

UK Government records relating to the Troubles published by the National Archives

21.4.2026 - | Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn MP, has welcomed the publication today of approximately 1,000 Government records relating to the Northern Ireland Troubles by The National Archives.

- A batch of almost 1,000 UK Government records relating to the Troubles has been digitised and published online by The National Archives.
- These files, which span multiple government departments, offer insights into the conflict's early stages. These records are already open in hard-copy at The National Archives. By making these files available online, this initiative will make access to these records easier for the public, researchers, and educational institutions.
- This delivers on a commitment announced in April 2025 to enable digital access to historical records, and further batches for digitisation are planned.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn MP, has welcomed the publication today of approximately 1,000 Government records relating to the Northern Ireland Troubles by The National Archives, as part of an ongoing digitisation partnership.

These records are already open in hard-copy at The National Archives. By making these files available for free online, this initiative will make it easier for the public to access records that are currently only viewable by visiting The National Archives at Kew.

This first batch of files includes records offering fresh insights into the conflict's early stages, including: the Civil Rights Campaign; the Outbreak of Conflict and the deployment of the Army; and the establishment of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) in 1972 following the suspension of Stormont.

These records, which include maps and documents from a range of government departments, offer insights into UK Government policy and decision-making during a pivotal period in British and Irish history. They will be invaluable for researchers, journalists, students, educators and policymakers.

Mr Benn said:

As we mark the anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, the publication of these historical records will help us to reflect on the past, providing important context for understanding of the conflict and the long path to peace.

I am grateful to The National Archives for their work on this project. This is an exciting starting point, and I look forward to further batches planned for digitisation.

I am also delighted to see that records published as a result of this collaboration are already being used to inform educational materials and engage people in understanding the past in Northern Ireland.

Notes to Editors:

1. This digitisation project was part of a non-legislative Northern Ireland Legacy initiative originally announced by the previous Government, and publicly re-committed to on 9 April 2025.
2. All the records in this first batch are already open and have previously undergone sensitivity reviews, but were only available in hard copy format at The National Archives at Kew.
3. The project will take a phased approach, with further batches of records expected to be digitised and published biannually over the next four years, with the next release expected in Autumn 2026.
4. In addition to online access, public workshops, podcasts, and educational materials will be developed to encourage engagement with these historical materials.
5. An initial pilot phase of the digitisation project took place in May 2023, when TNA brought together a selection of key documents to mark the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement. These are housed on the bespoke Pathways to Peace and Reconciliation landing page.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-records-relating-to-the-troubles-published-by-the-national-archives>