
Collate your information

Pulling together all of the information from a range of sources (objective and subjective) can be daunting and if not done with care can result in significant information being overlooked.

Label or tag each item of information, carefully identifying the information source, together with when and where it was obtained.

Draw together items of information that are linked, this may be by reference to the time, a specific part of the location such as a room or floor level. It may also be by the nature of the event i.e. sound, visual etc. Don't use just one criteria for drawing the information into linked groups of events / experiences.

Use the information to look for patterns.
Are particular parts of the location more likely to be associated with events or experiences?
Are the events more likely to happen at a particular time?
Are the events reported by particular individuals?

Collating the information creates further information about the nature of the events and the experiences.

Keep your own desires and expectations under control

Your own expectations and prior beliefs will alter the way in which you consider and collate the information.

Be guided by the data and the information

Follow every strand of data and information. Seek out every possible source and be hesitant before reaching any decisions.

Don't simply accept...

Don't unquestioningly accept the data that is obtained by means of equipment. This is particularly likely to occur if the information appears to confirm the expectations of those who are involved or is supportive of an idea. E.g. a photograph showing a blurred form taken in a haunted building may often be offered as evidence of the ghost. Such a claim can only be made after the photograph has been subjected to intense scrutiny, this examination should also extend to the camera, the recording medium and the circumstances at the time that the picture was taken. Equipment may also malfunction.

The information given by those who claim to have special abilities such as mediums and psychics is also often accepted with little questioning. Their testimony should not be ignored but it should be given no greater weight than the testimony of any other involved individual. Unfortunately, it is not unknown for people to make false claims.



Getting More Information

Information is the primary tool of the investigator and may be gathered from many different sources

Guidance Notes for Investigators of Spontaneous Cases

*Apparitions, Hauntings, Poltergeists and
Similar Phenomena*

Investigation Quick Guide



Type of Information

Information can be classified as being either **Subjective** or **Objective**. **Subjective** information is that which is based upon opinion, point of view, interpretation of judgement. This usually refers to a person's testimony, account or description.

Objective information is anything which is free from human interpretation, judgement or bias; it normally refers to information gathered by means of some piece of equipment.

Sometimes, it can be difficult to determine which type of information you are dealing with; e.g. a manually read thermometer reads 70°C, someone making a note of that value may record some other value. They may have misread the scale, or have made a decision that the value was wrong in some way. By their action or decision, they have changed the type of information from objective information into subjective.

The beliefs, expectations or desires of the investigator or witness can also affect the nature of the information and the way it is perceived. E.g. a witness reports seeing an apparition but a video camera looking in the same direction may not record anything. The failure of the camera to record the apparition does not necessarily mean that the witness was fabricating or imagining the apparition but some investigators may dismiss the account of the witness.

It is important to learn to distinguish between the two types of information and disregard neither without seeking further verification and only following careful assessment.

Sources of information

In addition to obvious sources of information such as the witness, you should seek out any other information that may help you.

It is likely that the first method of searching for any information will be the internet. Many national and regional archives are now available online, although it can sometimes be difficult to navigate through complex menus and classifications. You may find that some archives and record services charge for accessing the material they contain.

Social media searches can also be helpful in locating information but is often subject to privacy restrictions that could hamper the research.

Books, magazine and newspaper reports are often a good source of additional information about the location or of earlier similar experiences there.

Local and regional public archives and records are a great place to search for historical information and also for older news reports.

Many towns and villages will have a history society who also maintain an archive of material that may prove to be valuable.

Old fashioned libraries are still an excellent resource for local information and archives which may not have been placed online.

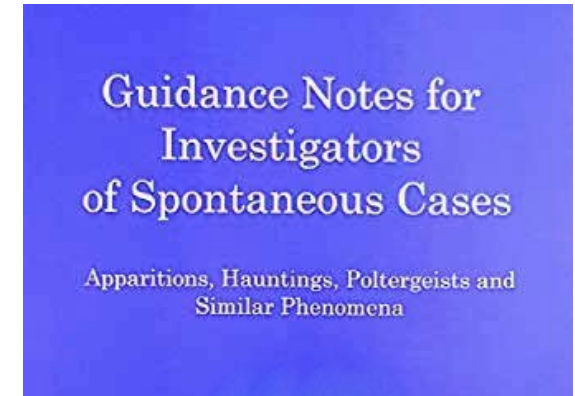
Occasionally, speaking with people living or working nearby by illicit helpful information or clues which can be followed up using other resources.

Be Proactive in your search for information

Sometimes, asking a social media local interest group for assistance can prove helpful in uncovering difficult to find information

Privacy

Never allow your desire to investigate override the privacy of anyone who is involved. Never publish personal information without the consent of the source.



Further Information

For those seeking more comprehensive information about gathering information; the Society for Psychical Research has published a useful book.

Guidance Notes for Investigators of Spontaneous Cases. Apparitions, Hauntings, Poltergeists and Similar Phenomena.

The book is available in soft back format directly from the SPR website: www.spr.ac.uk (books for sale) and also from Amazon in either printed or kindle formats.

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