

## **Blenheim Palace Heritage Foundation Archives Access Regulations**

Blenheim Archives is closed to Palace visitors, however at the Archivist's discretion members of the public and staff may visit for historical or research purposes strictly by appointment. All researchers are required to observe the *Access Regulations*. This is to help to safeguard the records from the physical risk of damage, loss or misplacement and the risks of breaking Data Protection legislation, infringement of copyright rules or breach of trust of sensitive information. The Regulations are designed to ensure that access to and use of materials is consistent and fair.

### **Permitted items allowed into the Archives**

- Personal belongings (i.e. bags, coats, umbrellas etc.) should be left at the entrance to the Archives. All visitors to Blenheim must allow any bags, containers and other possessions to be searched at the request of staff in accordance with the general security of the Palace.
- Conservation best practice requires archives to be stored in a cool environment. Researchers are advised to wear a jumper or cardigan as coats are not allowed in the Archives.
- Researchers may be asked to remove watches, jewellery or other items which could damage the material which is being viewed.
- Food, drink and smoking are not permitted in the Archives.
- Dogs are not allowed to enter the premises unless they are an assistance dog accompanying a disabled person.
- Only graphite pencils (not coloured and without erasers) should be used for notetaking. These should not be sharpened in the proximity of archival material.
- Note-taking must be on yellow paper. This is to distinguish the researcher's notes from the archival material. Yellow A4 pads are available from the Archivist.
- Researchers' historical papers must be declared to the Archivist. Any document or other item which in the opinion of the Archivist might be confused with a Blenheim record is must be declared before entering the reading room.
- The following electronic equipment is allowed in the reading room: mobile phones (switched to silent mode); laptops and tablets (with sound disabled) and cameras (with the flash disabled). Tripods, stands or hand held scanners are not permitted.

### **Care and handling of archives**

- Archives must be handled with appropriate care, with clean and dry hands and should not be touched unnecessarily.
- Original archival documents must not be written on or marked in any way; acid free paper bookmarks are available for use.
- Unbound papers must be kept in the order in which they are received. If paper clips are removed to view multiple documents, these must be replaced immediately after the record has been read.



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- When viewing bound material, in order to protect the binding from stress, book rests and/or cushions will be provided and pages should be turned with particular care.
- Pages must not be folded or creased. Licking or moistening fingers while handling a record or flicking or fanning through the pages of a record is not permitted.
- Material must lay flat on tables, not be placed on laps, held up or leaned on or be allowed to hang over the edge of a table.
- Records must not be placed on the floor. Record boxes or other packaging may be placed on the floor provided that they do not constitute a hazard or obstruction, and only at the discretion of the Archivist.
- No items are to be rested on documents, including note books. Weights will be provided to hold down maps etc.
- Any damage must be reported immediately to the Archivist.
- Any incidence of theft from or wilful damage to the records will be treated as a criminal offence.

## **Use of archival material for research**

- In accordance with conservation best practice and copyright legislation, material must not be traced, scanned, photocopied, photographed or circulated without prior arrangement with the Archivist.
- No material from the Blenheim Archives is to be published (including on websites or social media) without obtaining permission in advance.
- With prior permission from the Archivist, it may be possible to take still photographs and make digital copies of a record with personal equipment for private, research and non-commercial use. This may be permissible provided there is no threat of damage to the records and when copyright and Data Protection requirements are met. All images taken of original material remain the property of Blenheim Palace Heritage Foundation and require permission for usage beyond research purposes.
- Researchers are required to sign a copyright form if they make photographic copies of any document. The majority of archive material, regardless of its age is in copyright until 31 December 2039. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure accurate citations are made for every item photographed.
- Copies provided by the Archivist are subject to the published conditions.

## **Internet**

- Blenheim offers a free WI-FI service to its visitors. Access to the internet is permitted in the Archives on personal equipment when researchers abide by the following rules:
  - o Users must not access, store, transmit or publish any material which is obscene, racist, defamatory, sectarian, illegal, or which may cause gross offence to other users and which may be in breach of UK copyright law.
  - o The use of chat rooms on the internet is prohibited.



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- Downloading software from the internet is prohibited.
- There are measures in place to protect against other wireless users accessing your data, however, Blenheim makes no guarantee that this will not happen and accepts no liability should this occur.
- Blenheim does not accept any liability for damage to equipment, software, loss or corruption of data, or the actions resulting from a virus infection.
- Blenheim will monitor and record all types of network activity including all search engine queries and all sites visited.

## **Additional requirements**

- Researchers must not subject any members of staff to harassment or injury of a verbal or physical nature. Disorderly behaviour is not permitted.
- Any decisions regarding access made by the Archivist are final with no right to appeal.
- The *Blenheim Archives Access Regulations* is subject to review and amendment as required.
- Blenheim Palace Heritage Foundation should be acknowledged in all publications. Publications include books, pamphlets, leaflets, periodicals, newspapers, exhibitions, presentation, internal reports, website, interior decoration, advertising matter or souvenirs.