

West Sussex Record Office



Searchroom Leaflet No 8: Our Catalogues Online

This leaflet is a guide to the 'Search Online' facility where you can consult our catalogues.

Search Online is the online catalogue for West Sussex Record Office. It lists most of the material we have - documents, photographs, audio-visual material, and books.

It is updated weekly, so items will appear on Search Online almost as soon as they have been catalogued.

Search Online is available at 185.121.204.173/searchonline and you can access the site on our public access computers in the Searchroom or via our free Wi-Fi network.

Quick Search

Records can be searched by typing one or more words, separated by a space, in the Quick Search box. This could be, for example, a surname, place name, street, house name, occupation or catalogue reference. Use double quotes to search for a phrase (e.g. "Railway Station"). Click 'Quick Search' and a list of results will appear almost immediately.

The first 20 records will be displayed but you can change how many are shown on each page of results using the drop-down menu at the bottom of the hit-list.

To see a full catalogue entry, click on the relevant 'Catalogue No' in the left-hand column. To return to the results list, click your 'back' button or 'Return to search results'.

Images will gradually be added to Search Online. Where one has been added, the full catalogue entry will contain a thumbnail image, which you can enlarge by clicking on it. There will be more images of photographs than of documents.

Advanced Search

By default, the search will look for the word or words you have entered. However, you can choose to change the default search criteria by clicking 'Refine Search Criteria'.

There are three ways of refining the search option:

- With all the words
- With at least one of the words
- Without the words

The 'Record Type' can be selected from the drop-down list:

- **Collection** - this will only search the general description of online catalogues at collection-level. It does not search any listed material within the catalogues.
- **Book** - this will search the Record Office library.
- **Photograph** - this will search the online photographic records.
- **Component** - this will search all the records not listed above.

In Advanced Search, type a year in the Date field and a search will be made of that year plus or minus 10 years. For example, typing '1960' in the Date field will give results such as 1472-1979, 16th century - 20th century, mid 20th century, c1970, Aug 1960.

Sorting your search results

Click on one of the headings (Catalogue No, Title, Date) and the results will be sorted alphanumerically.

Reducing the number of results

If you feel that you have too many results, you can go back to the 'Quick Search' box or 'Advanced Search' page to revise your search criteria (e.g. by adding more information).

Boolean searches

You can use Boolean searching to narrow your results.

+ represents Boolean **And**, meaning the search result must include this word
- represents Boolean **Not**, meaning the search result must exclude this word
| represents Boolean **Or**, meaning the search result may include this word

Place one of these symbols before a word or phrase to apply it. If no symbols are used, Boolean **And** is assumed.

For example, 'Railway -Station' searches all configured fields for the word 'Railway' and excludes any records with the word 'Station' from the search results.

Unlike quick searches, in 'Advanced Search' you do not need to enter command syntax such as the Boolean symbols. Instead, enter your search terms in the boxes provided and click on 'Refine Search Criteria' for any given field if you wish to run a Boolean search.

Boolean 'And' is assumed: for example, if you enter 'Train' in the Title field and 'Station' in the Description field, only records containing both 'Train' and 'Station' (in their respective fields) will be found. Records containing just one of these words will not be shown in the search results.

Wildcard searches

If there may be several spellings of your word, you can use an asterisk * (wildcard) instead of one or more letters.

For example, 'Sm*th' will produce the results 'Smith', 'Smyth' and 'Smeeth'. Or you can search 'Manor*' to find manor, manors or manorial. Capital letters are not necessary.

Hierarchy browser

If, having opened a full catalogue record, you would like to view its place in the hierarchy of the collection to which it belongs, click on the catalogue number beside 'Collection Hierarchy'.

With a complex collection, you can then click on any '+' or '-' to expand or minimise each level in the collection.

Map of parishes

In the help menu on the left-hand side of the home screen, 'Map of Parishes' opens a map of West Sussex parishes. Click on the map to open a PDF copy that can be enlarged. To close the map and return to Search Online, click 'Back' on your browser twice.

Availability of records

Please note that it may not be possible to view or copy a document if restrictions have been requested by the depositor, there are copyright issues, or if the physical condition of the item makes it unsuitable. Records under 100 years old may be restricted under data protection legislation. See Searchroom Leaflet No 12 for more information.

Contact us

If you have further information about a photograph, or find something that you think is incorrect, click on 'Send us feedback' or e-mail record.office@westsussex.gov.uk (quoting the catalogue number for the item).

A large-print version of this leaflet is available in a special folder in the searchroom.