



MASS OBSERVATION

Recording everyday life in Britain

The Mass Observation Archive Annual Report

1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025

Report Number 45

www.massobs.org.uk

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Trustees of the Mass Observation Archive

**John Brewer
Simon Garfield
Jane Harvell
Kitty Inglis
Michelle Johansen
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Lucy Noakes
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Public Benefit Statement

The Archive is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registered charity number: 1179673) in the care of the University of Sussex as part of the University's Special Collections. The Archive seeks to benefit the wider community by providing the public with the opportunity to gain knowledge of everyday life in 20th and 21st Century Britain through access to the original Mass Observation social research organisation (1937 to early 1950s), and newer material collected continuously since 1981.

The Archive proactively engages in educational outreach with schools, Further and Higher Education institutions and the local and national community. This outreach provides the opportunity for intergenerational and interregional learning.

The Archive also provides the opportunity for people all over the UK to participate in the recording of their everyday lives, either through participation in the national Mass Observation Project and other related projects and partnerships or through the donation of their personal papers and diaries to a publicly accessible archive.

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Access

Research visits

70 individuals visited the Mass Observation Archive and made 421 orders for material (see fig.1 and fig.2 in the appendix).

Group sessions

The Mass Observation Archive hosted 50 group visits (appendix fig.3). 1578 people participated in these sessions. A list of groups who visited during 2024-2025 is available in Appendix fig.4. The Mass Observation team delivered these sessions online and in person.

On request access digital collections

Researchers may contact the Mass Observation Archive to access files submitted electronically in response to Mass Observation Project Directives. During the year, the Archive supplied 31 individuals with a total of 5,389 digital files (fig.7).

Online Access to AM Digital resource

Researchers continued to be able to access parts of the Archive through the AM Digital products, Mass Observation Online and Mass Observation Project Online. 56,336 session visits were made during this period. See Section.4, Appendix fig. 5 for more statistics provided by the publisher.

Research and Collection Activities

Morgan Centre, University of Manchester

Mass Observation continues to work closely with members of the Morgan Centre. Highlights include:

- A panel at the British Sociological Conference in Manchester, April 2025
- Incorporating Mass Observation material in their Sociology teaching and actively promoting its use for 2nd modules and 3rd year projects.
- Kirsty Patrick was invited to attend the Morgan Centres 30th Anniversary celebrations on 3rd September 2025, highlighting the valuable relationship Mass Observation has held with colleagues at the Centre since its inception.
- A collaborative PhD scholarship. Funded by the North-West Social Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership with match-funding from Mass Observation, Kirsty is the non-academic supervisor. The successful candidate Neve Meats will explore visual submissions to Mass Observation with a sociological research lens. She has completed her MSc and will start her PhD with time spent at the archive in Autumn 2025.

Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth, University of Sussex

Kirsty Patrick continues to sit on the Advisory Board for CIRCY and supports its engagement activities.

Mass Observation and Political Feeling

A successful event took place at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, London on 17th June 2025 with Professor Emily Robinson and Dr Jonathan Moss (University of Sussex). Participants from academia, think tanks, third sector and government, heard talks and discussed the potential for Mass Observation to be used as a resource for addressing political engagement in the UK.

Making and Using Archives Network

Kirsty Patrick co-organised this new network with Professor Rachel Thompsen at the University of Sussex. The first networking meeting took place at The Keep on 7th May attended by 40+ people from across academic and professional services at all career levels at Sussex. Supported by an internal grant from Faculty Culture Research funding.

British Sociological Organisation

The grant also enabled Jessica Scantlebury and Kirsty Patrick to attend the British Sociological Organisation event 'Beyond the Archival Turn; making and using sociological archives' 30th June. This took place at the University of Leicester in partnership with the Morgan Centre, University of Manchester. They co-delivered a workshop on *Working with Mass Observation* with Dawn Lyon (University of Kent) and Khaleda Brophy-Harmer (University of Southampton).

Mass Observing COVID-19 Collection

This open access resource makes available nearly 7,000 submissions from the Mass Observation COVID-19 collection. It allows researchers to select relevant documents through searches of meta-data, keywords and open text. It is then possible to export the data into research tools of their own choice for analysis. The database can be accessed here: <https://massobs.org.uk/research/covid19>.

This has been promoted through talks, teaching sessions and social media.

National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM)

Kirsty Patrick, Research Manager is a member of a national Special Interest Group for participatory and collaborative research methods. Kirsty co-produced an online training resource with another member on using qualitative diary methods.

On 11th September 2025 Kirsty co-organised the NCRM Big Qualitative Data event with Dr Laura Radcliffe (University of Liverpool) and Professor Sophie Woodard (University of Manchester) hosted at the Mass Observation Archive, at The Keep. The day brought together 35 people from academia and the charity sector including doctoral students. Throughout the day participants looked at working with large sets of multi-format qualitative material. It included a showcase of Mass Observation collections and a tour of The Keep. A resource output was produced for the NCRM website.

Mass Observation Project Online

The Mass Observation Archive collaborated with AM Digital to extend the Mass Observation Project Online resource, incorporating responses to Project Directives from 2010 to 2019. Digitisation was completed in summer 2025, and the Mass Observation team contacted over 100 contributors to clear copyright permissions. 98 boxes were prepared for digitisation and taken offsite during this time.

Mass Observation Critical Series

The Mass Observation Critical Series is an interdisciplinary publication series published by Bloomsbury. The series aims to make Mass Observation's rich primary sources accessible to a wide range of academics and students across multiple disciplines, as well as to the general reading public. Recent publications are included in section 9.

Eastern Arc

Jessica joined the Eastern Arc group for Archives and Heritage Collections in March 2025. The Eastern Arc is a strategic collaboration between the universities of East Anglia, Essex, Kent, and Sussex.

Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities (DCDC)

Jessica spoke at the DCDC conference at the University of Durham in July 2025. She presented on the Archive's experience of rapid collecting during the pandemic and on the creation of the open-access resource funded by the Wellcome Trust. Over 200 people attended this hybrid event.

Engagement

We continued to offer opportunities to engage with the Archive both online and in person at The Keep.

Teaching and learning sessions have included:

- Arts & Humanities 9th October
- MA Community Heritage, University of Sussex, 22nd October
- MA Skills & Methods History, University of Sussex, 4th November
- Business School Coffee Morning, University of Sussex, 7th November
- Education, Historical Childhoods 7th November
- MA Linguistics, University of Sussex, 11th November
- BA History, Second World War, 20th November
- MA Criminology, University of Sussex, 26th November
- Blatchington Mill School Year 10, 26th November
- Sociology, University of Brighton, 7th January 2025
- Foundation Year, Welfare State Lecture, University of Sussex, 6th February
- BA Film Studies, British Cinema, University of Sussex, 10th February

- BA Media Studies, University of Sussex, 19th and 21st February 2025
- Graphic Design, 26th February
- BA Politics, University of Sussex, 27th February
- BA Elective Module Death & Dying, University of Sussex, 3rd March
- Literature 9th March
- BA History of Emotions, University of Sussex, 2nd April
- Making and Using Social Archives Network, University of Sussex, 7th May
- Doctoral School 'Mass Observation as Survey', University of Sussex, 18th June
- Varndean College 10th June
- Brighton College 18th September

On 5th August Kirsty Pattrick and Ellie Turner-Kilburn, Assistant Officer hosted a visit and were interviewed by five students from Sungkyunkwan University in South Korea as part of their Global Academic Exploration Programme.

Suzanne Rose delivered outreach sessions in HMP Lewes and Rosewood School, a specialist school within Kent & Medway NHS Trust for young people with mental health issues, as well as talks for Micheldene WI, Eastbourne U3A and Essex University. She also hosted community visits for Fresh Start Portslade, All Sorts, a community group for trans and gender diverse young people, and a bilingual community group from Brighton.

Mass Observation Staff hosted a stall at Senate House for History Day 5th Nov 2024, with support from placement students. This was attended by 300+ people

The following events were hosted by Mass Observation as part of its public events programme:

- Carl and Bobbie event featuring the war time love letters between an American GI and his English sweetheart brought to life with readings by drama students set in 1940s installation. Dec 2024
- Film screenings at The Keep featuring films inspired by and showcasing the collection. Jan & March 2025
- VE Day commemoration at The Keep with talk on Mass Observation Archive and showcasing the collection. May 2025

Resources are available on the Mass Observation Archive website for schools and community groups to engage with the collections and recorded talks are available on the MO YouTube channel providing introductions to the Archive and highlighting research and potential of the Archive.

Webinar Events

- **Mass Observing COVID-19 Five-years on 6th June**

Professor Nick Clarke, University of Southampton and Nicola Madge, University of Kingston

- **Verian and Mass Observation 24th September**

Professor Lucy Noakes *War and Peace: Mass Observers and the end of the war in Europe, May 1945*

Yves Fradier, Director of Survey and Methods (Verian) *Living through war: Insights from displaced Ukrainians*

Living Histories

An NHS Heads On partnership project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Living Histories project aims to record experiences of those accessing or delivering mental health services as part of the Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust. This included people's lived experience of mental health throughout their life course, or work, as well as during the Covid 19 pandemic. Engagement Manager served on the Steering Group and worked with NHS consultants, experts by experience and project team to support delivery of this complex partnership project.

Transcripts of the interviews conducted as part of the project will be deposited with the Archive in 2026. The touring exhibition showcasing the project's outcomes will be launched at the De la Warr Pavilion on 23rd February 2026.

Creative Community Resilience

An AHRC funded Creative, Community, Resilience project with University of Southampton and University of Brighton to research and record experiences of trans and gender diverse young people. Mass Observation delivered training in January 2025 to the research team on MO methodology and supported engagement activities linked to 12th May to record and receive diaries. Resources were developed through community group activities with All Sorts, a community group and led by trans and gender diverse young people.

Take Shelter

A National Lottery Heritage Fund supported partnership project to enhance and develop the museum and shelter at Downs Junior School which will capture and share the experiences of the city's last wartime veterans. Working with volunteers, the project will present these first-hand experiences alongside artefacts, wartime documents, photographs and films drawn from the partner organisations including Mass Observation Archive to create a rich story of wartime Brighton. Research visits by project volunteers have taken place in April, June and July 2025 and will continue for the duration of the project. Materials selected will be used to enhance the displays and interactive activities within the shelter itself. MOA attended the Take Shelter Open Weekend again in May 2025, which was attended by 200+ people, in order to commemorate VE Day and promote 12th May.

Social Media

The archive promotes its events and activities online via Instagram, BlueSky and LinkedIn. MO has seen growth across all its channels during the reporting period.

- Instagram- 6,021 views and 1,504 engagements.
- LinkedIn – 8,150 impressions, 854 engagements and 558 post link clicks. Net audience growth of 144 over the period.

Insights for this period are currently unavailable to access for BlueSky. These will feature in the next annual report.

VE Day in Brighton and beyond

The University of Sussex hosted a public event at The Keep on Friday 9 May 2025 to celebrate VE Day to support Brighton & Hove City Council's programme of events.

Kevin Bacon (Head of Heritage Collections and Mass Observation) spoke about the wartime experience of Brighton as documented in photographs held at The Keep. Jessica Scantlebury (Mass Observation Archivist) explored the Mass Observation Archive, renowned for its extensive collection of Second World War diaries that capture the thoughts and emotions of British people during the conflict and the celebrations of VE Day.

They were joined by Councillor Amanda Grimshaw, Deputy Mayor of Brighton & Hove, who introduced the event and reflected on the bombing raids inflicted on Brighton and Hove during the war.

58 people attended by this event.

The 12th May diary project 2025

A total of 287 diaries were submitted electronically, with an additional 128 received by post. Among the postal submissions were contributions from the following groups:

- 26 from HMP Ashfield
- 17 from HMP Portland
- 5 from HMP Lewes
- 7 from Kimberly Library
- 5 from Beeston Library

As with previous years, participants were asked to share the copyright of their diary with the Archive.

We were grateful for the support of John Pateman PhD researcher, who worked to promote 12th May in a network of libraries across the Midlands. He will continue to support the project in 2026 and 2027 as part of his research into the role libraries play in communities.

The Trustees

Kitty Inglis stepped down from the Board of Trustees in summer 2025, having served since 2008 during her tenure as University of Sussex Librarian, a role she left in winter 2017.

Scarlett O'Malley and Meg Sweeney joined the Board of Trustees in 2025, following guidance from the Young Trustees Movement to broaden representation within the governance team.

Fiona Courage joined the Board of Trustees in September 2025 and has taken over the role of Chair from Jane Harvell. Jane remains on the Board as University of Sussex Librarian.

Staff changes

As Fiona Courage has joined the Board of Trustees, Kevin Bacon has taken over the role of Head of Mass Observation Archive from September 2025. Kevin has been line managing the Mass Observation team since April 2024 but will now report to the Board on operational matters.

Volunteers and placement students

The Mass Observation Archive welcomed a range of student placements, work experience participants, and volunteers during the reporting year.

Placement students (BA, MA and PhD):

- In autumn 2024, Isabel Snowdon, MA History student and Jasleen Kaur, BA History student from **Queen Mary University London**, undertook hybrid placements that combined remote and in-person activities. Their work included transcription, identifying extracts for teaching and publicity, writing blog posts, and assisting with the Archive's stand at History Day in November 2025.
- Niamh Rutter, an MA student at the **University of Brighton**, completed a 120-hour placement.
- Emily Calcraft, PhD student from the **University of Sheffield** volunteered remotely on transcription and cataloguing 12th May diaries and delivered an

online talk about Mass Observation to the WEA in April 2025 attended by over 150 people.

- Khaleda Brophy-Harmer, a PhD student from the **University of Southampton**, undertook a 12-week placement focused on the Ali Jaques collection.
- Natalie Wood, a PhD student from the **University of Manchester**, undertook a one-week placement. This involved publicity for the 12th May 2026 day-diary event. She will be undertaking fieldwork in Blackpool in 2025/6 and will support engagement with MO activities in this area.
- Conrad Freidson joined the team one day a week to assist with analysis of the 12th May data, following completion of his MSc.

Work Experience:

- Dice Barker joined the Archive for a one-week work experience placement in February 2025 and Calvin Clarke-Roberts joined us in July 2025 for a week's work experience.

Volunteers:

- Wei Wei Yang supported engagement activities from September to November including History Day 2024
- Libby Cleaves continued to volunteer and support digitisation and cataloguing of the Carl & Bobbie Collection.
- Jean Southey continued to volunteer supporting various events and teaching sessions.

The Mass Observation Project

We currently have 602 Observers on the panel. The panel was closed in June 2025 pending a review.

Biographical Form

The response rate continues to be good, and these are available to researchers upon request. This captures additional biographical information on ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and religion.

Commissioners

Advice and support documents were provided throughout the year for academic research funding applications and internal ethics processes. Institutions included University of East Anglia, Bristol, Reading, Nottingham, Cardiff and York for bids to BA, ESRC, AHRC, Wellcome and institution's internal funding.

In March 2025, the Mass Observation team began using Email Blaster—a secure email marketing platform—to communicate with Mass Observation Project writers.

At that time, 525 writers received their directives electronically, while 91 received them by post. The team worked with the University of Sussex Information Management team to ensure compliance with data protection regulations.

Collections

A new acquisition has been received: the Guant Family Letters, comprising approximately five boxes of correspondence exchanged between three siblings attending different boarding schools during the 1970s. This collection offers insight into family life and education during that period.

Publications

Balmer, A., Hodgson, J., Holmes, H., May, V. and Pattrick, K. (2025) 'Sociology of Everyday Life in the Past and Future Uses of the Mass Observation Project: Methodology, Materiality and Personal Life', *Sociological Research Online*. doi:10.1177/13607804241298239.

Clarke, N. (ed.) (2024). Everyday life in the COVID-19 pandemic: Mass Observation's 12th May diaries. London: *Bloomsbury Academic*.

Cooper, T. and Turner, M. (2024) "'That Awful Night in October": Sensory Experiences of Britain's 1987 Hurricane', *Cultural and Social History*, 21(5), pp.721–739. doi:10.1080/14780038.2024.2379507.

Curzon, L.D. and Jones, B.W. (eds.) (2024) *The historical contexts and contemporary uses of Mass Observation: 1930s to the present*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Ehgartner, U. and Welch, D. (2024) 'Exploring cultural futures: Dimensions of projectivity as a methodological lens for narrative analysis', *Futures*, 164, Article 103445. doi:10.1016/j.futures.2024.103445.

Huxtable, S.-A. (2024) 'Magic and Materialism: Fortune Telling and the Culture of Enchantment, 1919–1939', *Journal of Design History*, 37(4), pp.381–397. doi:10.1093/jdh/epae032.

Jackman, A. (2025) 'Everyday understandings of drone incidents and misuse in the Mass Observation Archive', *The Geographical Journal*, 191(2), n.p. doi:10.1111/geoj.12618.

Marsden, J. and Harris, R. (2024) 'Mass Observation, Counterculture and the "Art of Living"', *Humanities*, 13(6), p.161. doi:10.3390/h13060161.

Moody, S.J. (2025) 'Mass-Observers at the "atomic crossroads"', *Contemporary British History*, 39(2), pp.219–250. doi:10.1080/13619462.2024.2361627.

Moss, J., Robinson, E. and Watts, J. (2024) *The politics of feeling in Brexit Britain: Stories from the Mass Observation Project*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Patrick, K and Scantlebury, J. (2024) 'Mass Observing COVID-19', in Kavanagh, J., Miles, E., West, R.L. and Corder, S. (eds.) *Ethics of Contemporary Collecting*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 162–173.

Pimlott, W. (2024) 'Global British Jewish History: YIVO in Britain, 1937–71', *Jewish Social Studies*, 29(3), pp.119–155. doi:10.2979/jss.000018.

Purcell, J. and Courage, F. (eds.) (2024) *Reflections on British Royalty: Mass-Observation and the Monarchy, 1937–2022*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Scott, S. and Lockwood, N. (2025) 'Non-identity accounts: Personal myths, cultural scripts and narrative alignment', *The Sociological Review*, 73(5), pp.1122–1139. doi:10.1177/00380261241236256.

van Emmerik, C. (2024) 'Ethical Reflexivity, Care, and Slippery Data: Lessons From Working With the Mass Observation Project', *Sociological Research Online*, 29(3), pp.758–766. doi:10.1177/13607804231164486.

van Emmerik, C., Coleman, R. and Lyon, D. (2025) 'Towards a minor sociology of futures: Shifting futures in mass observation accounts of the COVID-19 pandemic', *Journal of Sociology*, 61(1), pp.176–192. doi:10.1177/14407833241248672.

Wright, V. and Lovatt, M. (2024) 'Thinking about the future in older age', *Journal of Aging Studies*, 71, Article 101282. doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2024.101282.

Events, talks and conferences

Jessica Scantlebury

- 'Mass Observing VE Day', 9th May 2025, The Keep
- 'COVID-19: An Open Access Resource', 31st July 2025, Discovering Collections Discovering Communities, University of Durham

Suzanne Rose

- 'Observing Everyday Life', 10th February 2025 Micheldene WI
- 'Mass Observing Everyday Life', 4th March 2025 Eastbourne U3A
- 'Mass Observation in Essex', 21st May 2025, Essex University

Kirsty Patrick

- 'Mass Observing COVID-19', 9th October 2024, University of Brighton

- ‘Mass Observation as Qualitative Data’, NCRM Big Qualitative Data at The Keep, 11th September 2025

Appendix 1

Fig. 1 Number of visits made by individual researchers 2019-2025

| Year | To MOA | % of all visits to Special Collections | % of all visits to The Keep |
|-----------|--------|--|-----------------------------|
| 2024-2025 | 70 | 55 | 8 |
| 2023-2024 | 54 | 30 | 5 |
| 2022-2023 | 118 | 20 | 7 |
| 2021-2022 | 70 | 46 | 9 |
| 2020-2021 | 42 | 77 | 8 |
| 2019-2020 | 226 | 49 | 9 |

Fig. 2 Number of documents issued from the MOA to researchers at The Keep 2019-2025

| Year | Number of documents |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 2024-2025 | 421 |
| 2023-2024 | 266 |
| 2022-2023 | 257 |
| 2021-2022 | 436 |
| 2020-2021 | 342 |
| 2019-2020 | 430 |

Fig. 3 Group visits 2019-2025

| Year | To MOA | Attendance |
|-----------|--------|------------|
| 2023-2024 | 50 | 1428 |
| 2022-2023 | 53 | 1072 |
| 2021-22 | 51 | 846 |
| 2020-2021 | 30 | 561 |
| 2019-2020 | 42 | 456 |

Fig. 4 Group visits made to the MOA in 2024-2025

| Date | Institution | Subject | Level | Number of Students |
|------------|---|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 09/10/2024 | University of Brighton | Arts & Humanities | Staff & students | 10 |
| 15/10/2024 | University of Sussex | English | UG | 12 |
| 22/10/2024 | University of Sussex | History | MA | 12 |
| 04/11/2024 | University of Sussex | History | MA | 12 |
| 05/11/2024 | IHR | History | | 200 |
| 06/11/2024 | National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) | NCRM Participatory & Collaborative Special Interest Group Network | UG/PG, academic, general | 88 |
| 07/11/2024 | University of Sussex | Education | UG | 14 |
| 07/11/2024 | University of Sussex | Business School | UG/PG, academic, prof services | 25 |
| 11/11/2024 | University of Sussex | Linguistics | MA | 4 |
| 20/11/2024 | University of Sussex | History | UG | 16 |
| 26/11/2024 | University of Sussex | Criminology | MA | 30 |
| 26/11/2024 | Blatchington Mill School | | Year 10 | 30 |
| 04/12/2024 | Public | | | 40 |
| 07/01/2025 | University of Brighton | Humanities | BA | 7 |
| 07/01/2025 | University of Brighton | Humanities | BA | 24 |
| 22/01/2025 | Uni Southampton | | MA | 7 |
| 06/02/2025 | University of Sussex | Foundation | UG | 19 |
| 10/02/2025 | University of Sussex | Film Studies | UG | 3 |
| 10/02/2025 | Eastbourne WI | | Public | 30 |
| 15/02/2025 | University of Sussex Research Workshop | Education and Social Work | Public | 5 |

| | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-----|
| 18/02/2025 | University of Brighton | Media | BA | 6 |
| 18/02/2025 | University of Brighton | Media | BA | 15 |
| 19/02/2025 | University of Brighton | Media | BA | 8 |
| 21/02/2025 | University of Brighton | Media | BA | 10 |
| 26/02/2025 | University of Brighton | Graphic Design | UG | 14 |
| 26/02/2025 | University of Brighton | Graphic Design | UG | 14 |
| 27/02/2025 | University of Sussex | Politics | UG 3rd Yr | 17 |
| 02/03/2025 | University of Sussex | History | UG 3rd year | 20 |
| 14/03/2025 | University of Sussex | English | UG2 | 15 |
| 01/04/2025 | British Soc Soc | Conference | Public | 300 |
| 30/04/2025 | Take Shelter | | | 6 |
| 07/05/2025 | University of Sussex | Open to all dept. | N/a | 20 |
| 07/05/2025 | HMP Lewes | | Public | 7 |
| 09/05/2025 | VE Day event | UoS | Public | 58 |
| 12/05/2025 | Eastern Arc | UoS | Academic Researchers | 5 |
| 20/05/2025 | University of Brighton | Doctoral School | PhD | 10 |
| 21/05/2025 | University of Essex | | All | 14 |
| 04/06/2025 | MOA Covid Webinar | | Public | 22 |
| 10/06/2025 | Vardean College | | 6th form | 100 |
| 25/06/2025 | Take Shelter | | Public | 6 |
| 02/07/2025 | Take Shelter | | Public | 6 |
| 12/07/2025 | Fresh Start Portslade | | Public | 10 |
| 31/07/2025 | DCDC | | Professional | 200 |
| 05/08/2025 | Sungkyunkwan University, Korea | | | 5 |
| 18/09/2025 | Brighton College | History | Year 11 | 10 |
| 20/09/2025 | University of Sussex | Law, Politics & Sociology | Doctoral | 3 |
| 24/09/2025 | Verian | | Public | 25 |
| 09/11/2025 | NCRM | | Doctoral and academics | 30 |

| | | | | |
|------------|------|--|------------------------|----|
| 09/11/2025 | NCRM | | Doctoral and academics | 30 |
|------------|------|--|------------------------|----|

Fig. 5 Access to Mass Observation Online 2019-2025

| Year | All Sessions | Number of sessions from members of the University of Sussex | Number of sessions made from The Keep |
|-----------|--------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2024-2025 | 26,372 | 1,702 | 66 |
| 2023-2024 | 25,287 | 1,806 | 73 |
| 2022-2023 | 28,391 | 2,286 | 83 |
| 2021-2022 | 32,497 | 1,726 | 87 |
| 2020-2021 | 25,372 | 1,202 | 32 |
| 2019-2020 | 18,790 | 2,525 | 110 |

Fig. 5 Access to Mass Observation Project Online 2021-2025

| Year | All sessions | Number of sessions from members of the University of Sussex | Number of sessions from The Keep |
|-----------|--------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 2024-2025 | 29,964 | 349 | 2 |
| 2023-2024 | 38,039 | 442 | 0 |
| 2022-2023 | 41,421 | 449 | 3 |
| 2021-2022 | 636 | 556 | 0 |
| 2020-2021 | 1,141 | 368 | 1 |

Fig.6 Directive themes 2024-2025 (Data collected October 2025)

| Date | Topic | Commissioner | Funding | Response |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------|-----------|
| Autumn 2024 (No 132) | Cost of Living Crisis Update; | University of Southampton Prof Jane Falkingham | £10,000 | 192 (32%) |
| | Seasons | In-house | | 183 (30%) |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|-----------|
| | The Israeli-Palestinian conflict | In-house | | 193 (32%) |
| Spring 2025 (No 133) | Covid-19 Five years on; | In-house | | 212 (35%) |
| | VE Day; | In-house | | 194 (32%) |
| | Good News | In-house | | 176 (29%) |
| Summer 2025 (No 134)* | Hands | Morgan Centre, University of Manchester | | 109 (17%) |
| | Time Pieces; | Morgan Centre, University of Manchester | | 112 (17%) |
| | Kitchens | Morgan Centre, University of Manchester | | 101 (15%) |

*Responses to these Directives are still arriving at the Archive.

Fig.7 Access to digital responses

| Date | Number of requests | Number of files |
|-----------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 2024-2025 | 31 | 5389 |

KP/SR/JS 13/03/2026

The Mass Observation Archive

**Annual Report and Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 September 2025**

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE

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THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| LEGAL STATUS | The Mass Observation Archive is a Registered Charity (Charity Registration No. 1179673) and a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Company number CE014960) |
| PRINCIPAL OFFICE | University of Sussex The University Library Falmer Brighton BN1 9QL |
| BOARD OF TRUSTEES | |
| Chair: | Dr Fiona Courage (Appointed 9 July 2025) |
| Trustees: | Mr John Brewer Mr Simon Garfield Ms Jane Harvell Ms Kitty Inglis (Resigned 9 July 2025) Dr Michelle Johansen Professor Claire Langhamer (Resigned 23 October 2024) Professor Lucy Noakes Professor Ben Highmore Professor Hester Barron Ms Megan Sweeney (Appointed 9 July 2025) Ms Scarlett O'Malley (Appointed 9 July 2025) |
| Secretary: | Mr Kevin Bacon (non-Trustee) |
| INDEPENDENT EXAMINER | VMR Anderson BA(Hons) FCA DChA Carpenter Box 2 St. Andrews Place Lewes East Sussex BN7 1UP |
| BANKERS | Co-operative Bank P.O. Box 101 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP |

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Introduction

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2025.

The Mass Observation Archive is registered as a charity (Charity Registration No. 1179673). It is governed by its rules which were first adopted on 28 August 2018. It should be noted that the charity is the successor charity to Mass Observation Archive (Charity Registration No. 270218). The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Company number 1179673).

The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Rules and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives of the charity

To advance education for the public benefit by operating and maintaining an archive specialising in particular but not exclusively in the modern social history of Great Britain.

The role of the Trustees

The charity trustees shall manage the affairs of the CIO and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of the CIO. It is the duty of each charity trustee:

- a. to exercise his or her powers and to perform his or her functions in his or her capacity as a trustee of the CIO in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO; and
- b. to exercise, in the performance of those functions, such care and skill as is reasonable in the circumstances

The chair of Trustees is the Director of Library Services, University of Sussex, an ex officio appointed by the University of Sussex in line with the provisions of the CIO's constitution. The Risk Register is the responsibility of the Trustees. They provide the material support necessary for the effective running of the CIO. The Trustees work in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Charity Commission.

Management is the responsibility of the Trustees and is delegated to the Mass Observation Team in terms of day-to-day administration. Under the Mass Observation University of Sussex Memorandum of Understanding (May 2018) the University of Sussex takes responsibility for the line management of staff employed specifically to work on the Mass Observation Archive.

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Trustee responsibilities

Financial statements

The Trustees are required to prepare annual financial statements, which provide a true and fair view of the affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of the income and expenditure of the charity for the year.

In preparing the reports the Trustees:

1. Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
2. Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
3. State whether the applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements, and
4. Prepare the Financial Statements on the ongoing concern basis unless it is inappropriate.

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's objectives.

Risk review

The Board of Trustees reviews the major risks to which the charity is exposed on a regular basis and systems and actions are implemented to mitigate those risks. The Trustees believe that there is a satisfactory system of internal controls and these are reviewed on a regular basis.

Financial review

Total expenditure and income for the year on operational activities were £173,605 and £164,669 respectively, resulting in a deficit of £8,936. The Charity's net movement in funds was a deficit of £8,936. (2024: a surplus of £54,359).

The charity carried forwards unrestricted funds of £649,550.

Expenditure is focussed entirely on Staff salaries and commission paid to Curtis Brown in respect of the royalties collected.

Income

The principal sources of income are royalties in respect of the archives and payments for the commissioning of Directives by researchers. This action is in line with the MOA Trust aim to support postgraduate and early career research.

Reserves

It has been agreed it is appropriate for The Mass Observation Archive to maintain strategic reserves sufficient to support unavoidable operating costs for a period of up to 12 months. The strategic reserve must consist of unrestricted funds.

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Summary of main financial activities in relation to Objects of the CIO

In this financial year three directives were issued covering nine research topics. This included a collaboration with the University of Southampton which generated the Summer 2025 Directive on the Cost of Living Crisis. For this, an income of £10,000 was received through funding from ESRC.

A total of £1,760 was received from other donations and fees for educational activities.

By Order of the Board of Trustees



Fiona Courage (Chair)

Date: 18/3/2026

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 30 September 2025, which are set out on pages 6 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

I report in respect of my examination of the Trustee's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



VMR Anderson BA (Hons) FCA DChA

Chartered Accountant
Carpenter Box
2 St. Andrews Place
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 1UP

Date: 26 March 2026

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

| | Unrestricted funds | Revaluation reserve | Total funds | Unrestricted funds | Revaluation reserve | Total funds |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| | 2024-25 | 2024-25 | 2024-25 | 2023-24 | 2023-24 | 2023-24 |
| INCOME | | | | | | |
| Income and endowments from | | | | | | |
| - Royalties | 129,023 | | 129,023 | 150,249 | | 150,249 |
| Other income | | | | | | |
| - Sales | 11,706 | | 11,706 | 33,680 | | 33,680 |
| Interest income | 22,180 | | 22,180 | 23,030 | | 23,030 |
| Donations | 1,760 | | 1,760 | 312 | | 312 |
| Total income and endowments | 164,669 | | 164,669 | 207,271 | | 207,271 |
| EXPENDITURE ON | | | | | | |
| Expenditure on charitable activities | 173,605 | | 173,605 | 152,912 | | 152,912 |
| Total expenditure | 173,605 | | 173,605 | 152,912 | | 152,912 |
| Net (expenditure)/income on operational activities | (8,936) | | (8,936) | 54,359 | | 54,359 |
| Total funds brought forward | 658,486 | 2,000,000 | 2,658,486 | 604,127 | 2,000,000 | 2,604,127 |
| Total funds carried forward | 649,550 | 2,000,000 | 2,649,550 | 658,486 | 2,000,000 | 2,658,486 |

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

| | Unrestricted Funds 2024/25 | Unrestricted Funds 2023/24 |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Expenditure on charitable activities | | |
| Commission charges and cost of goods sold | 13,079 | 15,258 |
| Travel, accommodation and subsistence | 3,396 | 1,632 |
| Advertising and marketing | 329 | 672 |
| Postage, printing and stationery | 602 | 415 |
| Salaries | 151,589 | 131,393 |
| Staff welfare | 53 | - |
| Staff training | 855 | - |
| Computer & IT | 288 | 368 |
| Subscription | 244 | 126 |
| Accountancy | 800 | 1,125 |
| Bookkeeping fees | 1,275 | 1,022 |
| Independent examiners fee | 835 | 795 |
| Bank charges | 29 | 7 |
| HMRC interest | 231 | 99 |
| | <hr/> 173,605 | <hr/> 152,912 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

CHARITY NUMBER 1179673

| | Note | 2024/25 | 2023/24 |
|--|------|------------------|------------------|
| Fixed Asset | | | |
| Mass Observation Archive | 2 | 2,000,001 | 2,000,001 |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Debtors | 3 | 41,148 | 45,481 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | <u>613,292</u> | <u>630,019</u> |
| | | 654,440 | 675,500 |
| Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year | 4 | <u>4,891</u> | <u>17,015</u> |
| Net Current Assets | | 649,549 | 658,485 |
| Total Assets less Current Liabilities | | <u>2,649,550</u> | <u>2,658,486</u> |
| Represented by: | | | |
| Unrestricted funds | | | |
| General fund | | 649,550 | 658,486 |
| Revaluation Reserve | | 2,000,000 | 2,000,000 |
| | | <u>2,649,550</u> | <u>2,658,486</u> |

The Financial Statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on and were signed on its behalf by:



Fiona Courage (Chair)

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a. Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with applicable accounting standards. In addition they have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. The trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the trust's ability to continue as a going concern. The accounts are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the Charity.

b. Fund Accounting

The charity maintains various funds in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities FRS 102'. These funds, which require separate disclosure, are as follows:-

Unrestricted Funds. These are the general funds of the charity and are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in the furtherance of the charitable objectives. The main sources of general funds are from fees, royalties and income from bank deposits-

c. Voluntary Income

Donations are recognised as income when the donation is received.

Legacies are recognised at the earliest point at which the amounts become certain.

d. Investment Income

Interest is accrued on a daily basis and is credited on this basis in the income and expenditure account.

e. Expenditure

Expenditure is included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accrual basis, inclusive of any VAT which cannot be recovered.

The main category of expenditure is:

- i. Expenditure on charitable activities, which are the costs of running the trust.

f. Statement of Cash Flows

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

g. Financial Instruments

The Charity has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost. Financial assets held at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand, other debtors and prepayments. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise other creditors and accruals.

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

| Cost | Mass Observation Archive | Total |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| As at 1 st October 2024 | 2,000,001 | 2,000,001 |
| Additions | | |
| As at 30 th September 2025 | <u>2,000,001</u> | <u>2,000,001</u> |
| Net Book Value | | |
| As at 30 th September 2024 | <u>2,000,001</u> | <u>2,000,001</u> |
| As at 30 th September 2025 | <u>2,000,001</u> | <u>2,000,001</u> |

3. DEBTORS

| | 2024/25 | 2023/24 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Trade Debtors | - | 4,000 |
| Accrued Income | 32,751 | 36,788 |
| Prepayments | 385 | - |
| VAT | 8,012 | 4,693 |
| | <u>41,148</u> | <u>45,481</u> |

4. CREDITORS

| | 2024/25 | 2023/24 |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Trade Creditors | - | - |
| Accruals | 4,891 | 17,015 |
| | <u>4,891</u> | <u>17,015</u> |

5. TAXATION

The trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charity for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

THE MASS OBSERVATION ARCHIVE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

6. ANALYSIS OF STAFF COSTS, TRUSTEES REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES AND THE COST OF KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL.

| | 2024/25 | 2023/24 |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Salaries and wages | 125,318 | 109,280 |
| Social security costs | 13,252 | 10,477 |
| Pension costs | 13,019 | 11,636 |
| | <u>151,589</u> | <u>131,393</u> |

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2024: nil). Pension costs are wholly charged to unrestricted funds.

No remuneration was paid to any of the trustees during the year by the Mass Observation Archive. The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Director of the Archive. The Director and the Chair of Trustees are employed by the University of Sussex and their roles include some responsibilities for the Mass Observation Archive.