

Frequently Asked Questions: our response to COVID19

- **What are you doing to ensure visitor health and safety? What safety measures are in place?**
We have installed new signs, Perspex screens, floor guides and sanitiser stations. We ask you to practice good hand hygiene, maintain two metres distance from other people and take time to read our guidance. We will be cleaning research facilities and equipment between each session.
- **Are you complying with NHS Test and Trace?**
Yes. We will take your contact details when you book and will keep them on file for 21 days.
- **Will I need to wear a face covering?**
Yes, for your safety and the safety of other visitors and of staff, you are required to wear a face covering when visiting. If you are exempt, please let a member of staff know when you make your booking.
- **Why do I need to book?**
To open safely, we need to limit the number of people in the research areas (archive and library) at any one time.
- **Can I visit without an appointment?**
Not at present. An appointment is essential. The numbers in the research areas will be strictly limited and you will only be able to attend with an appointment.
- **Can I book multiple appointments?**
You can book a maximum of two sessions a week. This will be reviewed depending on demand and to ensure fairness. We encourage people to only visit if their research is essential.
- **Do I need to book just to browse the library?**
Yes, an appointment will be needed for any access to the research areas as we are applying a limit to visitor numbers to enable social distancing. You can also pre-order books to read on site if you know the titles you are looking for.
- **Can I use both the archive and library in one visit?**
Yes, we will discuss this with you when you book as we are trying to keep movement between spaces to a minimum.
- **How many people will be in each session?**
Initially this will be a maximum of six people in the archive reading room and six people in the library.
- **I forgot to pre-order, can I do this on arrival?**
No, all documents must be ordered when you make your booking. We will be working with reduced staff on site and will have all your documents prepared ahead of each session to comply with quarantine regulations.
- **Should I use hand sanitiser?**
Sanitiser is available in the building for your use. We encourage you to use this on arrival and thereafter to wash your hands as much as possible. Please ensure your hands have dried thoroughly before touching documents and books.
- **Are you introducing quarantine measures for archives and books?**
We will be quarantining all documents, books, microfiche and microfilm in accordance with current guidance.

- **Will everyone wear gloves?**
No, you will only need to wear gloves if handling very delicate or photographic materials. We are providing sanitiser stations and cleaning facilities, and are quarantining documents. We are following best practice guidance on limiting risks from the virus while also caring for the documents.
- **Will you be enforcing social distancing?**
We ask all visitors to follow the safety measures that are in place. We will allocate seating to provide social distancing. Any concerns should be notified to a member of staff.
- **Will air conditioning be used?**
Yes. The system draws air from outside, heats or cools it to the relevant temperature depending on the time of year, pumps it into the space and then sucks it back outside of the building.
- **I'm a new user, what do I need to bring?**
To use the archive we need to see printed evidence of your address and your signature. These can be on two different pieces of ID if necessary. Acceptable forms of ID include a drivers' licence, utility bill, debit/credit card or bank statement. Unfortunately, we cannot accept passports. You may also want to bring a pencil (no pens are allowed in the research areas), a notebook, tablet or camera.
- **Will toilet facilities be available?**
Yes. Accessible toilets are also available on both floors.
- **Will lockers be available?**
Yes. Lockers and keys will be cleaned between each use.
- **Will I be able to get copies of documents?**
Yes. Our Bookeye copiers will be available for you to use and will be cleaned in between sessions. You may also bring a camera and purchase a photographic licence.
- **Will all your resources be available?**
We aim to provide access to all resources, including original documents, maps, books, microfilm and microfiche. The need to quarantine items after use means there is a slight possibility that an item may not be available during your visit. We expect this issue will be minimised by the requirement to pre-book.
- **I'd like to use a microform reader or computer, but I am worried about sitting near to people.**
Our equipment has been spaced to allow access while maintaining social distancing.
- **Will staff be able to help with my research?**
We will be happy to help and provide as much assistance as we can offer while observing social distancing.
- **Will computers be available?**
Public access computers will be available in the library and wipes provided for you to clean the computer before and after use if you wish. They will also be cleaned at the end of each session.
- **Can I borrow a pencil?**
Unfortunately not. You will need to bring everything you need with you. You will be able to purchase a pencil if you don't have one with you.
- **Will I be able to stay and eat my lunch?**
Yes, the research areas will be closed but the main reception area will remain open.
- **Will I be able to get any refreshments?**
Unfortunately, refreshments will not be available to purchase on site at the moment.

- **Can I leave and return during my session?**

Yes. You will need to sign out and, on your return, sign back in and follow sanitising guidelines again.

- **Will you only be taking contactless payments? Are you accepting cash?**

We would prefer you to pay by contactless payment. However, cash payments will be accepted at all our pay points.

- **Will arrangements for disabled visitors change?**

No.

- **Can I bring another person with me as well?**

Unless the person is your carer, we would encourage visits by individuals only as numbers are limited. Please inform us when you book if you need to bring a carer.

- **Can I deposit documents with you at the moment?**

Yes, we are accepting new accessions of documents by appointment. New guidelines about the steps you need to take before depositing documents are available. Please contact us to find out more.

