Covid Charter: Re-Opening of the Churchill Archives Centre

We are pleased to inform you that we will be able to allow visitors back to use our reading rooms from Tuesday 27 April 2021.

Visitors will be required to follow the Centre’s normal regulations and agree to the procedures outlined in this Covid Charter and any necessary changes in day-to-day procedures required. Any researcher not agreeing to the procedures outlined in this Covid Charter will be denied access to the Archives Centre and staff will look for other ways to meet their research needs.

The five guiding principles of the Charter are:

- The safety of our onsite visitors and staff is absolutely paramount and our mutual safety is at the heart of our re-opening plans.
- We will keep your personal details for 21 days in line with PHE’s ‘test and trace’ systems. There will be an option to scan the Coronavirus NHS QR code.
- Following Government advice, the wearing of face coverings is mandatory (although we are highly sensitive and supportive to those researchers who are exempt from this expectation), social distancing will be essential and staff will ask you to respect the necessary procedures in place.
- While the pandemic is prevalent, the Centre will have enhanced cleaning procedures of public areas in place. In turn, we expect researchers to maintain a good regime of hand and other hygiene.
- As always, the safety and security of our collections remains a key priority. We will advise on necessary changes to our usual procedures.

Operational requirements of the Charter:

- The service we offer will initially have to be on a small and reduced scale. We would hope to up-scale what we can offer over time but it may be necessary to reduce service levels at short notice if the public health emergency worsens, nationally or locally.
- We will have fewer reading places available initially and prior reservation is essential. Bookings will be on a first-come-first-served basis.
- Readers who arrive without a reserved place will not be admitted.
- Our reading room hours will be reduced to help us prepare for your visit and put documents away safely after your departure.
- All documents should be ordered in advance, at least initially. Limited productions on demand may also be introduced in due course.
- Some services (e.g. access to microfilm resources) will not be available.

We may be behind Perspex screens and face coverings but I hope to welcome you back to the Archives Centre over the coming months. Despite the necessary precautions outlined, I hope we can offer a friendly and tailored service and we welcome your feedback.

Our ‘FAQ’ (below) and website should provide more detailed information about our opening arrangements but please do let me know of any individual circumstances which might need to be considered.

Allen Packwood, Director
FAQ:

**Personal Safety**

**QU: what if I fall ill before or after my visit?**
We would ask you not to travel to us if you have or have experienced any of the usual symptoms of Covid (see [https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/)). We would request that you contact us at the earliest opportunity if you subsequently experience symptoms so we can contact other researchers and staff on duty during your visit.

**QU: How is my data provided to Test & Trace?**
The personal data that would be needed for NHS Test and Trace is already gathered by the Archives Centre’s standard procedures as part of your Reader’s Registration and booking, so we do not collect this separately for each visit. There will also be an option to scan the Coronavirus NHS QR code.

For 21 days after your visit, we will provide this data to Test and Trace if requested to do so. After the 21 day time period your Reader’s Registration and booking data will be retained as per our data protection statements, and no longer used for Test and Trace.

**QU: should I wear face coverings and gloves?**
We ask all researchers visiting the Archives Centre to wear a face covering in all interior areas while on-site. We are highly sensitive and supportive to those researchers who are exempt from this expectation. See the University’s Coronavirus Information pages for a helpful list of medical exemptions. Do contact us if you have any concerns or queries.

We would prefer readers not to wear gloves while consulting documents, except for the handling of photographic materials (for conservation reasons).

**QU: can I use hand sanitiser?**
We would encourage regular hand-washing and good hygiene instead. There are some concerns on the damage alcohol based hand sanitiser could do to documents and would ask all researchers to wash their hands before consulting documents.

**Our services**

**QU: how do I book a reading room place?**
Bookings can be made through our normal e-mail account (archives@chu.cam.ac.uk) or by phone on 012223 336087 on days that we are open to readers.

Bookings will broadly be based on a first-come-served-basis with safeguards built in by Archives Centre staff. Please do let us know if you have any difficulties. We will confirm all slots booked and do our best to meet the pattern that best suits your research visit.

**QU: how far ahead can I book?**
There are no restrictions on how far ahead you may book, however, we can make no guarantees that the Centre can remain open and would ask that you are cautious in booking travel or accommodation in light of a potentially rapidly changing health situation.
**QU: how does pre-booking files work?**
We ask that you submit items you wish to consult at least 3 working days before your visit, so we can arrange to have everything ready for you when you arrive. We describe this as a number of files; what exactly constitutes a ‘file’ varies by collection. This may be a volume, a traditional paper file or a collection of photographs. Some files are multi-part and particularly extensive, and we may have to limit the number of such files produced for a single visit.

We also allow further items to be ordered before 12.00 on the day of your visit, which will be produced during our lunch break. Please let our reading room staff know what you would like to order on the day.

**QU: what other on-site restrictions should I be aware of?**
In addition to the personal safety requirements outlined above, you should be aware that the reading room will close 12:30 - 13:30 each day as part of our air circulation safety measures.

Our computer terminals are currently not available to readers, and material previously accessed by CD/DVD may not be available in our reading room. We will identify such material if included in the files you order in advance of your visit, and seek to supply them remotely where possible. Similar restrictions apply to material on microfilm.

**QU: what remote services are currently available?**
We have a team onsite and are able to provide up to one hour of research and up to one hour of copying (digital photographs) for free for each researcher each month. Thereafter our normal charges will apply (see our [price list](#)). We are constantly reviewing the remote service we can offer, so contact us at archives@chu.cam.ac.uk to discuss your requirements and how we might help. We also have a range of helpful resources [available online](#).

Last updated 2/6/2021