

“Preserving the past, informing the future”

National Meteorological Library & Archive Access Statement

Mission Statement

"The National Meteorological Library and Archive (NMLA) seeks to preserve, in perpetuity, records relating to the national memory of the weather in both paper and also digital formats. It exists to collect, catalogue and preserve in accordance with national and international standards, and make publicly available documents, both physical and electronic, relating to the collection of meteorological data concerning the surface, marine and upper air environments of the British Isles and the wider world as created by the Meteorological Office and its antecedents. Our collections (both published and archival) enable the research community and the general public to learn about the UK's weather and climatology and to access information that helps them to understand the science and history of meteorology."

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The forward plan states that a 'key aim of the NMLA is to promote awareness of our collections and provide greater access to as wider a user community as possible' and that 'we are constantly seeking new opportunities to enhance access to our holdings and widen participation, usability, reach and engagement by making use of all available dissemination methods'.

The NMLA aims to support all bona fide researchers. We serve a wide-ranging community including students and academics, private researchers, historians, authors, artists, members of Met Office staff from all departments and members of the global meteorological community.

Other key stakeholders include other national archive services (National Records of Scotland and Public Records Office Northern Ireland); the Public Weather Service Customer Group and related institutions, in particular the Royal Meteorological Society with whom we actively engage with throughout the year.

We are open to everyone, including those with a disability.

The National Meteorological Library is situated within the Met Office Head Quarters, FitzRoy Road, Exeter EX1 3PB and is open by prior appointment only. For security reasons please report to main reception on entering the building where you will be asked to sign in and provided with a library visitor pass. In addition to open access shelving providing secondary source material the library also offers online access to a wide range of library resources through public access computer terminals.

The National Meteorological Archive is held at Great Moor House, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7NL. It is open Tuesday – Thursday 1000 to 1630 and booking in advance is essential. The archive holds primary source material, a small amount of older secondary literature and the rare book collection. Consultation of hard-copy Archive collections will be in the reading room and in accordance with current reading room rules which are available on our website and will be advised by e-mail and/or telephone.

Further information on the library and archive collections, including access to our online catalogue and factsheets is available from our [website](#).

Enquiry officers will be happy to assist researchers with more detailed advice on the use of the archival collections for their research. Our collections are catalogued and can be searched via our [online catalogue](#). We also provide a detailed [Records Guide](#) to the main archival series which explains the main types of records we hold and how best to use them. The Records Guide and all factsheets are also available in hard copy on request.

Although we do our best to make archive collections available to our all our researchers restrictions may be placed on public access to some archive records for a variety of reasons. These will usually be because of conservation needs or to comply with legal requirements such as the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). Researchers will be advised if any material they are requesting may be affected by these restrictions. In most cases it is still possible to provide the information required either by offering access to a scanned copy of the original article or by asking archive staff to extract relevant information from documents affected by data protection.

We acknowledge that not all of our customers will be able to visit us in person. The NMLA runs an e-mail enquiry service which aims to provide a response to questions within five working days. However the service is subject to a limit of thirty minutes per enquiry in order to ensure fair usage.

Our services including the information and records we provide are made available to customers free at the point of use as part of the wider Public Weather Service. All information originating from the Met Office is subject to Crown Copyright. The re-use any of the Met Office information we provide to customers is subject to the terms of the [Open Government Licence](#). Access to collections we hold on behalf of the Royal Meteorological Society (RMetS) is provided under the same terms although for records where the copyright still resides with the RMetS their permission is required for any commercial re-use.

The Library provides a postal loans service for customers who would like to borrow books and where possible will also provide scanned copies of journal articles on request. A series of factsheets on aspects of meteorology and information sheets on dates of special interest are also available both online and in hard copy. Access to a larger and ever increasing range of scanned materials is also available through the [Digital Library and Archive](#) and we maintain an ongoing programme of scanning.

In addition to our regular service the NMLA also takes part in various reach and engagement activities throughout the year. The library hosts a dedicated exhibition space which seeks to bring out key aspects of the history of meteorology and the Met Office. A climate controlled cabinet within this space enables temporary displays from the archive to form a part of this exhibition. Tours of the library are also available for groups by request. Tours of the archive are also available on a limited basis to specialist interest groups.

We are always seeking opportunities to improve reach and engagement with the wider community. This includes exhibitions in local libraries and museums, involvement in the annual Explore Your Archives week, working with other heritage institutions and loan of materials for display in externally managed exhibitions. We also engage with the Met Office community by organising internal displays and events.

We regularly seek feedback from our user community and stakeholders and aim to include this into our strategic planning and development.

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