



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL

Item: 9

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 12 November 2025.

Orkney Archive Management Scheme.

Report by Director of Education, Communities and Housing.

1. Overview

- 1.1. The Orkney Archive Management Scheme sets out the strategic aims for the archive service between 2026 to 2030.
- 1.2. The Scheme covers all areas of archive service provision that are necessary to retain accredited status for the Orkney Archive.
- 1.3. The Scheme includes refreshed policies, strategies and plans which have been previously recommended for approval in 2017 and 2023 by the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee under prior Management Schemes.
- 1.4. The capacity to meet the objectives set out in the Management Scheme has been considered by the Team Manager (Libraries and Archives), and are achievable within current budget, resource and staffing levels.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Approve the Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2026-2030, attached as Appendix 1 to this Report.

3. Background

- 3.1. Orkney Library and Archive has previously utilised several quality assurance frameworks before a framework specifically designed to examine the provision of archive services in Scotland was established in June 2014, called the Archive Service Accreditation, which is the UK standard for archive services.
- 3.2. The standard defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging and supporting development.

- 3.3. The Archive Accreditation Standard consists of an assessment of three sections of service delivery:
- Organisational health.
 - Collections.
 - Stakeholders and their experiences.
- 3.4. Orkney Archive achieved accredited status in November 2017 and again in November 2023. In order to retain accredited status, the service must go through a formal review three years post initial award, followed by formal re-submission to the assessing body six years post award.

4. The Orkney Archive Service and Accreditation requirements

- 4.1. The Orkney Archive will go through the formal three-year review in the latter part of 2026, with formal re-submission due in late summer of 2029.
- 4.2. In order to retain accredited status, Orkney Archive must have an approved and current Forward Plan along with other appropriate policies and strategies relating to collections development, care and conservation and collections access. These policies, strategies and plans are all outlined in the Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2026-2030 attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

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Implications of Report

- 1. Financial** – Actions within the Orkney Archive Management Scheme require to be met from within existing approved budgets, or external funding, where available.
- 2. Legal** - Orkney Library and Archive provide the archival service for Orkney Islands Council and for the areas served by that Council. In terms of the Public Records (Scotland) Act of 2011, it is approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland as a place of deposit for records under their charge and superintendence. Orkney Archive is responsible for identifying records of long-term value, looking after these records in appropriate conditions, and maintaining their integrity, reliability and authenticity. These records are then made accessible to as many people as possible.
- 3. Corporate Governance** – Not applicable.
- 4. Human Resources** - None arising directly from this report.
- 5. Equalities** - An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

6. **Island Communities Impact** - An Island Communities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - ☐ Growing our economy.
 - ☒ Strengthening our Communities.
 - ☒ Developing our Infrastructure.
 - ☐ Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - ☐ Cost of Living.
 - ☒ Sustainable Development.
 - ☒ Local Equality.
 - ☐ Improving Population Health.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk** - None arising directly from this report.
10. **Risk** - The loss of Accredited status to Orkney Archive if the Archive Management Scheme is not approved.
11. **Procurement** - None arising directly from this report.
12. **Health and Safety** - None arising directly from this report.
13. **Property and Assets** - None arising directly from this report.
14. **Information Technology** - None arising directly from this report.
15. **Cost of Living** - None arising directly from this report.

List of Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2026-2030.

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix 3: Island Communities Impact Assessment.



Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2026-2030

Orkney Archive promotes understanding of the history of the Orkney Islands by selecting, preserving and providing access to the archives of Orkney Islands Council and its predecessors, local individuals, estates, businesses and organisations, as well as published material.

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1. Purpose of the management scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to gather together the suite of policies and plans that are required to ensure that archive services are provided in a professional manner, thereby meeting the requirements of national guidelines in addition to the requirements of its stakeholders. Stakeholders are defined as those that have an interest in the present and future activities of Orkney Archive, and include:

- Orkney Islands Council, as the body responsible to taxpayers for the allocation of public funding
- The local community, who have an interest in the archive's activities on a number of different levels, as taxpayers, members of local heritage groups, users and future users, donors and volunteers. These different classifications can, and often do, overlap
- Members of the academic community and their students
- Internationally, the descendants of emigrant Orcadians who retain an interest in their family history

The scheme defines why and how Orkney Archive acquires, preserves, and develops its collections, as well as how it facilitates access to the archive collections and published works in its care.

This scheme serves as a guide for archive service staff and demonstrates to external organisations and individuals that Orkney Archive has adopted recognised professional standards and aims to follow good practice.

2. The role of Orkney Archive

Orkney Archive provides the archival service for Orkney Islands Council and for the area served by that council. Under sections 53 and 54 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, Orkney Islands Council is empowered to make proper arrangements for the preservation and management of any records which have been transferred to them, created or acquired by them in the exercise of any of their functions or otherwise placed in their custody by way of gift, purchase, temporary or long-term deposit.

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 requires that a local authority publishes a records management plan, which includes particular provision about archiving, destruction or disposal of public records, including proper arrangements for records of enduring value to be transferred to an appropriate archive repository. Orkney Archive is identified within the Council's records management plan as the appropriate place of deposit for its archives.

Orkney Archive has also been accepted by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland as the archive for the records of Orkney Islands Council, and as a place of deposit for records under their charge and superintendence.

Orkney Archive seeks to abide by all relevant archive and records legislation, including but not limited to:

- Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011
- Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, 2002
- BS4971:2017, Conservation and care of archive and library collections
- BS16893:2018, Conservation of Cultural Heritage – specification for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections
- BSI PAS 197:2009 - Code of practice for cultural collections management
- Environmental Information (Scotland) regulations, 2004
- BS EN 16790:2026 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for protection of Cultural Heritage

3. Definition and value of archives

Archives are collections of materials (including documents, papers, books, electronic files, records, films, objects) that are deemed historically, culturally or socially important. Archives preserve these for future generations.

Orkney's archives are the documented memory of the islands. They tell our stories, enrich our lives, connect us with the past and give us a sense of identity. They may be used to provide evidence of our rights as individuals, organisations and communities and, through them, we can hold authorities to account. Archives can bring families and communities together by telling us who we are and where we come from.

4. Collections Management Policy

The purpose of the Collections Management policy is to define why and how Orkney Archive acquires, preserves, develops and facilitates access to the archive and published works collections in its care.

This policy is underpinned by the BSI *Code of practice for cultural collections management*, PAS 197:2009; and BS4971:2017, *Conservation and care of archive and library collections*.

4.1. Scope of the collections

The geographical area served by Orkney Archive is that governed by Orkney Islands Council, which encompasses an archipelago of around seventy islands, of which twenty are continually populated.

The archives are in a variety of formats – parchment or vellum, paper, linen, bound volumes, photographic material, magnetic tape, microform and electronic media. Ranging in size from a few centimetres to many metres the items document Orkney's diverse history and culture from the 15th Century to the present day and include archives of estate management, people, organisations and businesses throughout Orkney, reflecting the changing landscape, communities and economy over the past five centuries.

Orkney Archive is approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland as a place of deposit for records under his charge and superintendence. These include records of:

- Kirkwall Customs and Excise
- Justice of the Peace Court
- Orkney Sheriff Court
- Orkney Presbytery

Orkney Archive also manages, in partnership with Orkney Library, a significant collection of over 7000 books and other printed material relating to the Northern Isles – The Orkney Collection. It provides a local studies resource, which enhances the value of the archive as a centre for research and study.

4.2. Management of the archive collections

Orkney Archive selects and acquires unique and irreplaceable archive material of enduring historical significance to Orkney and printed material relating to the Northern Isles, in accordance with our Collections Development Policy, as detailed in section 10 below. The transfer of council records to the archive is governed by the Orkney Islands Council Retention and Disposal Schedule. Orkney Archive will also accept deposits or donations of archive collections from organisations and individuals for the benefit of future research. Orkney Archive Collections Development Policy aims to ensure that the collections continue to accurately reflect the lives of individuals and communities throughout the islands.

Orkney Archive lists, catalogues and provides information about the archive collections in accordance with the Collections Development Policy. Cataloguing is carried out by trained and qualified staff, under the direction of the Archivists. Collections are documented in accordance with appropriate professional standards and collection level entries are made available online on Your Scottish Archives (<https://yourscottisharchives.com>). Item level descriptions are also available online on the joint archive and museum catalogue (<https://oice-apw.adlibhosting.com/AIS/home>). Descriptions are created in accordance with the guidelines defined in the International Council on Archives General International Standard of Archival Description [ISAD(G)].

Orkney Archive seeks to preserve, care for and undertake archive conservation work on the archive collections in accordance with the guidance in BS4971:2017. Storage in purpose

built, environmentally controlled strongrooms, supervised use of the collections and assessment of condition, followed by appropriate remedial action, ensure that the archives are preserved to a high professional standard.

Conservation is essential to the long-term survival and accessibility of the archive collections and, when required, such work is outsourced to trained and qualified conservation professionals under the direction of the Archivist.

Access to the archives is provided in accordance with and respect to the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) Act 2002, DPA (2018)/UK GDPR, Environmental Information Regulations and current copyright legislation.

Direct public access is provided free of charge in the Orkney Archive searchroom, with staff present to assist visitors in finding the information they need and, where possible, to interpret the archive collections. Orkney Archive is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of the service.

Orkney Archive recognises the value, as well as the risks, of exhibiting original archive material. In this regard Orkney Archive aims to fulfil the requirements as set out in BS4971:2017.

All physical access to the records will be risk-assessed to ensure, as far as possible, the safety of both staff and service users.

4.3. Management of the local studies collection

The Orkney Collection, comprising of books and printed material relating to the Northern Isles, is managed, developed and preserved in accordance with the Orkney Library & Archive Stock Management Policy.

Professional advice and support in developing, classifying and cataloguing the Orkney Collection is provided by qualified librarians who are members of CILIP Scotland (The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland).

4.4. People and training

Orkney Archive manages, preserves and provides access to archives, books and printed material collections effectively by providing an adequate level of staffing and ensuring that the people who work in the Archive understand the value and significance of the collections and are appropriately skilled and trained. All staff are trained in the necessary skills to carry out their defined roles in supporting the preservation of our collections, and in accordance with Orkney Islands Council's Corporate Learning and Development Policy.

Orkney Archive manages the health, safety and well-being of all staff and volunteers working with the collections, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Orkney Islands Council's Corporate Health and Safety and Dignity at Work policies.

Professional archivists are encouraged to become members of the Archives and Records Association and are expected to adhere to its code of conduct and to continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Non-professional members of staff are encouraged to continue to develop their skills as part of an annual employee good conversation process.

4.5. Monitoring and review

The strategic aims for managing Orkney's archive collections have been incorporated into a four year Forward Plan. The Forward Plan is reviewed annually by the Orkney Library & Archive management team.

5.Orkney Archive Forward Plan 2026-2030

The aim of Orkney Archive is to safeguard the future of the unique, rich and irreplaceable archival heritage of Orkney and to provide an excellent and responsive archive service.

This is achieved by collecting and preserving archival collections and published material relating to past and present life in Orkney; by encouraging the use of archives and local history sources through the public services that are provided; and by increasing appreciation and enjoyment of Orkney's archival heritage through interpretational and promotional activities, which form an integral part of the work of Orkney Archive.

The Orkney Archive Forward Plan for 2026-2030 sets out the direction to be taken by the archive service to enable the service's continuing development and has been developed considering staff and stakeholders' feedback and is underpinned by a range of service policies and a regular monitoring schedule.

The challenges over the next four years are for Orkney Archive to continue to deliver excellent and high-quality archive and local history services against a background of decreasing budgets and resources, shifting staffing structures and the rising demands of preserving and managing digital archival collections as well as the physical collections traditionally held.

There is a great need to continue raising awareness of the services available to all service users, whether they live in Orkney or elsewhere. Extending online provision to catalogues and finding aids, as well as digital images is key to this, as is continuing to promote the service via outreach activities and partaking in local, national and international archival campaigns to highlight the significant collections held in Orkney Archive. The challenges around digital preservation and managing access to these collections is also a key deliverable for the archive service over the coming years.

5.1. Service profile

Orkney Archive forms part of the Orkney Library & Archive Service, which sits within the Active Communities remit within the Education, Communities and Housing Directorate provided by Orkney Islands Council.

5.1.1. Service aims

- To preserve the recorded heritage of Orkney for present and future generations by locating, collecting and preserving irreplaceable archive collections and printed material.

- To contribute to local democracy and local authority accountability by ensuring that the archives of Orkney Islands Council and its predecessor bodies are preserved for present and future use by the Council and members of the public.
- To reinforce the role of the archive as a keeper of community memory, promoting social inclusion and a sense of place, whilst recognising the differences between each island and community.
- To support and encourage research on all aspects of Orkney's heritage.
- To provide wider access to Orkney's documentary heritage for all, including those disadvantaged through disability, income, digital exclusions or geographical remoteness.
- To support ancestral tourism as an economic boost to all areas of Orkney.
- To provide a high quality and responsive archive and heritage service by effective and efficient management within available resources and in accordance with best practice.
- To respond to the challenge of managing digital information so that it is accessible now and remains so in the future.

5.1.2. Service delivery

Orkney Archive is operated via a single record office located at the Orkney Library & Archive building in Kirkwall. Office space is provided for two partner organisations in the building – Orkney Family History Society and the Orkney Talking Newspaper.

Orkney Archive provides public access to its collections in a supervised searchroom as well as via displays and exhibitions throughout the building and externally. Some archival documents have been electronically copied to provide archive material to the public at Stromness Library.

Orkney Archive has developed a strong partnership with Orkney Museum Services and supports them in the creation of exhibitions at various sites. Archive staff provide specialist advice on collection management to heritage groups and individuals throughout Orkney.

5.2. Review of Orkney Archive Forward Plan 2020-2025

There have been several successes in meeting the aims and objectives of the 2020-2025 Forward Plan and how the service as a whole is continuing to develop to meet the needs of the wider profession. There are also some areas which require further work and will be developed more fully as part of the 2026-2030 Forward Plan.

Five key headings were identified as areas to develop during 2020-2025:

5.2.1. A positive experience for all service users

Three desired outcomes were identified:

- Maintain levels of staffing
- Increase quality of indexes to archives available online
- Work in partnership with Orkney Museum Service to provide a joint online access to both service catalogues

All desired outcomes have been achieved over the course of 2020 to 2025.

Staffing levels have remained stable after the successful recruitment of a Digital Archivist. The successful applicant was recruited as a Digital Archivist Trainee and is in their final year of remote studying to complete the necessary Archives and Records Management diploma from the University of Dundee.

The archive worked in partnership with the Scottish Council on Archives to ensure that Orkney Archive collection descriptions were included in the newly launched 'Your Scottish Archives' portal. The portal includes catalogue descriptions from archives across Scotland, including local authority, health, business and community archives, and records of under-represented groups. There have also been volunteer projects in the archives working on indexing key archival collections as well as improving existing descriptions which increases accessibility, with links being made on the Orkney Library & Archive website.

A major milestone achieved in 2024 was the launch of the joint online catalogue of Orkney Archive and Museum Services. This has been an objective for the archive for many years, and it was a huge achievement to finally be able to showcase industry standard catalogue descriptions to remote users all over the world. The online catalogue will be continually updated.

5.2.2. A sustainable service that continues to meet national standards

The three desired outcomes of this objective were:

- Successful recruitment of a new Senior Archivist following the retirement of the previous incumbent and maintaining staffing levels
- Maintain Archive Accreditation achieved in 2017
- Increase revenue

All outcomes were achieved between the period 2020-2025, with some deviations in relation to the staffing structure within the archive.

A new Senior Archivist was recruited and started in the role in September 2021. That person then went on to become the Team Manager for Libraries and Archives in April 2022 when that post became vacant after a retirement. At that point it was decided to restructure the staffing within the archive to reflect the need of the service in relation to digital preservation, so the post of the senior archivist was removed. The current structure still has two professional posts, now made up of an Archivist and a Digital Archivist. The remaining staffing structure within the service remains unchanged.

The service worked very hard to retain accredited status in November 2023. After a successful panel visit, the service was commended for its impressive engagement activity as well as for its positive approach to developing digital capacity, with recommendations for future actions given. Two action points around future storage needs and collections care were marked as required actions, while the others were improvement actions. These action points will form part of the objectives for the 2026-2030 Forward Plan.

Over the course of 2020-2025 the amount of revenue the archive brings in has increased. More digital images and physical print requests have helped generate income, as well as publishing and commercial outfits using archive material in productions. This is something that will continue to be looked at going forward as budgets become more challenging.

5.2.3. Improve service user access to archive collections

The projected outcomes of this objective were:

- Successfully adapt access protocols for the archive to take account of restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic
- Target for cataloguing of 400 hours achieved each year
- Online access to full archive catalogue provided

Most of the outcomes were achieved over the course of 2020-2025, with cataloguing hours falling slightly below the projected targets for some of the Plan's period due to Covid-19 access difficulties.

Dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic was certainly challenging, as it was for all organisations, and complying with strict and ever-changing restrictions while still providing access for service delivery was a lot of work for the team. Updated risk assessments and access procedures were brought into force, and the archive was one of the first in the country to be open and allow public access, meaning as minimal disruption as possible for service users and staff. Some procedures brought in during Covid-19 have remained in place as they worked well for service delivery, so the likes of searchroom bookings and room layouts have continued beyond the restrictions being lifted.

Cataloguing proves to be a continuing challenge to achieve the desired number of hours over the course of a year. While staff make good progress to try and deal with a cataloguing backlog that has built up over a number of years, new collections are continually coming in and there is a balance that needs to be struck between cataloguing and access and ensuring that other duties like answering remote enquiries, dealing with physical visitors, outreach work, digital preservation and physical storage of the archives are achieved. This is something that will be looked upon further in the 2026-2030 Forward Plan.

As previously outlined, the online catalogue was launched in 2024 and so this outcome has been achieved and will be an online resource that is continually added to.

5.2.4. Ensure the care of archive collections for the future

From this objective, three outcomes were identified:

- Maintain or improve levels of care of collections in all formats
- Explore methods of increasing archival storage within the existing building, including the capacity to store and manage digital records
- Participate in development of Orkney Islands Council's electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) where it affects storage and access to archived electronic records, through membership of the Information Governance Group

Progress has been made against all three of these outcomes, and for some it is a continual process that will always be an ongoing task for the service to show best practice is being adopted.

Collections care is a key priority at all times for the archive service. Regular monitoring of environmental conditions in the repositories takes place and efforts are made to ensure the

air handling units run as they are supposed to, keeping the temperature and humidity levels within permitted limits. There have been challenges around these units and them breaking down on a regular basis, but engineers are called out as soon as problems are identified. There does need to be a plan made going forward about how to best manage this situation.

The Collections Care Policy and Plan are routinely updated, and this was a required action point from the Accreditation panel visit who felt that there needs to be some changes to reflect best practice within the sector. Therefore, this will also be carried over to the 2026-2030 Forward Plan.

The archive has been reaching storage capacity for a number of years, and temporary measures have been put in place to allow for some expansion within an empty office in the archive. While it was projected that this space would last us until the end of 2025, it is clear that a more permanent solution is required. This will also therefore be an objective that will carry over into the new Forward Plan.

Dedicated and secure server space has been allocated to the Archive for storage of its digital records, and this is something that will again continue and so will carry on into the future objectives of the service.

The Digital Archivist has taken over from the Team Manager attending the meetings of the Information Governance Group and receives project updates on the EDRMS project. The EDRMS project was delayed during Covid-19 but has successfully conducted trials with service areas moving data over to SharePoint. The project is now progressing with moving other service areas over to using SharePoint. Discussions have taken place to acknowledge that the archive needs to be part of the planning for how to access and manage archived electronic records in the longer term that service areas have no further business need of. This will also be an objective carrying forward to the 2026-2030 Forward Plan.

5.2.5. Provide volunteer working opportunities

The three outcomes attached to this final objective were:

- Maintain levels of interest from volunteers and variety of projects
- Continue partnership working with VAO
- Provide increased accessibility to collections for all service users

All three outcomes have been achieved and are seen as ongoing objectives for the archive service.

During the period 2020-2025, Orkney Archive has continued to successfully engage with volunteers of mixed ages and abilities. During Covid-19 restrictions there were challenges getting volunteers back into the building to safely work on projects, but slowly the volunteer numbers came back up to pre-pandemic numbers, and over the course of the Forward Plan, 2,909 hours of volunteer time has been recorded. Projects worked on included the ongoing Service Personnel database, the creation of a Photographic Archive database, indexing work on the Balfour Estate collection as well as Fereday Project listing.

Successful partnership working with Voluntary Action Orkney has continued over the period of the Plan, with all volunteering opportunities being advertised and processed by them. Partnership working with Developing the Young Workforce, who are part of the University of

the Highlands and Islands, has also led to volunteering opportunities in the archive for students with additional support needs to learn new skills and gain confidence in a new social setting. Both partnerships will continue through the term of the future Forward Plan.

Through all the hard work of the volunteers, indexes are constantly being added to and created, which has improved access to several collections, as well as descriptions being made available on the new online archive catalogue.

5.3. Key service aims and outcomes for 2026-2030

5.3.1. Continue to develop a sustainable service, meeting national standards

Key themes around this aim will be:

- Ensuring succession planning for the service
- Maintaining professional standards for the service
- Maintaining contacts with other archival services/bodies as well as national bodies.
- Developing and delivering income generation within the service

Projected outcomes:

- Retain Archive Accreditation status
- Maintaining staffing levels within the service and timely recruitment should any of the present staff members leave/retire
- Ensuring continual professional development opportunities are taken up by staff to keep skills up to date and awareness of best practice within the industry.
- Increase income from the likes of prints, digital photos, scanning and publications

5.3.2. Ensure the ongoing care of archive collections for the future

Key themes within this aim are:

- Meeting the relevant standards such as BS4971:2017 and BS16893:2018 with regards to conservation, care and storage
- Identifying records at risk and ways to provide alternative access
- Progressing with digital preservation and the management of electronic records, both internal and external

Projected outcomes:

- Achieving medium term storage solutions on site using an existing library space and fitting it out with archive quality shelving to provide five years' worth of accrual space, while a longer-term collections centre, which would accommodate archival collections, is explored
- Maintain or improve levels of care of collections in all formats, undertaking preservation assessments of collections
- Exploring the long-term management of OIC's electronic records once captured in the EDRMS system by working with the Information Governance Group

- Continued development of digital preservation processes in line with the reviewed and updated Digital Preservation Policy and Strategy

5.3.3. Continue to improve service user access to archive collections

Key themes within this aim are:

- Continue to look at ways to improve the accessibility of collections
- Increase online access to collections
- Increase access to digital collections
- Ensure collection information is kept up to date and relevant to service users' needs

Projected outcomes:

- Achieve 500 hours of accessioning and cataloguing over the course of each year
- Continue to add cataloguing descriptions and images to Axiell Collections and the online catalogue as well as updating entries online at Your Scottish Archives
- Provide robust access to digital collections both internally and externally
- Use social media and outreach work to highlight collections and increase awareness of the archive service

5.3.4. Continue to provide opportunities for volunteer working

Key themes within this aim are:

- Providing opportunities for people of all ages to contribute their time, learn new or make use of existing skills, and assist in making archive collections more accessible.
- Supporting those with challenges to positively contribute to the wider community
- Supporting equality and diversity in the workplace

Projected outcomes:

- Maintain or increase levels of interest from volunteers for a variety of projects
- Continue partnership working with Voluntary Action Orkney and Developing the Young Workforce Orkney
- Providing increased accessibility to collections for all service users

5.3.5. Maintaining a service that provides a positive experience for all

Key themes for this aim are:

- Maintaining support for all archive staff to ensure they have the skills necessary to provide an excellent archive service
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place to measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction levels
- Develop and improve access to online information about the collections and access to digital content

Projected outcomes:

- Levels of staffing maintained and identifying areas where development is required
- Continue to engage with the ARA visitor and remote user surveys on an annual basis to understand the needs of archive users
- Continue to expand the joint online catalogue with Orkney Museum Service, uploading new content and images to a professional standard
- Develop procedures for ensuring access to digital collections in a way that meets customer expectations while ensuring professional standards and access requirements are still fully met

5.4. Conclusions

The Orkney Archive Forward Plan 2026-2030 provides the necessary structure to continue building on the strengths of the archive service and ensure the continuing quality of its provision.

The archive provides a range of services which benefit not only Orkney residents, but those further afield. And while it is important to recognise the financial constraints across all Orkney Islands Council services, including the archive, it is imperative to acknowledge the economic benefits the archive brings. Orkney Archive attracts ancestral tourism visits, researchers from all over the world, as well as generating income from images and media and commercial publishing rights. The educational benefits of the archive service can also be seen in the work the staff do to support historical and cultural learning in the local primary schools and in supporting the annual Orkney Heritage Society Fereday Project.

With online access to collection information now achieved via the online catalogue, it is essential that the service continues to update and add to this resource. This requires the continuation of accessioning and cataloguing collections to professional standards and promoting the service across various methods such as via the Library & Archive website, social media, outreach events and with colleagues across the country.

Digital Preservation and access to digital collections continues to be an area of focus for Orkney Archive. The Digital Preservation Policy and Strategy will focus on priorities identified for the four years ahead and will require the archive team to work with various Information Governance and IT colleagues within OIC, as well as more broadly across the archive profession.

The next four years will be challenging but rewarding for the archive team and the service as a whole and will see the reapplication for Archive Accreditation take place late in 2029.

6. Digital Preservation Policy

6.1. Scope of policy

The purpose of the Digital Preservation Policy is to define why and how Orkney Archive acquires, preserves, develops, and facilitates access to the digital records in its care.

The Policy reflects the overall mission and objectives of the archive service and should be read in conjunction with the Collections Management, Collections Care and Conservation, Collections Development and Access Policies.

This Policy also needs to be read in conjunction with Orkney Archive's Digital Preservation Strategy which will outline how the service will achieve effective and efficient practices in digital preservation to ensure the long-term survival and accessibility of its digital collections.

6.2. Scope of collections

The geographical area served by Orkney Archive is that governed by Orkney Islands Council (OIC), and the types of digital records taken into the custody of the archives reflects those of a physical nature (paper, parchment, photographic, microfilm etc) and represent the Orkney Islands Council and its predecessor bodies, local estates, people, organisations, and businesses, reflecting the changing landscape, communities, and economy.

Orkney Archive will also be the place of deposit for any future electronic records given over to the service by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland under their charge and superintendence, which can include Court and Church records, for example.

6.3. Professional standards

Orkney Archive seeks to be guided by all relevant legislative and professional standards as set out in the Collections Management Policy, as well as those specifically relating to digital preservation, including but not limited to:

- *ISO 14721:2012 Space Data and Information Transfer Systems – Open Archival Information System – Reference Model (OAIS)* - provides a systematic framework for understanding and implementing the archival concepts needed for long-term digital information preservation and access, and for describing and comparing architectures and operations of existing and future archives. It describes roles, processes and methods for long-term preservation.
- *ISO/TR 18492:2005 Long-term preservation of electronic document-based information* - provides a practical methodology for the continued preservation and retrieval of authentic electronic document-based information and to ensure authenticity of records beyond the lifetime of original information keeping systems.
- *ISO 16175:2011 Principles and functional requirements for records in electronic office environments* - relates to electronic document and records management systems, and the need to maintain records over time and that format obsolescence issues need to be considered in the specification of these electronic systems.
- PREMIS (Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies) - data dictionary and supporting tools that have been specifically developed to support the preservation of digital material.

It is important to note that the rate of change in technologies and standards make it impossible to base a policy solely on standards. A mix of standards and best practice that meets the need of the archive service will form a comprehensive strategy to meet the needs of the digital materials held and preserved by the archive service.

6.4. Roles and responsibilities

The Team Manager (Libraries & Archives) is responsible for developing the Digital Preservation Policy and ensuring that it is implemented, monitored, and reviewed regularly (at least every three years), while also ensuring that there are sufficiently trained staff with appropriate knowledge to accomplish long-term objectives in this area.

The Digital Archivist will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and subsequent strategy is put into practice within the archive, as well as being the main point of contact with internal and external agencies relating to digital preservation. This will include, but is not limited to, OIC IT, Information Governance, Information Security and Digital Communications colleagues, as well as external agencies such as the Digital Preservation Coalition, ASLAWG sub-groups relating to digital preservation and depositors of digital records.

The Archivist and Digital Archivist will work closely to align practices where possible between physical and digital collections to ensure best practice across all archival collections in the care of Orkney Archive.

6.5. Digital record keeping

6.5.1. Principles

Orkney Archive undertakes to preserve and offer access to the digital records in its care.

Relevant national standards and best practice are followed, and a professional code of ethics (Archives and Records Association Code of Ethics) is observed.

It may be necessary to apply appropriate techniques to stabilise digital collections to ensure long term access. Such interventions will be documented, and appropriate metadata collected to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the digital records.

6.5.2. Formats

Orkney Archive will strive to accept most formats, but there may be some that cannot be supported. In this instance the Digital Archivist will discuss options with the depositor.

Depositors will not be advised to convert file formats pre-deposit as this may remove essential metadata from the records.

Orkney Archive may create additional copies of records in other formats for preservation and access purposes, but the original deposited file will always be retained.

6.5.3. Metadata

Depositors will be encouraged to supply as much technical and descriptive metadata as possible.

Assistance can be provided by the Digital Archivist to help gather metadata for deposits.

Applications may be used to extract technical metadata, such as those advised by The National Archives and the Digital Preservation Coalition and approved for use by OIC IT.

6.5.4. Deposits and accessions

The deposit process for digital records will take more time than for the physical analogue records held by Orkney Archive. Digital deposits require to be prepared for transfer to digital archive storage.

The legal deposit and accessioning process remains the same as it is for physical analogue records.

It is imperative that digital deposits retain their authenticity and are properly documented to retain the chain of custody/ownership.

The Digital Archivist will support depositors through this process in the same way the Archivist does.

6.5.5. Storage

The archive will store at least two copies of digital records in separate locations, with one of these being offsite from the archive building.

Storage for digital collections will be secure and have methods of being backed up to prevent the potential for data loss and corruption.

Long term storage solutions will be discussed with OIC IT, Information Governance and Information Security colleagues as digital collections continue to expand.

6.5.6. Cataloguing

Digital records will be catalogued using, where possible, the same style and format as the analogue/physical collections in the custody of the archives.

Cataloguing standards will be met when cataloguing digital collections.

Cataloguing to item level is preferred, but depending on the size, complexity, and organisation of the digital records this may not always be possible. If item level cataloguing is not achievable, a note will be put on the catalogue entry to make this clear to all researchers.

6.5.7. Appraisal

Digital records, just like analogue/physical records, in the care of the archive will be subject to appraisal during the cataloguing process. Any digital material not in keeping with the Collections Development Policy will be offered back to depositors or securely destroyed after consultation with them.

6.5.8. Access

Access to digital collections will, where possible, be provided in line with Orkney Archive Access Policy.

Finding aids will be produced for digital collections as they are for analogue/physical collections to facilitate access.

Access to digital collections will be given via public access computers in the public searchroom, or by sending electronically to a person's email depending on what is being requested, size and format etc.

Access restrictions will apply to digital collections in the same way as they do for analogue/physical collections. Reasons for restrictions may include, but are not limited to, Data Protection legislation, copyright, political and commercial sensitivity, and will be discussed and agreed with depositors prior to the collections coming into the custody of the archive.

At present, there are no plans to access digital collections in an online environment apart from when individual items may be featured in archival blogs, on the library and archive's other social media platforms, or as images on the future online catalogue.

6.5.9. Preservation and care

Digital deposits will be fixity checked on accession into the archives. This will be the case for any copies made by the archives for preservation or access purposes.

Fixity checks will also be carried out at set intervals to ensure the bitstream remains the same as at time of deposit.

Such checks will remain in place and be a manual process for the Digital Archivist until such times as digital preservation software may be procured to make such checks automated.

6.5.10. Withdrawal

The process for withdrawing digital collections will be discussed with the depositor at the time of deposit and will be in line with what is discussed for analogue/physical collections.

Gifted digital deposits cannot be withdrawn from Orkney Archive.

6.6. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, and in line with any changes to the Digital Preservation Strategy as required. As with other archival policies, this policy and accompanying strategy is incorporated into the wider Orkney Archive Management Scheme and is reviewed and submitted for approval by the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee of OIC.

7. Digital Preservation Strategy 2026-2030

7.1. Scope of strategy

This strategy provides a framework for Orkney Archive's digital preservation activities and focus between 2026 and 2030. It clearly identifies strategic priorities within this area, reflecting on the Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy to achieve effective and efficient practices in digital preservation, ensuring the long-term survival and accessibility of its digital collections.

7.2. Digital collections

Orkney Archive currently holds approximately 1.2TB of digital material, mainly in the format of digitised audio, photographic and text-based files. There is great potential to also add digitised newspapers and manuscripts, electoral registers, and personal/private digital archives to the collections in the future.

It must also be acknowledged that a lot of Orkney Islands Council (OIC) electronically created files, which have a legislative requirement to be preserved or are deemed to be historically significant, will also pass into the archive's possession.

Digital content is acquired under robust accessioning and deposit procedures just like physical analogue records. Accession forms and deposit guidance is available. Records which are analogue and are subsequently digitised are held under the same deposit conditions.

Currently, most records being deposited in Orkney Archive are traditional analogue records; however, the amount of digitised content is steadily increasing, as well as the offerings of more born digital records, including official OIC electronically created content. Orkney Archive recognises the need to standardise and implement procedures to ensure it can preserve such digital content in the long term like it does for its physical collections.

7.3. Challenges

There are many technical challenges surrounding the preservation of digital preservation. Technological obsolescence and the pace of change in technology is a massive test to ensure that digital content remains accessible as well as authentic and reliable.

Digital content requires earlier intervention than traditional, physical records. The fragile nature of digital records means issues around data integrity and its authenticity need to be addressed as it is easier to make unnoticed changes to digital files, as well as managing the process of appropriate changes and accompanying metadata.

The fragile state of digital storage media is also a cause for concern. Corruption and bit rot can render digital content inaccessible and at a swift pace. This needs to be actively observed and managed to ensure long term accessibility and usability.

The long-term management, storage and accessibility of digital records is a challenge, and how OIC manages its digital records to ensure statutory obligations are met with regards to record series which require long term retention. A move to a new EDRMS goes some way to beginning to tackle these challenges, but it is not a permanent solution to ensure long term management and accessibility.

Staff expertise and learning new skills to enable Orkney Archive to properly look after its digital collections can be challenging when trying to keep pace with technological advancements and shifting best practice.

7.4. Review of strategic priorities 2023-2025

The digital preservation strategy of Orkney Archive between 2023 and 2025 was oriented around establishing dedicated staff resources, surveying existing digital collections, creating workflow priorities, as well as embedding key processes and procedures to ensure the long-

term preservation of digital records following the necessary professional standards required. The strategic aims fitted in with the overall mission statement of Orkney Archive as well as the general principles of the Collections Management, Development and Care policies.

7.4.1. Staff development and resources

By 2025:

- The Digital Archivist trainee will be close to completing their formal Archive and Records Management qualification – [Ongoing](#)
- Collaborative working with OIC IT, Information Governance and Information Security colleagues will be standard practice – [Ongoing](#)
- Outcomes of the ASLWAG Digital Preservation sub-group will have been achieved, or at least well under way. The sharing of best practice, processes and procedures should be inbuilt to the reporting process of the group and wider archive network – [Ongoing](#)
- Budgets and resources for digital preservation will have been investigated and assessed against current Archive funding – [Ongoing](#)

7.4.2. Assessing capabilities for digital preservation

By the end of 2023 Orkney Archive will have:

- Used the NDSA Levels of Preservation and DPC's Rapid Assessment Model to inform where the Archive is sitting regarding its capabilities for digital preservation – [Achieved](#)

By 2025 Orkney Archive will have:

- Used the above Models of assessment as live documents, updating our progress in each of the categories to inform future strategy and practice within Orkney Archive and the wider OIC – [Ongoing](#)

7.4.3. Surveying existing collections

By 2025 Orkney Archive will have:

- Conducted a survey into its existing digital collections, capturing necessary data to inform any collections at immediate risk, and priorities for action - [Achieved](#)
- Informed procedures and best practice on areas such as file formats, metadata, security, integrity, and access – [Achieved](#)

7.4.4. Procedures for transferring and accessioning digital collections

By 2025 Orkney Archive will have:

- Well established procedures in place for the transfer and accessioning of digital records into its custody. This includes guidance being in place for Archive staff, depositors and record creators around accessioning and the overall process for digital content – [Ongoing](#)
- Accepted tools embedded into such procedures which will ensure virus and integrity checks happen as standard, with metadata extraction and capture happening for each digital record coming into the custody of the Archive - [Achieved](#)
- Procedures in place for the secure transfer of OIC created content to a dedicated Archive space within the OIC EDRMS, with access controls established – [Ongoing](#)

7.4.5. Storage of digital collections

By the end of 2023 Orkney Archive will have:

- Agreed with OIC IT colleagues to secure space on a dedicated OIC server, and safely transferred copies of the Archive's digital collections to this server to give better resilience to the records and their future access - [Achieved](#)

By 2025 we will have:

- Looked at longer term storage needs and solutions that could be put in place to properly manage the digital collections coming into the custody of the Archive - [Ongoing](#)
- Assessed the longevity of the records being held in the OIC Microsoft 365/SharePoint environment as part of the EDRMS project and how those with permanent retention will be managed in the long-term by the Archives - [Ongoing](#)

7.5. Strategic priorities 2026-2030

7.5.1. Staff development and resources

The Digital Archivist trainee, who is enrolled on the Dundee University Archives and Records Management Diploma course, should achieve formal qualification early 2026. The post title will then become Digital Archivist and will be dedicated to the implementation and management of digital preservation activities within Orkney Archive and contribute to wider OIC digital preservation initiatives.

There will be ongoing opportunities for staff to develop and enhance their skills in digital preservation, through formal courses and continuing professional development prospects. This will ensure that there is a staffing skill set to sufficiently deliver and manage the preservation of Orkney Archive digital collections. The Digital Archivist will cascade training and knowledge share with team members.

The Digital Archivist will continue to work collaboratively with OIC Information Technology (IT), Information Governance and Information Security teams to enhance knowledge on the principles and practices required to receive, manage, and provide access to both internal and external digital collections. This collaborative work will ensure there is a wider OIC approach to digital preservation and safeguard that archive practice is in line with OIC information security and governance policy.

The Digital Preservation sub-group of the Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group (ASLAWG) is ongoing, and the Digital Archivist will join other representatives from across the local authority archive sector to look at best practice in digital preservation and look at common processes and procedures to align what archives are doing across the country. This sub-group will be a means to look at resources required, and lessons learned from other services who are further along in their digital preservation journey, and the tools and systems put in place to judge what will work best here in Orkney Archive. This should also help inform what budgets may be required and the potential need for separate resources from the current Archive funding structure.

By 2030:

- The Digital Archivist will be fully qualified, having completed the Archive and Records Management Diploma
- The Digital Archivist will be cascading training to archive team members and relevant CPD opportunities will be made available to all staff members
- Continued collaborative working with Information Governance, IT and IT security colleagues
- Continued contributions to the Digital Preservation sub-group of ASLAWG
- Budgets and resources for digital preservation continue to be investigated and assessed against current Archive funding

7.5.2. Assessing capabilities for digital preservation

To gain meaningful insight into moving forward with digital preservation, it is necessary to assess the risks associated with digital records and what processes and procedures are already in place.

It is an ongoing priority to use toolkits and assessment models to accurately assess Orkney Archive's capabilities for digital preservation and define where the Archive and wider organisation is at present for record keeping.

Toolkits such as the NDSA Levels of Preservation and DPC's Rapid Assessment Model will continue to be used to define where Orkney Archive are regarding capabilities for digital preservation. The outcomes of which will help inform future strategy and practices with regards to preserving digital collections within the Archive and wider OIC environment.

By 2030:

- Continue to use the NDSA Levels of Preservation and DPC's Rapid Assessment Model to inform on the capabilities of digital preservation and areas for action within the Archive

7.5.3. Surveying existing collections

There is currently 231.49GB of born digital collections preserved in the Orkney Archive, but there are many records created by both OIC and external bodies that have been created electronically which will be scheduled to be transferred to the Archive for long term preservation in the future.

The bulk of the digital collections within the Archive are records that have been digitised by the Archivists over several years. These collections mainly consist of audio, photographic and text-based files. A survey of all digital collections held in the Archive has been conducted by the Digital Archivist, capturing information on file formats, essential metadata, security, integrity and any access requirements. Processes and procedures for conducting a digital collections survey have been documented and are consistent with the Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy.

The aim for the next few years is to look at internal transfers of OIC records identified as requiring long term/permanent retention by conducting a similar survey and determining relevant workflows and procedures to allow those digital records to transfer over to the Archive.

By 2030:

- Conduct surveys into OIC digital records identified as requiring long term/permanent preservation and capture necessary data to inform collections or records at risk and priorities for action
- Continue to make sure processes and procedures reflect best practice on areas such as file formats, metadata, security, integrity and access

7.5.4. Procedures for transferring and accessioning digital collections

A formal procedure has been developed for accessioning external digital collections into Orkney Archive. This legal deposit and accessioning process reflects that already in place for physical analogue records, and ensures the authenticity, collected metadata and integrity of the digital records coming into the Archive are documented to accurately reflect the chain of custody so far in the records' life cycle.

Procedures and guidance now need to be developed for dealing with internal depositors and transfers of electronic records from OIC service areas to the Archive. This documentation will help colleagues within OIC know what is expected of them during the accessioning and transfer period to ensure vital information is passed over along with the digital assets.

It will be imperative for the Digital Archivist to continue working with OIC's IT, Information Governance, and Information Security colleagues. Appropriate programs have been secured with the help of IT colleagues for virus checking, fixity checking and metadata capture, and these will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that the digital collections being preserved in the Archive are maintained and traceable through continual auditing and reporting processes.

The OIC EDRMS project being rolled out within OIC will see electronically created records from OIC service areas stored and managed within Microsoft365/SharePoint. While there has been input from the Archives since the start of the project, there is a need for the Digital Archivist to ensure that processes and procedures are put in place to manage the transfer and access to a dedicated Archive space within the EDRMS.

By 2030:

- Assess and implement workflows for internal transfers of electronic records to the Archive, including guidance on accessions, fixity checking and metadata

- Continue to work with IT and Information Governance colleagues
- Ensure records which require permanent preservation are properly managed and appropriate checks routinely carried out in the SharePoint environment

7.5.5. Storage and accessibility of digital collections

With the progression of the EDRMS project, the medium-term storage of OIC electronically created content which has long term preservation requirements will be relatively stable. There will still need to be all the necessary checks put in place to ensure metadata capture, integrity and authenticity and access controls, but the environment will be secure, and the Archive will have access to the content.

The digital collections already held by Orkney Archive are currently stored on secure OIC server space, on networked drives, external hard drives, and USB flash drives. External hard drives are located in a variety of locations to allow for the preservation of digital collections in geographically different locations to the Archive which reduces the risks of information loss, follows industry best practice and is in line with Orkney Archive Digital Preservation Policy and its Disaster Plan.

A big challenge for Orkney Archive is around access to digital collections in a way that provides safe and manageable access to records, while considering sensitive data and other access restrictions. This is more challenging in ways compared to physical analogue records. While the long-term aim would be for online access to digital collections, for the short to medium term, access via a dedicated PC in the public searchroom will be the objective.

By 2030:

- Monitor space on OIC secure server space to continue being able to store digital collections safely and securely, and continue to back up collections in various locations to give resilience and secure future access
- Assess the longevity of the records being held in the OIC Microsoft 365/SharePoint environment as part of the EDRMS project and how those with permanent retention will be managed in the long-term by the Archives.
- Establish, with the assistance of OIC IT colleagues, an access station PC in the Archive searchroom to allow secure and controlled access to digital collections

7.6. Conclusions and review

Orkney Archive has made good progress in their digital preservation journey, with a clear plan of what next steps need to be to ensure this progress continues while complying with best practice and in keeping with professional standards which are already upheld when looking after the physical analogue collections.

Good use is being made of available toolkits, programs and assessment models to show the areas where more development is required, and continued working with wider OIC colleagues and service areas is essential for the Archive to meet the outcomes of this strategy, and to inform future progress.

Longer term storage and access solutions needs to be considered by Orkney Archive and OIC. Solutions identified in 7.5.5 will cover short to medium term risk regarding digital

preservation. This will inform future strategy requirements and will require joint resourcing and planning across OIC.

8. Collections Care and Conservation Policy

The Collections Care and Conservation Policy should be read in conjunction with the Collections Management Policy, as detailed in section 4 above, which describes the statutory and legal basis for Orkney Archive, the preservation and management of its collections and the framework of standards within which it operates.

The Collections Care and Conservation Policy outlines the strategic approach of Orkney Archive in caring for and conserving the archive collections to ensure that they will be available for future generations to use, learn from and enjoy. It provides a comprehensive statement on the preservation of the archive collections and communicates principles that guide the conservation activities necessary for long term protection and security.

The policy is underpinned by the *BSI Code of practice for cultural collections management*, PAS 197:2009 and BS4971:2017, *Conservation and care of archive and library collections*.

The Archivists and Team Manager are responsible for developing the Collections Care and Conservation policy and ensuring that it is implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly (at least every three years); ensuring that funding is available for collections care, conservation, and sufficient trained staff with appropriate knowledge to accomplish long-term objectives in this area.

8.1. Collections care and conservation principles

Orkney Archive stores archival material in secure and suitable accommodation, with appropriate environmental conditions, which are controlled and monitored weekly.

Relevant national standards and best practice are followed and a professional code of ethics (Archives & Record Association Code of Ethics) in all aspects of collections care and conservation is observed.

Appropriate techniques are used to stabilise and slow down further deterioration of archives with the minimum of intervention.

Access to archives is provided, whilst ensuring their protection and minimising risks from handling.

8.2. Accommodation for the archive collections

Orkney Archive aims to fulfil the requirements of BS4971:2017.

The archive collections are housed in purpose-built accommodation comprising four strongrooms situated within a dedicated archive area of the Orkney Library & Archive building, which was completed and opened in 2003. There are also collections now housed in vacant office space within the building as the strongrooms reach capacity.

Archive collections are stored in the strongrooms according to their physical nature and condition, on clearly labelled mobile and static steel shelving, wall mounted wooden map racks and in steel cabinets.

Orkney Islands Council's Infrastructure and Organisational Development Service inspects and maintains the building and carries out regular testing and servicing of the fire detection system. Members of the Library & Archive management team carry out weekly tests of the intruder alarm system.

The Orkney Library & Archive building is constructed of materials designed to withstand fire and is fitted with fire doors and smoke detectors throughout the building. An automated fire detection and alarm system is linked to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Automatic fire extinction is not installed because of the building design controls in place. Fire extinguishers of a type appropriate to their locations are available throughout the building.

The Fire Risk Assessment for the Orkney Library & Archive building considers the risk to the archive collections as well as to staff and visitors and documents the measures in place to minimise the risk of fire.

All archive accommodation is situated on the first floor of the building to provide protection against the dangers of flooding.

8.3. Security of the archive collections

The Orkney Library & Archive building is situated in a well-lit area of Kirkwall and has its own external lighting, reducing the risk of vandalism and theft. Internally, an intruder alarm system and CCTV cameras are fitted throughout the building.

All doors are fitted with appropriate locks. Archive strongrooms are manually locked by key with access restricted to authorised staff only. The Archive Searchroom is where archive materials are consulted by service users and is always supervised by at least one member of staff.

Lockers have been provided for visitors to secure personal possessions and to ensure that large items and bags are not brought into the public access area of the Searchroom.

8.4. Environmental control and monitoring

Orkney Archive aims to provide environmental conditions which conform to BS4971:2017. An environmental control system operates in all four strongrooms. The current system was installed in 2019 under the supervision of Orkney Islands Council's Development and Infrastructure Service.

Environmental conditions within each strongroom are set according to recommendations. Relative humidity and temperature in all storage areas are monitored on a weekly basis by archive staff.

For collections housed in areas which are not environmentally controlled, the conditions are regularly monitored and generally remain within permitted parameters set out in BS4971:2017.

The windows in the archive storage areas are blocked with light tight material to protect against the risk of damage by UV light and assist with environmental control. Lighting within the building is provided by fluorescent tubes which are protected by diffusers. Windows in public and staff working areas are fitted with vertical blinds and tinted glass.

Orkney Archive recognises the importance of a safe clean environment in the storage areas and the value of good housekeeping as part of collections care. All strongrooms are cleaned regularly and are regularly inspected by the Archivists as part of the routine monitoring of these areas.

At Orkney Archive collections care is the responsibility of every member of staff. All staff work closely with the Archivists to minimise the risk of infestation and of carrying and transporting contaminated material within a collection. Wherever possible potential new accessions are surveyed at source or, if not, are treated within a designated area of the building to prevent cross contamination.

8.5. Packaging and storage of the archive collections

Proper cleaning, packaging and storage reduces the risk of damage to the archive collections. Orkney Archive uses appropriate conservation products; high quality acid-free paper and board, polyester sleeves, unbleached tape and plastic paperclips which meet the technical specifications recommended for archive use.

Boxes constructed from acid-free board are ordered flat packed from a specialist supplier and assembled by archive staff. These, together with acid-free folders and envelopes provide the optimum storage solution for our archive collections; light, but strong, reusable packaging which is safe and easy for staff to handle.

The physical condition of all new accessions is assessed in a designated area. Contaminated archive material, which has the potential to harm or infect other collections, is placed in isolation until a solution can be arranged.

Archives are stored in the strongrooms according to their physical nature and condition - on shelves, in cabinets, drawers and boxes as appropriate for their format. The location of items is clearly indicated by shelf signs and labels, as well as within the archive catalogue.

A tidy and safe environment is sought in the strongrooms. Ladders and trolleys are provided to aid staff access and transport of heavy boxes and regular inspections are carried out by senior Library & Archive staff.

8.6. Conservation treatments

Conservation is an essential consideration for the long-term survival and accessibility of archive collections. Orkney Archive does not employ a qualified conservator, so any conservation work required is outsourced to appropriate qualified archive conservators.

Orkney Archive recognises that regular conservation audits would provide the best protection for the records in our care, however due to the length of opening hours and staffing levels, completing an audit is currently not possible but is included, as recognition of its importance, within our Collections Care and Conservation Plan, as detailed below in section 9. Archive staff inspect documents during the retrieval and return process, and regular weekly inspections of collections and their condition will commence in 2026. Any information

regarding conservation treatment required and its priority is recorded in the archive collections management system (Axiell Collections). Individual items are prioritised for treatment depending on demand, the context of the item within the collection and/or its physical condition.

Basic preservation practices (cleaning and putting records in acid free enclosures for example) are carried out with the minimum of intervention in order to retain the integrity and authenticity of the item. The future storage format, storage location and anticipated use of the item also influence the level of treatment applied.

8.7. Access and handling

Orkney Archive provides access to collections in accordance with its Access Policy (see section 11 below). Archives catalogued as 'Open' are available to all users for consultation in appropriately controlled and supervised conditions and in accordance with the searchroom rules. Uncatalogued material may be produced at the discretion of archive staff.

Access to archives is subject to legitimate closure requirements, the reasonable wishes of the depositor and the physical condition of the item.

Orkney Archive supports the use of surrogate copies which are made available where the condition of the original material is unstable, or where current or anticipated use will pose a threat to its survival. Researchers are encouraged to use surrogate copies where possible to minimise handling and reduce the risk of further damage to the original.

Staff and volunteers are trained in handling archives and staff promote best practice in the searchroom. Appropriate aids are provided to researchers, such as foam book wedges, protective polyester sheets, and a variety of weights, to protect books and archives. Training is given in the use of these aids.

Orkney Archive recognises the value of using digital technology to increase access to archives and safeguard the collections. Full archival descriptions are available remotely via the joint Orkney Archive and Museum online catalogue as well as being available on the Your Scottish Archive online catalogue.

Digital copies of documents provide remote access and are supplied at the discretion of archive staff, in accordance with copyright laws and the reasonable wishes of the depositor. These digital copies are saved to decrease the need for future handling/copying.

Orkney Archive recognises both the benefits of displaying archives and the risks of exhibiting original material. Material from the archive collection is made available for exhibition in line with national and professional standards.

8.8. Emergency planning

Orkney Archive subscribes to Harwell Drying Restoration Priority User Service which, in the event of a disaster, will provide recovery and emergency salvage services. The Orkney Library & Archive building is constructed to retard the spread of fire and the joint service has procedures in place that, in the event of a fire, ensures protection of staff and users. These procedures have provision for staff training and testing.

In the event of a serious event that endangers the archive collection, staff will follow the procedures set out in the Orkney Archive Disaster Plan, which has been created with the assistance of staff at Harwell.

8.9. Communication and training

Orkney Archive provides advice and guidance on best practice and the importance of collections care to other Orkney Islands Council Services, external organisations and institutions, community groups, owners of private archives and the general public.

Staff communicate an understanding of the nature and value of archives and the importance of collections care and appropriate conservation through their interaction with users, outreach activities and exhibitions. All staff and volunteers are trained in handling archives and in safe working practices.

Orkney Archive maintains active professional relationships with the archival and preservation communities and organisations in the UK, including the Archives and Records Association and ASLAWG (Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group).

9. Collections Care and Conservation Plan

The Collections Care and Conservation Plan will enable Orkney Archive to minimise the risk of harm to the collections we hold, from handling and from the environment. It should be read in conjunction with the Collections Care and Conservation Policy, as detailed in section 8 above, and the Orkney Archive Forward Plan, as detailed in section 5 above, which set out the overall institutional strategic approach to Collections Care. This Plan is a more practical guide to procedures and Orkney Archive's programme to maintain or improve care of collections over time.

9.1. Building

The collections of Orkney Archive are held at the Orkney Library & Archive, Junction Road, Kirkwall. The building is maintained by Orkney Islands Council. The building is the collections' primary protection against the external environment, damage or theft by others, and is fit for purpose, providing significant protection from the elements and being of appropriate strength and quality of construction.

Floors are capable of safely supporting the loads placed on them. Changes in use, particularly in storage areas, will only be made after an assessment of loading limits.

It is recognised that the nature of archive collections is to continue to grow, and that the current storage space is close to capacity. It is therefore vital that additional suitable storage space is identified within the timescale of this Management Scheme.

The building is regularly inspected by library and archive staff and any potential threats, such as missing roofing slates, blocked gutters and water ingress are identified and reported to Development and Infrastructure Services for action.

Plant and equipment, such as lifts, are inspected periodically, in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations. Portable appliances, fire extinguishers, burglar and smoke alarms, and circuit testing are all carried out at agreed times either by appropriately trained staff or contractors.

9.2. Collections condition overview based on assessment

Orkney Archive's collections contain a broad range of materials with varying needs in terms of care and conservation. To ensure that an awareness of the condition of the collection and its needs are maintained, material will be subject to regular assessment.

Assessment takes place through regular inspection during use of the collections and by this method awareness of the needs of individual items and groups of materials continues to grow.

Assessment considers the following risks to the collections:

- The nature and vulnerability of different materials and the condition of individual items.
- Potential risks from other items and materials in the collection.
- Environmental factors, including temperature, relative humidity, light, airborne pollution and pests.
- Accidental or malicious damage.
- Theft or loss.
- Emergencies and the risks posed by the response of the emergency services to such an event.

9.3. Conservation requirement

In order to provide all items in the collections with appropriate care, and that priorities for conservation are identified, the following procedures will be followed:

- Items currently in the collection are visually inspected during the retrieval and return process, as well as during weekly shelving checks. After assessment, the requirement for conservation treatment will be recorded in Axiell Collections, being noted as High, Medium or Low priority. It is then possible to create a prioritised list of any items requiring conservation. New acquisitions will be assessed on arrival at the Archive.
- When conservation work is required, it will be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced conservators.
- It is recognised that care of the collection would be enhanced by the carrying out of a full preservation survey.

9.4. Environmental monitoring

The following ranges of temperature relative humidity (RH) are recommended (BS 4971:2017, *Conservation and care of archive and library collections*) as a means of preventing even sensitive archive materials from being compromised when stored alongside less critically sensitive archival material:

- 13 °C to 23°C

- 35% RH to 60% RH

The annual average temperature in the archival storage areas should not be above 18°C however, and while there are allowances for seasonal fluctuations between these ranges, sudden and frequent variations will lead to the deterioration of the archival documents.

Environmental measurements are collected, evaluated and retained in an environmental monitoring and control file. Professional archive staff will regularly review records of relative humidity and temperature and will notify Development & Infrastructure Services if these fall outside the recommended range so that appropriate action can be taken.

9.5. Environmental control

All collections are kept within the Orkney Library & Archive building in secure storage areas. Temperature and humidity controls are in place in the majority of the storage areas, which achieve the conditions identified in section 8.4 for most of the time. The storage areas are kept dark when unoccupied by staff to avoid the damaging effects of UV light, and doors are kept closed except when in use to provide protection from airborne pollutants.

Archival quality materials and products are used in storage and display areas to ensure that collections are given the best protection possible. Some older, non-archival, materials are still in use in some areas of the archive, and a programme of replacement of these materials is continuing as funding allows.

9.6. Housekeeping

Orkney Archive's accommodation and collections are carefully cleaned and boxed to reduce the risk of damage being caused by infestation, mould, abrasion or chemicals. All display and storage areas and furniture are cleaned and inspected regularly. Cleaning methods, products and tools have been selected to reduce the risk of physical and chemical damage to collections.

All incoming material is examined for signs of infestation, dampness or mould. Where this is obvious items will be isolated immediately. Advice will be sought promptly, and appropriate action taken as a matter of urgency.

The design of the Orkney Library & Archive building and location of the archive within the building offer protection against the risk of infestation by insects or rodents, and this is reinforced by staff monitoring of all accommodation. Any existing items in the collection that show signs of pest infestation will be isolated from the rest of the collection until treated.

9.7. Handling

All handling of collections, whether for display, research or conservation, will be carried out in ways that minimise the risk of physical or chemical damage.

All staff and volunteers who are expected to work with the collections will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding the care of the collections during their induction training, and will undergo appropriate training in handling, packaging and safe storage methods.

Staff members are also given training on correct handling procedures during their induction to guard against personal injury or damage to archives during the retrieval or return of archives to strongrooms.

Archive staff will ensure that public access to the collections is always supervised.

9.8. Emergency preparedness

Orkney Archive operates on the principle that prevention is better than cure and seeks to identify risks to the collections and take steps to reduce the threat occurring. The Orkney Library & Archive building is constructed to retard the spread of fire and the joint service has procedures in place that, in the event of a fire, ensures protection of staff and users. However, it is acknowledged that situations beyond the control of staff can occur which could endanger the archives and impede the abilities of staff to provide an archive service.

The Orkney Archive Disaster Plan includes the information required to quickly and efficiently react to any emergency which threatens the archives or the continuity of the Archive service and will be regularly reviewed.

Orkney Archive subscribes to Harwell Drying Restoration Priority User Service which, in the event of a disaster, will provide recovery and emergency salvage services.

9.9. Action plan

Actions	Priority	Timescale	Resources
Continue regular environmental monitoring	High	Ongoing	Staff time
Identify suitable additional archive storage space	High	Ongoing	Staff time Financial resource
Complete a preservation survey	High	For completion by 2029	Staff time Conservation expertise Financial resource
Replace non-archival storage materials	Moderate	Ongoing	Staff time Materials

10. Collections Development Policy

A collecting policy plays an integral part of good practice in managing and caring for archive collections. This Collections Development Policy has been created to support continuing good practice at Orkney Archive and provide guidance in the future shaping of the archives in our care.

The policy aims to define the role of the archive service in the wider framework of national archive collecting and to provide clear guidance to potential depositors and to staff, ensuring effective use of resources by minimising duplication of effort and potential conflict between repositories through overlapping interest.

This policy covers all collecting situations, i.e., both active (through surveys of specific categories of records leading to deposit) and reactive (responding to unsolicited offers of material). It will assist staff in exercising judgement as to whether to accept or reject material and, as appropriate, to advise on a more suitable place of deposit.

The Team Manager and the Archivist are responsible for developing the Collections Development Policy and ensuring that it is implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly (at least every three years).

10.1.Scope of collecting

Orkney Archive will consider any collection of archival material, ephemera or illustrations that document the topography, ownership, occupation and use of land in Orkney, or records or illustrates aspects of human activity in the islands.

The geographical boundaries of this policy are the administrative area governed by Orkney Islands Council, encompassing an archipelago of around seventy islands, of which twenty are continually populated.

Records relating to other areas may be accepted on the grounds of preserving archival integrity if they are received with material relating primarily to Orkney. However, the service shall have discretion, with the consent of the depositor, to split group collections of archives and transfer material to other repositories where this course of action is deemed to be appropriate and in the best interests of researchers.

There are four types of deposit:

- Official deposit – deposited from the Local Authority or other public body.
- Gift – the depositor is authorised and wishes to transfer title to the Archive.
- Long Term Loan – the depositor wishes to provide researchers with access to items while retaining ownership.
- Temporary loan – the depositor agrees to a short-term loan to allow the material to be copied and for the copies to then be made available to researchers.

There are no date limits on material eligible for collection provided that they are no longer in use.

Orkney Archive will accept records in all media, except for moving film, for which the archive has no storage or viewing facilities, and three-dimensional artefacts, which would usually be offered to Orkney Museum.

In the opinion of the archivist(s) evaluating them, all records must be of sufficient quality and condition for permanent preservation.

Orkney Archive collect microfilm copies and facsimiles of documents held elsewhere where it is considered that they will support the archival collections and maintain a select library of printed material to support research relevant to the Northern Isles (Orkney and Shetland).

10.2.Where the collections come from

Internal transfer

The core of the collection comes from the records of Orkney Islands Council and its predecessor bodies. Records are transferred to the archive at the end of their retention period if they are marked as having, or having the potential for, long-term historical or legal value, as advised by the Council's Retention and Disposal Schedule, which has been developed using the Scottish Council for Archives Records Retention Schedule model (SCARRS) as its basis. The Schedules are endorsed by each Head of Service (as appropriate) and apply to both paper and electronic records.

Charge and Superintendence

Orkney Archive is approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland as a place of deposit for records under their charge and superintendence. These include records of Customs and Excise, Justice of the Peace Court, and Orkney Sheriff Court. While Presbytery records are normally held under charge and supervision arrangements, Orkney has a separate agreement with the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland whereby Orkney Presbytery records are permitted to remain in the County. However, in recognition of responsibilities to national archiving aims, Orkney Archive will inform the National Records of Scotland of new acquisitions of such records. Most transfers of Presbytery records are prompted by changes of circumstances such as staff changes or lack of storage space.

External transfer

The archive accepts private collections from businesses, social groups, charities, families and individuals. Most transfers from external bodies are prompted by changes of circumstance such as staff changes, accommodation moves or lack of storage space. Limitations of space and other resources within the archive prevent a more proactive approach to transfers.

Orkney Archive seeks to maintain strong relationships with our depositors, and they are encouraged to provide finding aids where bulk is likely to render the records inaccessible until processed by archive staff.

In certain circumstances, Orkney Archive will acquire collections by purchase, either by obtaining external funding or internally where the acquisition is deemed to be an appropriate investment of public funds. Acquisitions requiring significant funding will be subject to committee approval.

10.3.Appraisal and disposal

When materials are received, they are appraised to determine their suitability for preservation by the service. The Archivists will have authority to weed records during processing and to return or destroy items identified as not appropriate for permanent preservation. This will be made clear to the owner at the time of deposit, and they will be consulted before any records are destroyed.

In some instances, the suitability of materials previously acquired by Orkney Archive may come into question. Should this occur, they will be subject to an appraisal procedure and, where considered appropriate, removed from our collections.

We are committed to making use of experience in the appraisal of particular classes of archives or types of records. Professional judgement will nevertheless be the ultimate deciding factor in all appraisals.

10.4.What Orkney Archive does not collect

In some instances, materials offered to the archive will be refused. This may be because the archive lacks the correct facilities for long-term preservation, because it is not considered a suitable use of public resources or because the collection is better suited to another collecting institution.

These considerations mean that the service will usually not accept the following types of material:

- Three dimensional objects.
- Document containers such as chests or picture frames.
- Duplicates of documents already held.
- Digital material in unsupported formats or on prohibited media.
- Moving images on film.

Should a deposit be refused, the owners are advised of suitable repositories to approach, how to preserve documents themselves, or how to convert digital material into supported formats and approved transfer methods.

10.5.What Orkney Archive seeks to collect in the future

To ensure that the best use is made of the limited space and resources available to the archive, existing collections and recent acquisitions are regularly assessed to determine their strengths and weaknesses in relation to documenting as broad a view of life in Orkney as possible. Orkney Archive seeks to maintain its strengths and acquire records for areas considered under-represented.

Our ongoing priorities for acquisitions are:

- Local Authority archives.
- Orkney church records.
- Sheriff Court records.
- Family and estate archives.

- Records of land management and agriculture.
- School records.

The following areas have been identified as under-represented, and Orkney Archive will therefore seek to address the lack of material in the following categories:

- Records reflecting LGBTQIA+ lives as well as cultural and racial diversity in Orkney.
- Records relating to the renewable energies sector and the world leading research Orkney is involved in.
- Records depicting life on the outer isles.
- Collections showing local crafting and traditional activities in Orkney.
- Collections, both sound and physical/electronic, preserving Orkney dialect.

11. Access Policy

The Access Policy aims to provide a measurable statement which informs users and researchers of what to expect from the archive service in terms of accessibility. It gives details of access arrangements for the Orkney Library & Archive building and specifically for the archive service as well as providing a description of Orkney Archive's services and facilities.

11.1. Onsite access to archive services

Orkney Library & Archive provides public access to library, archive and local studies facilities through its premises at 44 Junction Road, Kirkwall.

The Orkney Library & Archive building in Kirkwall is a two-storey building with the archive service situated on the first floor. The public entrance provides ramps for disabled users and a lift is available for access to the upper floor. Disabled toilets are available on both floors and baby changing facilities are available on the ground floor. Both the library and archive reception desks provide access to an induction loop for users with hearing loss.

In Orkney Archive you can access records that document Orkney's diverse history and culture from the 15th Century to the present day and include archives of estate management, people, organisations and businesses throughout Orkney, reflecting the changing landscape, communities and economy over the past five centuries. You can also access the local studies collection of printed and published material.

Original records will be accessible at the discretion of archive staff. Orkney Archive is committed to providing access whenever possible but reasons for not providing it include current legislation, such as Data Protection restrictions, or the physical condition of the archive. Researchers will be provided with handling aids, such as gloves, book cradles and weights to protect the archives. They will also be required to adhere to archive searchroom rules, which are displayed throughout the archive.

The archive is committed to providing access to archives through an internal programme of exhibitions and displays, within the archive and at other locations within the building. Exhibitions are created mainly using surrogates. Any original archive materials used are displayed within secure display cases and for a limited time.

11.2.Admission to the archive

Users can access the archive and local studies collections free of charge. Membership of the library service is not required if using reference materials, meeting rooms, study areas, reading newspapers and magazines or visiting the archive.

Visitors wishing to come into the archives are encouraged to book in advance.

When entering the Archive searchroom, visitors are asked to fill in a Visitor Registration form for each day of their visit and store any large bags and coats in the lockers provided.

Archive staff are available to help visitors with enquiries about the archive and local history collections, and assist with specific enquiries, such as family history research.

Orkney Archive is open every day, excluding Wednesdays and Sundays, a total of 38 hours per week.

Last admission to the archive is 15 minutes prior to the published closing time to allow staff time to return all archives to secure storage areas and carry out other closing tasks.

Opening hours are advertised on Orkney Library & Archive's website and in other relevant publications and websites.

11.3.Access facilities

Orkney Archive aims to provide physically accessible space throughout our facilities for everyone who wants to visit us. Accessible facilities include:

- Hearing Induction loop at archive reception desk.
- Public access computer, with adjustable internet browser accessibility settings.
- Microfilm readers which have magnifier and zoom controls to view an enlarged area of the displayed image.
- Digital microfilm scanners which allow users to zoom in and highlight areas on the screen.
- Height-adjustable chairs.
- Magnifying glasses and sheet magnifiers available to borrow in the archive searchroom.
- Accessible toilet facilities.
- Four disabled parking spaces available outside the building.

11.4.Obtaining copies from the archive collections

Orkney Archive is committed to making its collections available to the widest possible audience, whilst balancing this with the responsibility of preserving them for future generations and adhering to copyright legislation. Staff provide a range of copying services

for the purposes of private study or research, and users are required to complete a copyright declaration form to that effect. Copying services provided are; scanning of archives or microfilm and transfer of copyright cleared audio recordings on to CD or into MP3 format. Information about the charges for these services can be found on the Orkney Library & Archive website. For a small fee, Archive users are also permitted to take photographs of documents with their own photographic equipment, when it is permitted by archive staff and copyright law and, is for the purpose of private study or research.

Remote users can also place orders for copies of items held in the archive and local studies collections for the purpose of private study or research, which can be supplied either electronically or as printouts.

All copying is at the discretion of staff and there are some items that cannot be copied for a variety of reasons, such as legal restrictions and/or the size or condition of the material.

11.5. Online resources

Orkney Archive recognises the importance of access to information online and also digital access to items in the collections to ensure wider access generally. The following are available:

- Online catalogue of Orkney Archive and Local Studies collections which includes information and low-resolution images from the Photographic Archive. The catalogue is regularly updated with new material. As it is held jointly with the Orkney Museum, the catalogue also contains information and images of the objects in their collections.
- Online catalogue of Orkney Library collections, which includes the local history collection. The catalogue is regularly updated with new material.
- Orkney Archive contributes catalogue information to national online catalogue Your Scottish Archives.
- The Archive provides access to a number of finding aids on the Orkney Library & Archive website, including guides to the records held by the archive, gifts and deposits, the George Mackay Brown collection and an index to the Orkney Register of Sea Fishing Boats 1852 - 1968.
- The Archive also provides online information about its photographic collections, including galleries of selected images.
- Orkney Library & Archive recognises the value of social media to increase access. The library Facebook, Instagram, X and Bluesky accounts, as well as the Archive Blog, are used to highlight events and increase access to the collections through interpretation. They also provide an important tool for communication with users.
- We provide access to a range of electronic resources, including online bibliographic and image databases, electronic dictionaries and encyclopaedias. They are all available free of charge to library members and many of them can be accessed from home or outside of the building.
- Free public Wi-Fi is available to all visitors.

11.6.Enquiries

Orkney Archive is committed to helping members of the public who have enquiries about the collections. These may be answered face-to-face or by telephone, letter or email. The archive receives enquiries from all over the world covering a wide range of different subjects. All enquiries are acknowledged as soon as possible after receipt and recorded in the enquiries database.

Due to staffing levels and the volume and complexity of some enquiries, full answers can take some time, but all enquires will be responded to within 20 working days.

11.7.Monitoring and evaluation

Orkney Archive ensures it is meeting its targets and the needs of its users in the following ways:

- Monitoring use – number of visitors and number of items retrieved from archive strongrooms, number of remote enquiries and types of material used.
- Cataloguing material and establishing cataloguing priorities based on requests, projects and targets.
- Surveys e.g. customer questionnaires and annual ARA visitor surveys
- Evaluation of user comment cards as well as comments received on social media or by other methods.
- Monitoring the role of the collections for internal and external research (for exhibitions, publications, events and activities).

11.8.Staffing

Orkney Archive staff are key to providing access to archive services. Their commitment, knowledge and expertise are vital to ensure visitors get the most out of their visit and archive resources. The staff are trained to deal with a wide variety of enquiries and assist with access and interpretation of the collections whenever possible.

12. Conclusions

The suite of policies and procedures detailed above provide a structure on which to continue to build on the strengths of Orkney Archive and demonstrate to stakeholders that the archive service is managed responsibly.

It is recognised that there will be financial and other constraints on all OIC services during the period of this scheme, but that Orkney Archive provides services that have wide ranging benefits to all Orkney community members, as well as those further afield, and provides value for money.

Key to raising awareness of collections held by Orkney Archive is to continue adding collection descriptions to the online archive catalogues, as well as partaking in outreach activities and further developing work in how people access the collections.

Digital preservation continues to be a key priority, as well as ensuring the long-term storage needs of the collections are met and the collections care elements of this scheme are adhered to.

Orkney Archive continues to strive to improve and meet best practice in all areas, with the staff committed to providing the best service possible.



Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a proposal or changes by anticipating the consequences and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

Should you have any questions or wish for your draft EqIA to be reviewed by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser, please contact OD@orkney.gov.uk.

1. Identification of the Proposal or Change

Name of proposal or change being assessed.	Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2026-2030
Responsible Service and Directorate.	Orkney Library and Archive Education, Communities and Housing
Date of assessment.	July 2025
Is the proposal or change existing? (Please indicate if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	Existing. The service has not been deleted, reduced or changed significantly. The Archive Management Scheme outlines future priorities and specific standards for the service in the form of a suite of policies and plans.

2. Primary Information

What are the intended outcomes of the proposal or change?	The Archive Management Scheme consists of a series of policies and plans for the archive service. The Scheme defines a set of standards, actions and priorities that may be effectively monitored thereby demonstrating the level of service delivery.
Is the proposal or change strategically important?	Yes, the Archive Management Scheme will ensure the archive service retains its accredited status and formulates how the service will deliver its strategic aims and objectives.

State who is or may be affected by this proposal or change, and how?	Staff within the service are affected as the plan prioritises the delivery and direction of the service over the coming 4 years. Archive staff will have a clear understanding of the key priorities of the service and what will be prioritised within their workloads. In addition, general members of the public as well as partner organisations will also be affected. They will benefit from the outcomes to be delivered by the archive service, resulting in better access to archival collections.
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this proposal or change?	Staff within the archive have had close involvement in the creation of the scheme and the objectives arising from the scheme have shared responsibility between the archive service manager and the wider archive team.
Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking.	The Archive Service Accreditation standard published by The National Archives was used to inform the Scheme. Section 3 'Stakeholders' specifies that services and facilities should support access by a broad range of users and that archives must carry out consultations regularly to establish the views of users on a range of issues. Orkney Archive regularly collects feedback in relation to its services and uses this as a basis to monitor and offer improvements where any gaps have been identified. The Accreditation standard also specifies that archives should understand factors which might impede usage of an archive and provide evidence that access issues are being identified and addressed.
Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies for further information.	Direct public access is provided free of charge in the Orkney Archive searchroom, with staff present to assist visitors in finding information they need. The archive is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of the service. Orkney Archive recognises the importance of access to information online and its digital collections to ensure wider access generally. Free public WIFI is available to all visitors.
Could the proposal or change have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?	Please provide any evidence – positive impacts / benefits, negative impacts and reasons:

1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.	No
2. Sex: a man or a woman.	No
3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.	No
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.	No
5. Pregnancy and maternity.	No
6. Age: people of different ages.	No
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	No
8. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	Yes, in a positive way: The Archive Management Scheme identifies several pro-active actions to improve access, both physical and digital, to the service and the archive collections held by the Council. It should therefore have positive impacts in relation to people affected by disabilities.
9. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No
10. Caring responsibilities	No
11. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Yes, in a positive way: The Archive Management Scheme identifies actions and practices to improve access to archival collections to include those who may be at a socio-economic disadvantage. Free access and technical equipment to access online/digital content is included.
12. Care experienced	No

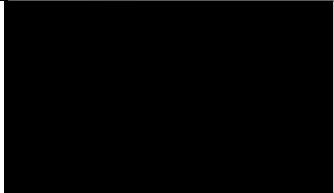
3. Impact Assessment

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	No
Does the analysis above identify any potential negative impacts?	No The Archive Management Scheme identifies actions to improve access to the service and the archive collections held by the Council. This includes aiming to ensure that the collections continue to reflect the lives of all individuals and communities throughout the islands; having staff present to assist visitors in finding the information they need; and where possible, to interpret the archive collections. Orkney Archive is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of the service. The Archive Management Scheme should therefore have positive impacts in relation to equalities.
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes

4. Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please complete the following action plan where you have identified any differential impacts or potential negative impacts in Section 3 of the Equality Impact Assessment.

Impact Identified	Action to be taken	Owner	How will it be monitored	Date Action to be completed

5. Sign and Date	
Signature:	
Name:	Garry Burton, Head of Active Communities
Date:	July 2025

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Orkney Archive Management Scheme

Preliminary Considerations	Response
Please provide a brief description or summary of the policy, strategy or service under review for the purposes of this assessment.	The Orkney Archive Management Scheme combines all relevant policies, procedures, strategies and forward plans that are necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the Archive service. Orkney Archive is an officially accredited service and requires such documentation to be in place and implemented. The existing Management Scheme covers the period 2020-2025 and, therefore, requires to be updated.
Step 1 – Develop a clear understanding of your objectives	Response
What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?	The Orkney Archive Management Scheme sets out the service's objectives and priorities in relation to collections management, collections care and conservation, collections development, access and digital preservation for the forthcoming four-year period.
Do you need to consult?	No.
How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service?	The Management Scheme covers the whole local authority area, including all the inhabited islands.
What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?	To ensure Orkney Archive has in place appropriate policies, procedures, strategies and forward plans to deliver archive services in an appropriate manner to maintain formal accreditation. The Scheme addresses how the archival collections are collected, appropriately housed, conserved, managed by professional staff and accessed. There is also a required Forward Plan setting out key priorities over the next four years, including improved service user access to archive collections via online catalogues and finding aids,

	and collecting archival records relating to life on the outer isles to ensure representation within the service.
Is the policy, strategy or service new?	No, it is a revised Management Scheme.
Step 2 – Gather your data and identify your stakeholders	Response
What data is available about the current situation in the islands?	Annual Archives and Records Association surveys looking at visitor and remote enquiry users are a way of the Archive service being able to monitor usage and where people are accessing the services from. The surveys allow people to tell Orkney Archive where they feel priorities should be placed, what services they want to see, and any improvements they wish to see. The surveys are filled in by all who use the service, including those from the islands. Regular contact is also made with isle heritage centres and groups, as well as digitisation and digital access to related collections to allow for better access to those not based in mainland Orkney.
Do you need to consult?	No.
How does any existing data differ between islands?	N/A
Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?	N/A
Step 3 – Consultation	Response
Who do you need to consult with?	N/A
How will you carry out your consultation and in what timescales?	N/A
What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?	N/A
What information has already been gathered through consultations and what concerns have been raised previously by island communities?	Questions around collections development, access and engagement and priorities of the Archive service have been asked in previous

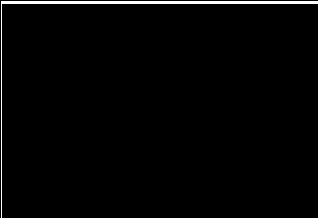
	surveys, and none have highlighted particular concerns by island communities.
Is your consultation robust and meaningful and sufficient to comply with the Section 7 duty?	Yes.
Step 4 – Assessment	Response
Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities?	No.
Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?	No.
How will you address these?	N/A
You must now determine whether in your opinion your policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community, which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities). If your answer is No to the above question, a full ICIA will NOT be required and you can proceed to Step 6. If the answer is Yes, an ICIA must be prepared and you should proceed to Step 5. To form your opinion, the following questions should be considered: • Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as different levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)? • Are these different effects likely? • Are these effects significantly different? • Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the Scottish mainland or between island groups?	
Step 5 – Preparing your ICIA	Response
In Step 5, you should describe the likely significantly different effect of the policy, strategy or service:	N/A

Assess the extent to which you consider that the policy, strategy or service can be developed or delivered in such a manner as to improve or mitigate, for island communities, the outcomes resulting from it.	N/A
Consider alternative delivery mechanisms and whether further consultation is required.	N/A
Describe how these alternative delivery mechanisms will improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	N/A
Identify resources required to improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	N/A
Stage 6 – Making adjustments to your work	Response
Should delivery mechanisms/mitigations vary in different communities?	No, the Orkney Archive Management Scheme is applied evenly and consistently across the whole of Orkney.
Do you need to consult with island communities in respect of mechanisms or mitigations?	No.
Have island circumstances been factored into the evaluation process?	The Orkney Archive Management Scheme is applied evenly and consistently across the whole of Orkney.
Have any island-specific indicators/targets been identified that require monitoring?	Areas identified as being currently under-represented within the Archive service include collections relating to life on the outer isles over the ages. A key priority within the Management Scheme is for archive staff to liaise and communicate with heritage trusts and locals on the outer isles to ensure archives are recorded and accessible, even if the collections themselves remain on the isles and not in the Archive in Kirkwall.
How will outcomes be measured on the islands?	Increased accessibility to archival collections, online catalogue descriptions and any new records brought into the Archive service.

How has the policy, strategy or service affected island communities?	The Orkney Archive Management Scheme is applied evenly and consistently across the whole of Orkney.
How will lessons learned in this ICIA inform future policy making and service delivery?	N/A
Step 7 – Publishing your ICIA	Response
Have you presented your ICIA in an Easy Read format?	Yes.
Does it need to be presented in Gaelic or any other language?	No.
Where will you publish your ICIA and will relevant stakeholders be able to easily access it?	Orkney Islands Council's Website with Committee Report and Minute.
Who will signoff your final ICIA and why?	Garry Burton, Head of Active Communities Head of Service

ICIA completed by:	Vikki Kerr
Position:	Team Manager (Libraries & Archives)
Signature:	
Date complete:	21 October 2025

ICIA approved by:	Garry Burton
Position:	Head of Active Communities

Signature:	
Date complete:	21 October 2025