

## **Item: 6**

**Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 16 February 2022.**

**Orkney Archive Management Scheme.**

**Report by Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To consider the 2020-2025 Management Scheme for Orkney Archive Service.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That the Orkney Archive Service first achieved accreditation status in November 2017 when the service was awarded the Archive Accreditation Standard.

#### **2.2.**

That, due to a backlog of archive services awaiting accreditation decisions by the Scottish Council on Archives caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the Orkney Archive Service will now progress to formal re-submission to retain its accredited status in November 2023 in line with the accreditation standard procedure, with the formal three year review now incorporated into the re-submission process.

#### **2.3.**

That, in order to retain accredited status, the Orkney Archive Service must have an approved current Forward Plan and other appropriate policies relating to collections development, care and conservation and collections access.

#### **2.4.**

The draft Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2020-2025, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, which contains the plan and policies required by the Scottish Council on Archives as the Assessing body of the Archives Accreditation Standard.

**It is recommended:**

#### **2.5.**

That the Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2020-2025, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, be approved.

## **3. Orkney Archive Service**

### **3.1.**

The Orkney Library and Archive Service has utilised several quality assurance frameworks over the years before a framework specifically designed to examine the provision of archive services in Scotland came into being in June 2014, called the Archive Service Accreditation, which is the UK standard for archive services.

### **3.2.**

The standard defines good practice, identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging and supporting development. Prior to this standard, there was no central standard to cover Scottish Archives, unlike in England and Wales, which were covered by the self-assessment programme under The National Archives' *Standard for Record Repositories*.

### **3.3.**

The Archive Accreditation Standard consists of assessment of three sections which correlate with the existing Museum Accreditation Standard:

- Organisational Health.
- Collections.
- Stakeholders and their experiences.

### **3.4.**

Orkney Archive Service achieved accreditation via the Scottish Council on Archives (Scotland's Assessing organisation) in November 2017. To retain its accredited status, the service should go through a formal review three years post initial award, followed by formal re-submission to the assessing body six years post award.

### **3.5.**

Orkney Archive Service was due to have an official review of its accredited status in 2020, however, COVID-19 restrictions delayed this process. A formal review was then arranged to take place early in 2022. However, the Scottish Council on Archives no longer has the capacity to carry out the review due to an established backlog of archive services awaiting accreditation decisions. This means Orkney Archive Service will progress to formal re-submission to retain its accredited status in November 2023 in line with the accreditation standard procedure, with the formal three year review now incorporated into the re-submission process. The Archive Service requires an agreed Forward Plan to include service wide commitments and improvements to meet the re-submission requirements.

### **3.6.**

The draft Archive Management Scheme 2020-2025 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

## **4. Equalities Impact**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

## **5. Links to Council Plan**

### **5.1.**

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priority theme of Quality of Life.

### **5.2.**

The proposals in this report relate directly to Priority 5.7 - Work in partnership to deliver the Strategy to Further Protect Orkney's Cultural Heritage.

## **6. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan**

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priority of Community Wellbeing.

## **7. Financial Implications**

### **7.1.**

The details set out in the Archive Management Scheme are subject to the level of resources that will be made available to the Archive Service over the 5-year period 2020-2025.

### **7.2.**

The Archive Service operates within the limits of a revenue budget which is approved by the Council each year, and that can be enhanced by external funding streams.

## **8. Legal Aspects**

### **8.1.**

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

### **8.2.**

In terms of the Public Records (Scotland) Act of 2011, Orkney Archive is approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland as a place of deposit for records under his

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.

### **8.3.**

Achieving and retaining Archive Accreditation Standard represents continuous improvement in terms of best value and the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 2003.

### **8.4.**

Accreditation in the context of this Report supports the above legislative requirements.

## **9. Contact Officers**

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## **10. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Draft Archive Management Scheme 2020-2025.

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment.



## **Orkney Archive**

# **Management Scheme**

## **2020 - 2025**

**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 his 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.

### **3. Covid-19 pandemic**

**\*updated October 2021 to reflect changes in dealing with the pandemic and public access.**

The Covid-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, a wide-ranging effect on the delivery of the archive services. Physical access has been very limited and is only now returning to some semblance of pre-Covid times. Various measures have been put in place to develop alternative methods of access during the lifetime of this Management Scheme and are reflected throughout this document.

### **4. 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.

### **5. 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.

## **5.1 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 6000 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.

## **5.2 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 9 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 Senior Archivist. Collections are documented in accordance with appropriate professional standards and collection level entries are made available online on the Scottish Archive Network ([www.scan.org.uk](http://www.scan.org.uk)). 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 Senior 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 search room, 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.

### **5.3 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).

### **5.4 People and training**

Orkney Archive manages, preserves and conserves 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 review and development process.

## **5.5 Monitoring and review**

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

## **6. Orkney Archive Forward Plan 2020 – 2025**

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 carried out in a number of ways; by collecting and preserving archive 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 archive service works to a five year Forward Plan which sets out the direction to be taken to enable the service's continuing development. This Forward Plan has been developed after considering staff and stakeholders' feedback and is underpinned by a range of service policies and a regular monitoring schedule.

The challenge over the five years of this Forward Plan is to continue to deliver excellent and high-quality archive and local history services against a background of decreasing budgets, shifting staffing structures and the difficulties of providing physical access caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The focus over the next five years will, initially, be to adapt the provision of archive services in the light of the pandemic, so that researchers can still access the records, but in a manner that is safe for both them and staff, and also protects the records.

A further aim will be to raise awareness of services available to all service users, whether living in Orkney or elsewhere. This will be achieved by extending online access through additions to the Orkney Library & Archive website and increasing direct access by improving and adding to online finding aids. A key element of this is to provide online access to the archive catalogue. This aim was included in the Orkney Archive Forward Plan 2017 – 2020 but was not achieved due to technical and financial constraints. It is recognised, particularly in these times of travel restrictions, as the most important method of raising awareness of and improving access to the archive collections, so is included in the Forward Plan for 2020 - 2025.

### **6.1 Service profile**

Orkney Archive forms part of the Orkney Library & Archive service, which is part of Leisure, Culture and Inclusion Services within the Education, Leisure and Housing Service provided by Orkney Islands Council.

## **6.2 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 predecessors are preserved for present and future use by the Council and 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 or geographical remoteness.

To support the ancestral tourism industry 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.

## **6.3 Service delivery**

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

Orkney Archive service presents and interprets collections to the public through displays and exhibitions throughout the building and interprets local history by making copies of selected archive material available 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.

## **6.4 A review of the Orkney Archive Forward Plan 2017 – 2020**

The end of the period of the 2017-2020 Forward Plan has seen many successes in meeting the aims of the plan, and in some areas a disappointing lack of progress.

Five headings were used to identify the different areas of the service that were identified as desirable to improve, or maintain at present levels:

### **1. An integrated onsite and online customer experience**

Three desired outcomes were identified:

1. Maintaining a high level of user satisfaction, both onsite and online.
2. Provide online access to more indexes to archives.
3. Work in partnership with Orkney Museum Service to provide access to a joint online catalogue.

In an onsite and online survey of users of all Orkney Library & Archive services, held in March/April 2020 of those respondents that used the archive service, given the choices excellent, good, fair or poor, 100% rated the service either excellent or good (78.6% said excellent, 21.4% said good).

In August 2017 a re-designed Orkney Library & Archive website was launched, which provided space to make archive documents available online. Additional indexes to the archive collection, and other material, have been made available in this way, with plans to publish more in the future.

Work has continued with Orkney Museum Service to make both catalogues ready to go online, but this has not yet been achieved. The fact that it has not happened can be attributed to a combination of technical issues, financial factors and museum curators being heavily involved in a large-scale restoration project at Scapa Flow Museum.

### **Conclusion**

Of the three projected outcomes, 1 and 2 were achieved within the timescale of the Forward Plan. Outcome 3 was not achieved due to the reasons stated but is so integral to the future of archive service delivery in the future it will continue to be a desired outcome in the new Forward Plan.

### **2. A sustainable service which achieves and maintains national standards**

Five desired outcomes were identified:

1. Achieve Archive Accreditation.
2. Well-trained and experienced staff continuing to provide a high-quality archive service.
3. Partnerships with other organisations.
4. Continue to provide archive facilities to national standards.
5. Increase revenue.

Orkney Archive was awarded accreditation in October 2017, with a mid-term update due to be submitted to the Accreditation Review Committee in November 2020 and re-application required in 2023. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused some slippage to these timescales.

Archive staff continue to provide a high-quality service which is valued by archive service users, as evidenced by survey results and service user feedback. Staffing levels were maintained throughout the period of the plan.

Orkney Archive has worked in partnership with several organisations and institutions over the period of the plan:

- July to October 2018: Stills Gallery, Edinburgh – an exhibition of the work of two artists, Gunnie Moberg and Margaret Tait, featuring material from the archive.
- November 2018: Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA), Glasgow – a celebration of the life and work of Orcadian film-maker Margaret Tait. Film installations were accompanied by a display of archival photographs, ephemera and other materials from Orkney Archive.
- September 2018 to July 2019: Worked in partnership with Orkney Library and Scottish Book Trust to deliver Orkney Story Stack project – improving digital skills through an oral history project.
- November 2019: Being Human Festival, organised by Robert Gordon University in partnership with Orkney Library & Archive, and using archive material.
- 2019: Advising the North Isles Landscape Partnership on setting up and supporting local heritage centres in the North Isles.

Orkney Archive continues to provide facilities that meet national standards, in particular BS4971:2017, Conservation and care of archive and library collections and PAS 197:2009, Code of practice for cultural collections management. New working practices were developed in light of the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018, to ensure that the management of personal information within the archive meets the requirements of the new regulations.

Revenue has not increased but has remained broadly at a similar level throughout the period of the 2017-2020 Forward Plan. It is in part due to a change in service user permissions, which allows them to copy archive documents using their own devices rather than staff providing photocopies for a charge. This was initiated because, after discussion among Scottish local authority archives, it was agreed that the change in copying permission provided the documents with greater protection from damage during the copying process, and that was of more long-term value than the small loss of revenue. Remote users are still charged a fee for providing copies of documents so it is expected that the publication of the archive catalogue online will increase revenue from that source in the future.

## **Conclusion**

Of the five projected outcomes, 1 to 4 were achieved within the timescale of the Forward Plan. Outcome 5, to increase revenue, has proved difficult to achieve, particularly with the closure of the archive in March 2020 due to the Covid-19

pandemic. It is likely that online services will become more important as a source of revenue over the period of the 2020-2025 Forward Plan, so they will need to be developed to make that possible.

### **3. Improving and promoting user access to archive collections**

Four desired outcomes were identified:

1. Increased visitor numbers to Orkney Library & Archive website and social media pages.
2. Achieve target of 500 hours of cataloguing per year.
3. Online access to archive catalogue, resulting in higher visitor numbers and revenue.
4. Enhanced user experience both online and onsite.

The statistics for online visits to the Orkney Library & Archive website and social media pages appear to show a change in the way visitors are accessing online services, with visitor numbers to the main Orkney Library & Archive website decreasing, though still quite respectable, but the numbers of visitors to the social networking feeds and archive blog increasing. There are always spikes in visitor numbers to these services as certain posts grip the public imagination more than others but, on average, all feeds have shown a steady increase. The statistics for the archive blog show an increase in visitor numbers of 11,638 between 2017 and 2019.

The cataloguing target was originally set in an arbitrary manner, on a trial basis, and has not been achieved in any of the three years of the Forward Plan (417 hours in 2017/18, 408 hours in 2018/19 and 475 hours in 2019/20). Considering the small number of archive staff and the extra demands placed on them over the timescale of the Plan by activities connected to the centenary of the First World War, this is understandable. However, as the figure of 500 hours was originally chosen as a trial amount, altering the target to 400 hours will ease the pressure on staff, free up time for other duties and will still make considerable inroads into the cataloguing backlog.

Online access to the archive catalogue has already been covered in Heading 1 above (page 8).

User experience is measured through feedback from archive users, both onsite and online. Responses to a survey of users held in March/April 2020, showed that 100% of archive users rated the service either excellent or good (78.6% said excellent, 21.4% said good). Over the period of the Forward Plan more documents have been made available through the Orkney Library & Archive website, blog visitors have continued to increase and new copying guidelines for visitors have proved popular, as well as offering greater protection to the records.

### **Conclusion**

Of the four projected outcomes, 1 and 4 have been achieved to an acceptable level within the timescale of the Forward Plan. A change to item 2, reducing the

cataloguing target from 500 to 400 hours per year, is recommended, for the reasons stated above. Item 3 has not been achieved for the reasons stated on page 10.

#### **4. Ensuring the care of archive collections for the future**

Four desired outcomes were identified:

1. Improvements in the care of collections.
2. Digitisation of the analogue sound archive collection.
3. Staff time re-prioritised to include preservation surveys and collection management.
4. Procedures created for the management of, and storage of born-digital records received internally from Orkney Islands Council and other external depositors in the future.

In 2019 the obsolete environmental control system was replaced in all four archive storage areas, providing a more consistent and controllable environment within each area which meets the standards required BS4971:2017. Changes have also been made to the document access conditions, allowing researchers to use their own electronic devices to make copies of documents. This change to access conditions reduces the risk of damage occurring during the photocopying process.

Digitisation of the Orkney Sound Archive OSA collection was completed in 2019.

Staff time has been re-prioritised to allow professional staff more time away from the archive reception desk to complete collection management requirements. This has resulted in better management of storage space, accessions, and improvements to the archive catalogue.

Orkney Islands Council is developing an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS), with a delivery date of March 2023. Procedures for archive storage and access will be included in the EDRMS.

#### **Conclusion**

Of the four projected outcomes, items 1 to 3 have been achieved to an acceptable level within the timescale of the Forward Plan. Item 4 is underway but, as part of a council-wide project, is not within the direct control of archive staff. However, the completion of the EDRMS project is expected by the end of the Forward Plan 2020-2025.

#### **5. Extending volunteer working opportunities**

Three desired outcomes were identified:

1. Increased use of volunteers.
2. Continue partnership working with Voluntary Action Orkney.

### 3. Increase accessibility to collections.

During the period of the 2017-2020 Forward Plan the archive engaged 22 volunteers, who completed a total of 1481 hours on different projects. Most volunteers have worked on the creation of a Service Personnel Database, an index of the names of all service personnel that appear in the records of the archive. 11 volunteers were still working at the archive when lockdown occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Partnership working with Voluntary Action Orkney has continued over the period of the Plan, with all volunteering opportunities being advertised and volunteers processed by them. This partnership is expected to continue through the term of the future Forward Plan.

The work of volunteers, creating indexes to records, has improved access to many collections, among them are the Public Assistance Application Records (Poor Board Records), the Balfour Papers and the Service Personnel Database.

### **Conclusion**

All three of the projected outcomes have been achieved to an acceptable level within the timescale of the Forward Plan. Orkney Archive has been very successful in the past at attracting volunteers. The challenge for the future will be to continue offering volunteering opportunities when physical access to the archive will be limited due to Covid-19 restrictions and attracting back volunteers that may feel a reluctance to return.

## **6.5 Key Archive Service aims and outcomes, 2020 – 2025**

### **1. A positive experience for all service users**

- Maintain, or improve, existing high levels of service user satisfaction.
- Maintain support for archive staff to ensure that they have the skills necessary to provide an excellent archive service.
- Develop and improve access to online information about the collections.

### **Projected outcomes**

- Levels of staffing maintained.
- Increase quantity of indexes to archives available online.
- Work in partnership with Orkney Museum Service to provide joint online access to both service catalogues.

### **2. A sustainable service that continues to meet national standards**

#### **Underpinning themes**

- Ensure succession planning for the service.
- Maintain professional standards for the service.



- Maintain contacts with other archive services and national bodies.
- Develop and deliver appropriate ways to earn revenue.

### **Projected outcomes**

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

### **3. Improve service user access to archive collections**

#### **Underpinning themes**

- Continue to improve the accessibility of collections by cataloguing.
- Increase online access to collection information.
- Keep onsite information up to date and relevant to service users' needs.

#### **Projected outcomes**

- 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.

### **4. Ensure the care of archive collections for the future**

#### **Underpinning themes**

- Meet the standards required by BS4971:2017.
- Identify records considered at more risk and provide alternative ways to provide access.
- Develop procedures for the management of digital records.

#### **Projected outcomes**

- Maintain or improve levels of care of collections in all formats.
- Explore methods of increasing archive 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 record management system where it affects storage and access to archived electronic records, through membership of the Information Governance Group.

### **5. Provide volunteer working opportunities**

#### **Underpinning themes**

- Provide 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.
- Support equality and diversity in the workplace.

### **Projected outcomes**

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

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The Orkney Archive Forward Plan for 2020 – 2025 provides a structure to continue to build on the strengths of the archive service and ensure the continuing quality of its provision. It recognises the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and that there will be financial constraints on all council services over the period of the plan, and beyond, but that the archive provides services that have wide ranging benefits for Orkney and its citizens. These include economic benefits through ancestral tourism and research, and educational benefits, in particular through its support for school pupils taking part in the annual Orkney Heritage Society Fereday Prize.

It is recognised that, due to the precautions made necessary by the Covid-19 pandemic, onsite access to the archive collections may be limited for some time to come. It is therefore crucial for service continuity that online access to the archive catalogue is provided as soon as possible. Achieving this, together with increased item-level descriptions, will open up access to the collections in a way that is not currently possible, as well as provide remote service-users with a much-improved service.

It is further recognised that provisions for the effective management and preservation of digital records (both born digital, and records which have been digitised) requires serious exploration by the archive service to deal with the increasing digital content which the service has responsibility for.

## **7. 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 5 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 Senior Archivist is responsible for developing the Collections Care and Conservation policy and ensuring that it is implemented, monitored and reviewed no later than three years after the date of approval; ensuring that funding is available for collections care, conservation, and sufficient trained staff with appropriate knowledge to accomplish long-term objectives in this area.

## **7.1 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 and 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.

## **7.2 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 of four strongrooms situated within a dedicated archive area of the Orkney Library & Archive building, which was completed and opened in 2003.

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 Development and Infrastructure 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.

### **7.3 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.

### **7.4 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.

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 Senior Archivist 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 Senior Archivist and Assistant Archivist 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.

## **7.5 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 and appropriate preventative conservation treatment is applied, including cleaning. 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 and Archive staff.

## **7.6 Conservation treatments**

Remedial conservation is essential for the long-term survival and accessibility of the archive collections. Orkney Archive does not employ a qualified conservator, so any major 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 8. Archive staff inspect documents during the retrieval and return process. Any information regarding conservation treatment required and its priority is recorded in the archive collections management system (Axiell CALM system). Individual items are prioritised for treatment depending on demand, the context of the item within the collection and/or its physical condition.

Remedial conservation treatments 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.

## **7.7 Access and handling**

Orkney Archive provides access to collections in accordance with its Access Policy (see section 10 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. Information about the parts of the collection is available remotely through the online Scottish Archive Network catalogue (SCAN) but it is considered a priority to provide remote access to our full archive catalogue, as detailed in the Archive Forward Plan above.

Photocopies and 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.

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.

## **7.8 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.

## **7.9 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).

## **8. 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 7 above, and the Orkney Archive Forward Plan, as detailed in section 6 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.

### **8.1 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.

## **8.2 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.

## **8.3 Remedial conservation**

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

- Items currently in the collection are visually inspected during the retrieval and return process. After assessment the requirement for remedial work will be recorded in the CALM catalogue entry as being High, Medium or Low. It is then possible to create a prioritised list of any items requiring more immediate remedial 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.

## **8.4 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 and Infrastructure Services if these fall outside the recommended range so that appropriate action can be taken.

## **8.5 Environmental control**

All collections are kept within the Orkney Library & Archive building in secure storage areas. Temperature and humidity controls are in place, 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.

## **8.6 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.

## **8.7 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.

## 8.8 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.

## 8.9 Action plan

<b>Actions.</b>	<b>Priority.</b>	<b>Timescale.</b>	<b>Resources.</b>
Continue regular environmental monitoring.	High.	Ongoing.	Staff time.
Identify suitable additional archive storage space.	High.	For completion by 2023.	Staff time.
Replace non-archival storage materials.	Moderate.	Ongoing.	Staff time. Materials.
Complete a preservation survey.	Moderate.	For completion by 2025.	Staff time. Closure period?

## 9. 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 Senior Archivist is responsible for developing the Collections Development Policy and ensuring that it is implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly (at least every three years).

## **9.1 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).

## **9.2 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 his 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.

## **9.3 Appraisal and disposal**

When materials are received, they are appraised to determine their suitability for preservation by the service. The Senior Archivist and Assistant Archivist 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.

#### **9.4 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.

#### **9.5 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 of working lives.
- Records of the wartime service of those stationed in Orkney during both World Wars and of Orcadians stationed elsewhere.
- Records of life on the outer isles.
- Local industry and business archives.

## **10. 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.

### **10.1 Access conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic**

Changes at Orkney Library & Archive brought about by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic mean that access to Orkney Archive will be restricted in certain ways to protect staff, service users and the collections. These restrictions may include:

- Reduced opening hours.
- Reduced access to public toilets.
- Reduced numbers of researchers at any one time.
- Quarantine period for records after access.
- Reduced level of personal assistance from staff.

Any restrictions that are placed on access to the archive will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the highest level of access is provided, while ensuring the safety of all.

### **10.2 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.

### **10.3 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. This comes after Covid-19 restrictions to ensure physical distancing, cleaning and document quarantining can take place.

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 40.75 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.

### **10.4 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.
- 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.

## **10.5 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, photocopying, printing from microfilm and transfer of copyright cleared audio recordings on to CD. Information about the charges for these services can be found on the Orkney Library & Archive website. 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 in paper form or electronically.

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.

## **10.6 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 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 SCAN (Scottish Archives Network).
- 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 and Twitter accounts and 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.



## **10.7 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.

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.

## **10.8 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 CIPFA Survey of Visitors to British Archives.
- 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).

## **10.9 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.

## **11. Conclusions**

The suite of policies and plans detailed above provide a structure on which to continue to build on the strengths of the archive service and demonstrate to stakeholders that the archive service is managed responsibly. It recognises that there will be financial, and other, constraints on all council services over the period of this scheme, and beyond; but that the archive section provides services that have wide ranging benefits for Orkney and its citizens and provides value for money.

Key to the work of raising awareness of the collections held by Orkney Archive is to provide online access to the archive catalogue. Achieving that will be a huge advance for the service and will significantly raise its profile throughout the wider community, therefore this development is the top priority during the term of this current management scheme.



## 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 function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

<b>1. Identification of Function, Policy or Plan</b>	
Name of function / policy / plan to be assessed.	Orkney Archive Management Scheme 2020-2023
Service / service area responsible.	Education Leisure & Housing / Leisure and Lifelong Learning.
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details.	Garry Burton Email: <a href="mailto:garry.burton@orkney.gov.uk">garry.burton@orkney.gov.uk</a> Ext. 2440
Date of assessment.	10/12/2021
Is the function / policy / plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	New. The Service is not to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly. The scheme outlines future priorities and specific standards for the Service in the form of a suite of policies and plans.

<b>2. Initial Screening</b>	
What are the intended outcomes of the function / policy / plan?	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 function / policy / plan strategically important?	Yes, the Management Scheme will ensure the Archive retains its accredited status and formulates how the service will deliver its strategic aims/objectives.
State who is, or may be affected by this function /	Council staff within the Service are affected as the plan prioritises the delivery and direction of the service over the next three years. Archive staff will

<p>policy / plan, and how.</p>	<p>have a clear understanding of the key priorities of the Service and what they should prioritise within their workloads.</p> <p>In addition, general members of the public as well as partner organisations will also be affected by the Management Scheme. They will benefit from the outcomes to be delivered by the Service, resulting in better access to archival collections.</p>
<p>How have stakeholders been involved in the development of this function / policy / plan?</p>	<p>Staff within the Archive Service have had a close involvement in the creation of the scheme and the actions have been produced with shared responsibility between the service manager and the archive team.</p>
<p>Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal).</p>	<p>The Archive Service Accreditation Standard 2014 published by the Scottish Council on 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 in order to establish the views of users on a range of issues. The Archive Service 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.</p> <p>The Standard also specifies that archives should understand factors which might impede usage of an archive and must provide evidence that access issues are being identified and addressed.</p>
<p>Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See <a href="#">The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies</a> for further information.</p>	<p>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. Orkney 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 Wi-Fi is available to all visitors</p>
<p>Could the function / policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?</p>	<p>(Please provide any evidence – positive impacts / benefits, negative impacts and reasons).</p>
<p>1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.</p>	<p>No</p>

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. Caring responsibilities.	No
9. Care experienced.	No
10. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No
11. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	Yes (positive). The Archive Management Scheme identifies several pro-active actions to improve access, both physical and digital, to the Service and the archive collection held by the Council. It should therefore have positive impacts in relation to people affected by disabilities.
12. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Yes (positive). The Archive Management Scheme identifies actions and practices to improve access to the 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.

### 3. Impact Assessment

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	No
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	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 accurately 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. Conclusions and Planned Action

Is further work required?	Yes
What action is to be taken?	Continue to monitor feedback to identify gaps in provision and use information to inform future development and improvement.
Who will undertake it?	Senior Archivist and Library and Archives Team Leader
When will it be done?	ongoing
How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans).	Customer/ user feedback

Signature:



Date: /12/2021

Name: GARRY BURTON

(BLOCK CAPITALS).

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to HR and Performance. A Word version should also be emailed to HR and Performance at [hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk)