

M&S ARCHIVE

Access Policy

Hearing loop
installed



Sensory
backpacks for
visitors with SEND



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1 MISSION STATEMENT

The M&S Archive enables Marks & Spencer to celebrate and utilise its rich heritage for the good of the business, its customers and the wider community. As a vital business asset, the Archive actively preserves, develops and facilitates access to its unique collection for commercial innovation and inspiration, and delivers a dynamic programme of public engagement, using the collection to support and inspire the community.

2 AIM AND SCOPE OF POLICY

The Access Policy outlines facilities and services that the M&S Archive offers all visitors and researchers, both in terms of physical and intellectual access. It also describes the Archive's commitment to facilitating access to the Archive and its collection for as many people as possible.

3 POLICY APPROVAL AND REVIEW PROCESS

This policy was first introduced in September 2017, with the approval of the M&S Group Secretary and the board of the M&S Company Archive Community Interest Company (CIC).

The review process for this policy involves evaluating access and its underpinning objectives, ideas for progression and improvement, and ensuring that all objectives, plans and procedures are appropriate to the scale and nature of the Archive and its activities.

4 PHYSICAL ACCESS TO THE ARCHIVE

This section aims to accurately describe the facilities and services at the M&S Archive. Physical access is detailed further on the Plan Your Visit pages of the M&S Archive [website](#).

The M&S Archive engages with Visit England's Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme (VAQAS). As a Quality Assured Visitor Attraction, the M&S Archive has the National Tourist Board seal of approval and is committed to providing a high quality, consistent visitor experience. This was last assessed and awarded in June 2022.

4.1 Location of the M&S Archive

Situated on the Western Campus of the University of Leeds, the Michael Marks Building, home of the M&S Archive is just over a mile from Leeds City Centre.

The area surrounding the Archive is flat, however, the approach to the University's Western Campus from Leeds City Centre is uphill.

4.2 The Michael Marks Building and M&S Archive exhibition

The M&S Archive celebrates the role that M&S has played in people's lives since 1884. The exhibition is open Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm and the second Saturday of each month, and is free to visit. The exhibition is closed for several weeks from early December to early January to allow for essential behind-the-scenes work.

4.2.1 Lighting, flooring, sound and seating

Main entrance and reception

- The main entrance, on the ground floor, has step free, level access throughout. All public areas of the Archive are on the ground floor.
- The entrance is by automatic door wide enough for a wheelchair or mobility scooter.
- The floor surfaces of public areas are tiled and carpeted.
- Public areas are evenly and well-lit, by overhead fluorescent LED lights and halogen LED spotlights.
- There is a hearing loop system at reception.



M&S Archive exhibition

- There are several seating areas throughout the exhibition, including in front of film projections and interactive activities.
- The exhibition displays are generally bright and evenly lit by overhead fluorescent and halogen lighting; however, some areas are more dimly lit to aid preservation of the exhibits. Fibre optic lighting, emitting minimal levels of UV light, is used inside the exhibition cases.
- Visitors are encouraged to handle and touch real and replica objects at several locations in the exhibition.
- There are four audio-visual displays in the exhibition including film projection with both sound and subtitles.
- Large-print versions of the exhibition text are available to borrow from reception.
- Sensory backpacks are available for use by visitors free of charge. Details of contents are available on the M&S Archive [website](#).

4.2.2 Interactives

- There is an oral history listening post with QR codes to access recordings on visitors' own devices.

- There is an interactive replica Penny Bazaar shop with objects to handle and a working replica till.
- There is a low-level light table with coloured shapes for pattern-making.



4.3 Visitor facilities

4.3.1 Shop

- A shop with a small range of souvenirs is located in the main entrance and reception area.
- Staff are on hand to offer assistance.

4.3.2 Refreshments

- Tea and coffee making facilities are available, free of charge, but the Archive does not have any onsite catering. Cold water is also available.
- There are several nearby cafes on the University of Leeds campus.

- Visitors may bring their own refreshments or packed lunch and eat them in the seating area provided.



4.3.3 Toilets

- Public toilets are located on the ground floor with level access from the main entrance.
- There is a unisex accessible toilet with baby changing facilities.

4.4 Accessibility and staff awareness

- All staff receive regular training, which includes disability and dementia awareness training. Designated members of the Archive Team are trained in First Aid.
- The Archive welcomes visitors with assistance dogs and provides water for assistance dogs.
- One wheelchair is available for visitor loan, free of charge, from reception. There is always a member of staff on hand in the exhibition should assistance be required.
- The Archive has a set of evacuation procedures, and Archive staff will assist visitors either out of the building, or to a refuge, in the event of an emergency.



5 INTELLECTUAL ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION

The M&S Archive facilitates both onsite and offsite access to the collection. As well as supporting the business needs of the Company through inspiring learning and informing research, the M&S Archive advocates the use of the collection for academic research, by academics and students, and private research, by current and former employees of M&S, family historians and interested members of the public. Use of the Archive by schools and community groups is outlined in section 6.



5.1 Onsite access to the collection

5.1.1 Reading Room service

The M&S Archive collection of over 72,000 items is directly accessible via the Archive's Reading Room service. The Reading Room is open to both internal and external researchers; almost the entire collection is open to public researchers.

The Reading Room is typically open Tuesday-Thursday, 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm. The Archive team is happy to discuss providing access outside of these times (for example to support researchers who are travelling a long way), subject to capacity.

As space in the Reading Room is limited, researchers must contact the Archive to book an appointment, requesting any material that they would like to view at least two working days in advance. This is to allow the Archive Team time to retrieve the items ready for the arranged visit.

Appointments and material requests can be made using the Archive Catalogue (available on the Archive website) to select items, and then emailing the team with the relevant reference numbers at archive@mands.com

Wherever possible the Archive team will provide digital surrogates of the archive sources required by a researcher,

subject to the researcher completing a copyright undertaking and subject to the Archive's standard access provisions relating to Data Protection and Copyright.

If the Reading Room service is unavailable due to service or building restrictions or disruption, the Archive team will maintain the digital archive access service.

5.1.2 Visiting the Reading Room

Upon arranging an appointment, researchers receive a digital copy of the Reading Room Access Statement, which details the Conditions of Access and Regulations of using the M&S Archive collection and the Reading Room. A copy of this Statement must be signed on arrival to the Reading Room. The M&S Archive reserves the right to restrict or withdraw access to the collection at any time if these Conditions and Regulations are breached.

Access to both analogue and digital material is in line with the Collection Care and Conservation Policy (section 9.1.5), the main points of which are outlined below:

- The Reading Room is actively invigilated by a member of staff when in use. Staff are trained in handling archives and promote best practice to researchers in the Reading Room.
- Researchers are required to use pencil only for taking notes in the Reading Room and gloves will be provided for examining garments.
- Surrogate copies of delicate items, or items in poor condition, will be provided where possible, to minimise further deterioration or damage to the original item or items.
- Surrogate, read-only copies of digitised and born-digital material can be made available to external researchers onsite in the Reading Room, or as part of digital access provision during extended Reading Room closure periods.

Digital material can be shared internally to allow remote access to the Archive.

5.2 Off-Site access to the collection

5.2.1 Internal enquiry service

A research and enquiry service supports the work and research of colleagues within M&S. The Archive team will provide as much support as possible for internal enquiries, although there may need to be prioritisation based on team capacity, and the nature and time demand of the enquiry. All internal enquiries are answered as soon as possible.

Information and images can be shared internally via SharePoint, allowing remote access to the collection, and the Archive can host research visits for colleagues able to visit the Archive in person, allowing for the consultation of original material.

While research visits are not possible during extended closure periods, the Archive team will continue to provide remote access, including online archive sessions designed to meet the research needs of M&S colleagues.

5.2.2 External enquiry service

Where information already exists, it will be shared with external enquirers, but the Archive team cannot carry out extensive research on behalf of enquirers. Enquirers will be directed to helpful online sources, including the Archive's website (detailed in section 5.2.4).

The Archive team will provide support and guidance for researchers in both finding and using material from the collection, allowing them to undertake their own research.

The Archive team will conduct basic catalogue searches for external enquiries but will direct enquirers to the Archive Catalogue to conduct more detailed searches. External

researchers will be invited to use the Reading Room to consult material and carry out their research. At times when the Reading Room service is unavailable for extended periods, the Archive team will facilitate digital access to archive resources wherever possible.

5.2.3 Press enquiries

All press enquiries must be approved by the M&S Corporate Press Office before any information is provided to journalists.

5.2.4 Online and digital access

The M&S Archive's online offer facilitates national and international access to the Archive collection and provides a rich online experience.



M&S Archive website

The Archive's website, archive.marksandspencer.com, features content which interprets the history of M&S and the Archive collection:

- Themed interactive timelines and digital exhibitions allow users to follow the development of the business with information, images and videos.
- A Collection Overview and Collection Guide are available to view online to support user understanding of the archive collection.

Archive Catalogue

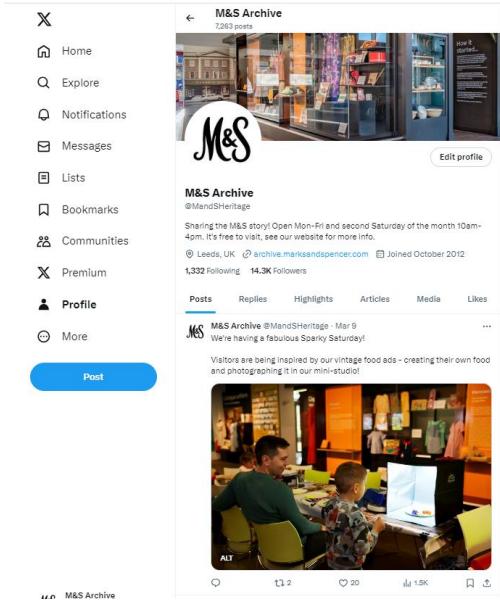
The Archive Catalogue can be used to explore items in the collection. Users can search the catalogue using keyword or advanced searches. The catalogue can be accessed here <https://archive.marksandspencer.com/collection/archive-catalogue/>

Digital Archive

The Digital Archive allows users to access digital assets themselves, getting deeper than our Archive Catalogue (which describes items but doesn't provide direct access to digital formats). The Digital Archive can be accessed here <https://archive.marksandspencer.com/collection/digital-archive/>

Social media

The Archive's X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and Facebook accounts facilitate public engagement with the Archive collection through social media. Social media is used to share collection highlights, promote Archive events and encourage engagement with the collection.



5.2.5 Pop-up archives and loans

- Touring exhibitions, displays and pop-up archives in M&S stores and support centres offer the opportunity for M&S store employees, customers and interested members of the public to engage with the Archive collection. These events and displays are communicated via the Archive's events leaflet and/or online communication channels. Any events in stores or support centres are also promoted internally via the staff intranet.
- Any requests for loans of items from the collection by other institutions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The



terms and conditions of loans are specified in the M&S Archive Loan Agreement.

5.3 Access restrictions

Almost the entire collection is open to public researchers, however access to some items in the collection is restricted. Uncatalogued material is not listed on the Archive Catalogue and is unavailable to the public but will be made available to internal colleagues according to business need. Public access to uncatalogued material may be allowed, with requests for access being granted on a case-by-case basis.

5.3.1 Closed material

Access to any information that would constitute a breach of data protection legislation is not permitted. Accordingly, the Archive reserves the right to refuse access to any information relating to living identifiable individuals (in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018) particularly if:

- the information relates to an individual who has a reasonable expectation that such information would be kept private
- the information is of an inherently confidential or sensitive nature, eg relating to health, work performance, personal opinions; and/or
- the disclosure of the information is likely to cause harm or prejudice to any individual.

For operational business reasons, or in compliance with Data Protection legislation, personal or commercially sensitive material may be restricted or closed to the public:

- The Archive works with departments across M&S to establish closure periods for records of a commercially sensitive nature, where closure periods will be for either 10 or 30 years.
- Highly confidential records may be closed for longer periods. These include board meeting minutes, production

methodology, design files, style files and documents which detail product manufacture.

5.3.2 Communication of access restrictions

The access status of each catalogued item, either 'Open' or 'Closed', is displayed in its description on the Archive Catalogue.

Access Restrictions and Conditions for public access (detailed in section 5.3.1) are communicated in the Collection Guide and on the M&S Archive website. If a researcher requests to view any closed material, this will be communicated and explained in advance of the arranged research visit. Where possible, the Archive team will make suggestions for similar material that is open access and available to view, as an alternative.

5.4 Reprographics

Researchers are welcome to take photographs of material from the collection, subject to completion of a Reprographics Form.

Photocopying and scanning services are available upon request, subject to charges – contact the Archive for more information.

Completion of a Reprographics Form grants researchers permission to use any photographs, photocopies or scans for the purpose of personal enjoyment or private study. Anyone wishing to reproduce, exhibit, or make commercial use of an image in any medium (including books, newspapers, magazines, television, films, exhibitions or websites) must first seek written permission from the M&S Archive.

5.5 Permission to use images and information

5.5.1 Copyright

The Archive is happy for researchers to use images from the collection for personal use. However, the Archive cannot guarantee that there are no third-party rights which subsist in

images held in the collection and, therefore, cannot be held liable for any loss incurred as a result of using images from the Archive.

The Archive does not own the copyright of all items in the collection. An example of such an item would be a photograph taken by an external (non-M&S) photographer, where (in line with copyright restrictions) the photographer retains ownership of the copyright for the photograph. Copyright would remain with the photographer while the photographer is living, and until 70 years after the photographer's death.

5.5.2 Use of images and information

Any images provided to enquirers by email are accompanied by a proviso, setting out the agreed terms of use.

Anyone wishing to reproduce, exhibit, or make commercial use of an image in any medium must first seek formal written permission from the M&S Archive.

Permission should also be sought before work produced as a result of research using the M&S Archive is published, which may be declined at the M&S Archive's complete discretion. Text must be submitted for approval prior to publication. Authors will be personally responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1998 are met.

Written permission for using images and information can be sought by contacting the M&S Head of Archive at archive@mands.com.

6 LEARNING AND COMMUNITY USE OF THE ARCHIVE

6.1 Schools

The Archive works closely with schools to deliver engaging and relevant workshops which support the needs of the community and inspire the next generation.

The Archive offers free on-site cross-curricula workshops for primary and secondary school children which draw on the Archive collection. Off-site access to the Schools Programme can be accessed through the Archive's digital resource suite on the M&S Archive website and TES website.

More information about the Schools Programme and available workshops can be found on the Archive's website.

The Schools Programme may be suspended in line with other service restrictions. Teachers, learners and parents/carers supporting home education are directed to the extensive range of digital learning resources available free of charge from the Archive website.



6.2 Community Programme - groups and reminiscence

The Archive offers free sessions and resources for community groups, older people and people living with dementia.

Free exhibition visits for community groups can be arranged and include a handling and reminiscence session. Additionally, the Archive's Outreach Officer can visit community groups or care homes in the Leeds area to run reminiscence sessions.

The Archive has a series of themed Memory Boxes, containing original vintage clothing and accessories, which can be borrowed free of charge, for a maximum for two weeks.

The Community Programme may be suspended in line with wider service closures. Care providers are directed to the extensive range of digital reminiscence resources available free of charge from the Archive website.



6.3 Group visits

The M&S Archive Group Visit programme facilitates the engagement of visitors with the Archive collection and heritage of M&S.

Group Visits may be suspended in line with wider service closures.

6.4 Volunteering

The Archive's volunteer programme offers a range of volunteer opportunities, from short work-experience placements for gaining experience of working in a business archive, to longer-term projects (typically a day per week), such as preservation work to help the Archive to care for the collection.

Short-term volunteer placements are available in the first two weeks of July, designed to help people, including young people, who are considering a career in the heritage sector. Applications for these

placements can be sent by email to archive@mands.com after Easter, for placements the following July.

More information can be found in the M&S Archive Volunteer Policy.

Volunteering activities may be suspended in the event of wider service closure.