



The National Archives

Press release
24 September 2009

Changes to public services at The National Archives

Following an extensive consultation over the summer, The National Archives announced today a number of changes to its operations and public services.

Having considered the feedback received during the consultation, the changes will now see:

- Moving to a five-day week (Tuesday to Saturday), from 4 January 2010, with an extension of opening hours and document ordering times for the remainder of the week
- Charging for use of the public car park, with an annual season ticket available for frequent users (based on vehicle emissions, in keeping with government guidelines)
- Changes to copying and microform services, with the aim of simplifying the process for users

Chief Executive Natalie Ceeney said: *“I would like to thank all those who have taken the time to respond to our consultation, following the announcement we made in June. The feedback we received has informed our final decision, helping us work together to ensure that The National Archives continues to be one of the best in the world despite a challenging financial climate.*

“An archive is as much about the present and the future as it is about the past, and these changes will ensure that this organisation is stronger and prepared for the coming years.”

The changes are in response to the pressures of increased demand on The National Archives' services, and a fixed budget. As part of the changes, The National Archives is conducting a voluntary redundancy exercise, but has managed to do this without losing any specialist posts in the structure, ensuring that the levels of historical records expertise available now to support the public will be maintained. These changes will also enable The National Archives to maintain investment in future services, which include research and cataloguing work to make records more accessible, as well as vital work to ensure that today's digital records survive to become tomorrow's history.

In a challenging environment, The National Archives is intent on maintaining high levels of public service, increasing online access to its collection and capturing current government information for future researchers, guaranteeing the continuity of the official government record.

Changes will be implemented over the coming months. To find out more, please go to:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

- Ends -

For further information, please contact:

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Notes to editors

Further detail on the changes

- **Closure to the public on Mondays**
Reading rooms will open from Tuesday to Saturday only. Closing on a Monday will allow us to reduce our ongoing running costs whilst continuing to provide a high-quality service.

Monday is already one of the quietest days so will have a lower impact on the public than any other day of closure.

- **Introducing car parking charges**
Introducing charges for the use of the public car park will allow us to cover the costs of providing onsite parking and bring us in line with the Government's green agenda. There will still be free parking available for visitors with a disability.

The National Archives is relatively unusual in providing free onsite parking for both visitors and staff (for example there is no onsite parking for staff or readers at the British Library's St Pancras site or the National Archives of Scotland, while our neighbour Kew Gardens charges £6 flat rate for a day's parking).

About The National Archives:

The National Archives, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk, is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the official archives of the UK government, it cares for, makes available and 'brings alive' a vast collection of over 1000 years of historical records, including the treasured Domesday Book.

Not only safeguarding historical information, The National Archives also manages current digital information and devises new technological solutions for keeping government records readable now and in the future. It provides world class research facilities and expert advice, publishes all UK legislation and official publications, and is a leading advocate for the archive sector.

At the heart of information policy, The National Archives sets standards of best practice that actively promotes and encourages public access to, and the re-use of information, both online or onsite at Kew. This work helps inform today's decisions and ensures that they become tomorrow's permanent record.

The National Archives brings together the Public Record Office, Historical Manuscripts Commission, the Office of Public Sector Information and Her Majesty's Stationery Office. See also www.opsi.gov.uk