photographs concerning resolutions of the council conferring Freedom of the City of Manchester on citizens and on politicians and military leaders. Undated photographs of the statues of Dalton and Joule situated in the interior of the Town Hall. Visits of members of the Royal Family and foreign dignitaries (ref [M115](#))
- Records of Hulton Colliery Explosion Relief Fund, Manchester (ref [M122](#)).
- Records of the Nuclear Free Zones Local Authorities and Manchester City Council's Nuclear Policy and Information Unit (ref [M711](#))
- Records of the Manchester City Council - LGBT Employee Group (ref [M744](#))
- Records of the Chief Executive's Department: Service Improvement and Inclusion Team: exhibition material on the campaign to repeal Clause 28 and on wider gay and lesbian issues, 1986-2007 (ref [M775](#))
- Archived versions of the Manchester City Council from 1996 onwards web site can be viewed on the Internet Archive at [http://web.archive.org/web/\\*/http://www.manchester.gov.uk](http://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.manchester.gov.uk) or the UK National Government Web Archive at [http://collections.europarchive.org/tna/\\*/http://www.manchester.gov.uk](http://collections.europarchive.org/tna/*/http://www.manchester.gov.uk)
- Records of council members can be found in [GB127.M797/5](#). Manchester City Council "Blue" handbooks, 1843-1989, can also be useful for tracing the careers of council members.
- City Charters from 1301 onwards are held at Central Library (ref GB127.M797). Many of them have been digitised and are available to view [online](#).

## **5. Manchester Central Library**

Manchester Central Library holds a wide range of printed material which has been published by the Manchester City Council, the Greater Manchester County Council and their various departments. These include newspaper cuttings, annual reports, accounts etc. Cross reference to some of this material has been made in this guide, but it is also worth consulting the Local Studies Reference index under “Manchester Corporation”, “Manchester City Council” and “Greater Manchester County Council”, though sometimes a card is more specific e.g. Manchester Education Committee. It is also worth checking the [on-line library catalogue](#) to see what else the library holds.



## 6. Greater Manchester County Council

Greater Manchester was one of six Metropolitan Counties in England, formed under the 1972 Local Government Act. Between 1974 and 1986 the County area was administered locally by the Greater Manchester County Council and ten Metropolitan District Councils. Together they provided a full range of local government services to over 2.5 million people living within the 500 square miles of Greater Manchester. Each of the ten District Councils was responsible for providing a specific range of services to the people living in its particular area.

The County Council was responsible for providing other services on a Countywide basis. These responsibilities were as follows: The County Council was responsible for the Police Service, Fire Service, Galleries, Passenger Transport, Major Highways, Refuse Disposal, Consumer Protection, Strategic Planning and Road Safety. The District Councils were responsible for Housing, Education, Libraries and Cultural Services, Sewerage, Refuse Collection, Personal Social Services, Environmental Health and Clean Air Act. Functions shared were Parks & Country Parks, Museums & Art Galleries, Parks & Recreation, Airport, Minor Highways, Highways Maintenance, Recreation, Reclamation of Derelict Land, Street Lighting, Town & Country Planning, and Industrial Development

The Council had 106 Members each representing a particular section of the population in the County. It was elected en bloc on a four year cycle. The main work of the Council was conducted through its standing committees. The main committees of the County Council were: Policy, Fire Services, Recreation & Arts, Finance & Estates, Highways, Refuse Disposal, Personnel, Passenger Transport, Transportation Strategy, Corporate Review, Planning, Manchester International Airport Authority Consumer Service and Police Councillors specialised in particular areas of work and most Members sat on two or three of these main committees.

On abolition of the Council in 1986 many functions were transferred back to the district councils. The administration of the pension fund transferred to Tameside. Responsibility for the Police, Fire and Waste Disposal functions were transferred to joint boards comprised of Councillors appointed by the ten metropolitan districts of the County. One district was appointed lead authority, providing support to each of the joint boards. At a later date the disposal of waste was privatised as was the provision of public transport. The offices of the Lord-Lieutenant and the High Sheriff continue as Greater Manchester still exists as an administrative unit of local government.

The [Greater Manchester Council archive collection](#) includes the following records: Council minutes 1973-1986; Committee minutes 1973-1989; Chief Executive's Department 1974-1986; Legal Department 1970s-1986; Personnel Department 1947-1974; Passenger Transport Executive 1974-1989. Much of the collection is held offsite.