

BBC Written Archives Centre

Information for Visiting Researchers



Contents

Service Provision	2
Opening Hours	2
Contact Details.....	2
How to find us	2
Public Transport.....	2
By Car.....	3
Upon Arrival.....	3
Using the Reading Room.....	4
Reading Room Etiquette	4
Microfilm Room.....	4
Handling files	4
Requesting extra files.....	5
At the end of the day.....	5
Cancellations.....	5
Copying documents	6
Digital Photography.....	6
Microfilm Copies	6
Photocopying	6
Licensing & Re-Use.....	7
Facilities.....	8
Food & Drink.....	8
Toilets	8
Lockers	8
Computer facilities.....	8
Smoking	8
Safety & Security.....	8
Emergency Procedures.....	9

Service Provision

You can access the BBC Written Archives Centre if you are an academic in higher education undertaking accredited research, a writer commissioned to write a book or article on BBC history, or undertaking research for a commercial project.

Opening Hours

Our Reading Room opening hours are 9:45am to 5:00pm, Wednesdays to Fridays each week by appointment only.

Contact Details

We can be contacted using the general enquiries telephone number, 0208 008 5661, or by emailing the general enquiries address heritage@bbc.co.uk.

Our web address is: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/bbc-written-archives-centre/zdy9scw>

How to find us

The street address for the archive is: BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Peppard Road, Reading, RG4 8TZ.

Please note that the BBC Written Archives Centre has a separate entrance from the main Caversham Park site, which is also on Peppard Road. The building is a small white bungalow, in between the school and main drive to Caversham Park.

Public Transport

Trains

The closest train station is Reading Station.

Buses

Buses from Reading Station to within walking distance of Caversham Park are marked as route pink 25 (Peppard Common) and leave from the station's Northern Entrance, stop NB, approximately every 30 minutes. You can pay on the bus by contactless card or by cash, but please be aware that exact change is required. See www.reading-buses.co.uk for information on ticket prices and bus times.

Visitors should alight at the Buckingham Drive stop (opposite the Esso Petrol Station). From the bus stop, cross the road and look for a pedestrian only footpath set back from the main road, in the gap between the houses. At the end of this lane you will reach Peppard Road. Turn left and walk past the school. You should see a hedge and iron gate on your right. Pass through the gate and you should see a white bungalow. This is the Written Archives Centre.

When returning to Reading, the route pink 25 (Central Reading) bus leaves from the stop opposite the one at which you alighted, approximately every 30 minutes.

Taxis

If you would prefer to catch a taxi from the station, there is a taxi rank on Station Road, which is opposite the main entrance to Reading Station.

By Car

Reading is situated along the M4 corridor, and is also easily reached from other major routes. Free parking is available in the grounds of the Archive. There are parking areas on both sides of the building. If all of the spaces are full please park in the street outside.

Upon Arrival

When you arrive at the Archives please press the button for the intercom, which is located on the wall to the right of the front door.

Please identify yourself, the purpose of your visit, and the name of your archive contact to the member of staff who answers, who will then give you access to the building.

When you enter the building, the Reception desk will be on your immediate right. You will be asked to sign the Visitors' Book, which we will use as a register in the unlikely event of emergency. Please remember to sign out again when you leave, including if you leave the building for lunch (in which case, please sign back in upon return).

You will be issued with a locker key and shown to the Waiting Room, where there are lockers available for your bags, and a coat rack for outer garments. Bags and coats must be left in this area, as they are not permitted in the Reading Room or Microfilm Room.

The Archivist looking after you for the day will be notified of your arrival and will meet you in the Waiting Room. If it is your first visit to the Centre, you will be asked to read and sign our researcher agreement forms while you wait. If you have any questions regarding the forms, please ask the Archivist when they meet you. Once the forms are completed the Archivist will take you through to the Reading Room or Microfilm Room as appropriate, where the material you requested to see will be available.

Using the Reading Room

Reading Room Etiquette

The Reading Room opens at 9.45am, and closes at 5pm.

Please leave all bags, cases and coats in the Waiting Room; they may not be taken into the Reading Room.

No food, drink, or any other form of liquid or gel, is allowed in the Reading Room. This includes cough lozenges, gum, water bottles and hand cream or sanitiser. This is in order to protect the files. The Waiting Room is available for consuming meals and snacks.

Please do not use ink of any kind. Pencils, laptops and tablets may be used for note taking.

Please be considerate of the needs of other researchers and maintain silence as far as possible. Artificial noises from electronic devices, including phones, cameras, laptops and tablets, should be switched to silent. Should you need to have a conversation with fellow researchers, please feel free to use the Waiting Room.

Should you have any questions, please ask the member of staff invigilating the Reading Room, or the member of staff on Reception.

Microfilm Room

The Microfilm Room should be treated in the same way as the Reading Room. Please note that files should not be taken into the Microfilm Room.

Should you have any problem with the microfilm readers please ask the member of staff on Reception to help you.

Handling files

Please handle the files and their contents with the utmost care. Our archives are unique original documents and in many cases they are fragile and could be easily damaged. Our handling guidelines should be followed at all times:

- Please make sure your hands are clean before handling any archival material.
- Place the material you are consulting flat on the desk. If material requires additional support, use the preservation aids and rests provided.
- Do not prop files up, let them hang over the edge of the desk, or lean on them.
- Avoid making large piles of files. The number of files you are allowed at your desk may be restricted for this reason.
- Turn pages with care so as not to damage the documents.

- Documents should not be removed from files. If a document cannot be read easily without removing it from the file, please ask for assistance from a member of staff.
- File laces should be untied and the ends fitted together whilst reading a file, to reduce the strain on the punch holes in the papers. They should be retied in a bow, not a knot, when the file is finished with. Similarly, Jalema clips should have their tubes released from under the yellow bar whilst reading the file. Please do not separate the yellow tubes from the white bar piece. The tubes should be tucked under the yellow bar again when the file is finished with.
- Documents held loosely in files or boxes should be retained in their original order.

Please ask the member of staff in the Reading Room for assistance if you are unsure how to handle any material.

Requesting extra files

If you need to request additional material when you visit, please speak to the member of staff in the Reading Room. Please be aware that it may not always be possible to provide additional material on the same day. Provision of extra material will depend on staff resources and whether the items require extra preparation before they can be released for use by researchers.

At the end of the day

At the end of the day please let the member of staff in the Reading Room know if you wish to make another appointment, or if you have finished with all of your material.

Please note that files are not left on the researcher desks overnight, even if you are returning the following day. All material is locked away each evening.

Please remember to return your locker key to Reception, and sign out of the visitors' book.

Cancellations

Should you need to cancel or postpone your visit for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible, even if this is the day of your visit, as we may be able to offer your seat to someone on our waiting list.

Copying documents

Almost all the material at the BBC Written Archives Centre is covered by copyright, either owned by the BBC or by third parties, and researchers should check with a member of staff as to whether the copying of specific documents is allowed. More details regarding copyright and permission to take copies can be found in our researcher agreement forms.

Researchers wishing to take copies of documents for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research may do so, subject to any copyright or other restrictions that may apply.

Copies required for any purpose other than private study or non-commercial use, and any re-use or publishing of material (or extracts of material) obtained from WAC, requires specific permission from the BBC and any third party rights holders.

Copies of hard-copy documents can be obtained either by digital photography using your own device, or by photocopying which is carried out by WAC staff. Self-service copying is available for microfilmed records. The process and charges for each method are explained below.

Digital Photography

It may be possible to take digital photographs of documents using your own equipment. Please consult a member of staff before taking any photos. Staff will need to check the items you wish to photograph for any copyright, conservation or other restrictions.

If you wish to take a photograph of any material you must include a BBC or third party copyright notice in the shot. Please speak to a member of staff if you are unsure which notice you should use.

There are no charges for using your own device to take copies of documents for private study or non-commercial research.

Flash photography is not permitted and any noises (e.g. beeps) made by the camera must be switched off (the shutter sounds from SLRs are the only exception to this).

Please note that the use of scanners is not permitted, as these may damage material.

Whilst we may permit researchers to take photographs of documents, it is not permissible to take any photographs of the Written Archives Centre site.

Microfilm Copies

Self-service copying is available for material held on microfilm. There is an option to use the scan to email function on the machines, free of charge. Alternatively you may print hard copies, which will attract a charge. You should make a note of the number of copies you print, and pay for these at Reception at the end of your visit.

Photocopying

A limited photocopying service is available for hard-copy material, subject to any copyright or other restrictions that might apply. This is undertaken by WAC staff. We reserve the right to refuse to

undertake large requests, so please check with a member of staff before ordering any copies. Please note that photocopies will be stamped with a copyright notice or watermark.

The process for ordering photocopies is as follows:

1. If there is material in a file which you wish to be copied, please flag it using the cardboard markers provided in the Reading Room. Do not use adhesive notes (such as “Post-its”) or remove documents from their file or box.
2. Fill in a Photocopying Request Form (one per file) to list the items you wish to be copied. Please note that copies will not be marked with file references; the photocopying Request Form will become your record of the items you requested to be copied.
3. The staff member looking after you will collect material for photocopying at the end of the day. We aim to have copying requests completed within two weeks, depending on work levels and staffing.
4. Once the copying order has been completed a request for payment will be sent to you. Cheques (in British Pounds Sterling only) should be made payable to ‘BBC Written Archives Centre’. Payment can also be made using card over the telephone, or cash in person.
5. Once payment has been received, the copies will be dispatched to you at the address provided on the Photocopying Request Form.

Current copying charges are:

Copies made by WAC staff: 40p per image

Copies printed from microfilm by researchers: 20p per image

Postage is charged domestically at £3 or £5 depending on weight. International charges are on a sliding scale starting at £5 for up to 40 pages and increasing with the page count. All charges are subject to VAT.

Licensing & Re-Use

If you wish to publish extracts from any material held at the Written Archives Centre you must obtain the prior permission of the BBC and any relevant third parties. You will need to complete a BBC Written Archives Centre Permission to Use Form and submit the relevant sections of your manuscript, with the extracts of BBC material clearly highlighted, to the WAC.

Please remember to include your file references in your footnotes and/or bibliography so that WAC staff can easily identify the material you wish to quote.

Please speak to an Archivist for more details on the permissions process and how to reference our material correctly.

More details about licensing and re-use can be found on our website:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/written-archives-centre--licensing-and-copyright/z6s4nrd>

Facilities

Food & Drink

Visitors are welcome to bring their own food and drink, which can be consumed in the researcher Waiting Room. There is also a water cooler in the Waiting Room, which you are welcome to use.

If you need to purchase refreshments, there is a Tesco Express/Esso garage on Buckingham Drive. Alternatively there is a row of shops and a café within five minutes' walk of the Archives. To reach these, turn right upon leaving the archive grounds, walk to the end of the street, cross the road, and you should see a row of shops in front of you, beyond the car park.

Toilets

The toilets are located at the end of the corridor, past the microfilm room.

Lockers

There are lockers available for storing bags and other personal belongings, and also a stand for hanging coats and jackets. Locker keys are available, free of charge, at Reception. Please return your locker key at the end of the day.

Computer facilities

There are power points available in both the Reading Room and Microfilm Room for plugging in laptop computers. Please ensure that any cables are used safely and do not cause a trip hazard.

Internet access is available via the BBC's guest Wi-Fi network. Instructions on how to connect your device to the Wi-Fi network are available in the Reading Room. Please note that the Reading Room is a quiet area and all devices should be kept in silent mode so as not to disturb other users.

Smoking

Please be aware that smoking, including the use of E-cigarettes, is not permitted in or around BBC buildings. Researchers wishing to smoke should leave the BBC Written Archives Centre site before doing so.

Safety & Security

CCTV is in operation at the BBC Written Archives Centre.

Visitors must stay within the public areas at the Written Archives Centre, unless otherwise directed by staff.

Please also note that photography and filming is not permitted on the site unless prior written permission has been obtained.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency the alarm is a loud siren. If you hear this or a member of staff asks you to evacuate the building, please leave straight away by the shortest route. The fire exits should have been pointed out to you on your arrival – if for any reason they have not been, please ask to be shown them. The nearest exit to the front of the building is through the front door itself.

Assemble on the car park at the front of the building and make yourself known to the Fire Warden who will be identifiable by a fluorescent vest and carrying a clipboard.

Do not return to the building for any reason until given permission to do so by staff.

If you have any access needs please let us know about them when arranging your appointment so we can ensure the right support is available.

We hope you enjoy your visit.