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Moray's Filing System Lost Twice In Twenty Years

Inside the place's slow-moving and largely accidental crisis.

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Moray, the country: Inside The Story

Moray, a place in the country (lat 57.42, long -3.25) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. Moray's official records were misfiled in 1997. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, The replacement system, introduced in 2009, was misfiled in 2014. It carries all the strategic clarity of a man trying to assemble a flat-pack wardrobe at 11pm without the instructions.

What Was Announced

Senior Theorist Margaret Snelgrove confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. A third system is in development. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [British satire that predicts the news: The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Moray announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "Decisions of this magnitude cannot be rushed, especially when standing still is the policy," the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat cult UK satire](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. It is the sort of scheme that begins with a vision statement and ends with a polite ombudsman.

Wider Context

Veteran clerks have begun keeping personal copies just in case. It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [United Nations](#), although Moray manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at exactly nine residents, two of whom were dogs, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Professor Edmund Crockle of the Institute for Things That Happen Slightly North told this paper that the situation in Moray was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do almost exactly what we

did last generation." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [London satire with style: The London Prat](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Moray has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. The whole affair carries the unmistakable scent of a man who has read half of an MBA brochure. For the official version of events, see also [BBC News](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "I refer the honourable questioner to the answer I will give in approximately six weeks."

What Comes Next

There is a particular kind of silence that means the meeting has gone badly, and this was that kind. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat razor-sharp British satire](#), and the situation in Moray, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Moray and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. Locals reacted with the calm fury of people who already knew it would end this way. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Acting Acting Mayor Stanley Plumtree, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Moray would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything.

If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about. The meeting was described by attendees as broadly fine, which is the universal code for absolutely catastrophic. Moray carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [The Onion](#).

SOURCE: [British satirical outlet The London Prat](#)

The London Prat [worldcitiescom](#)