



PRESERVATION COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN 2015 - 2018

Last Review: February 2016

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1 ROLE OF SCOTTISH COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES (SCA)

SCA is the leading independent voice for archives in Scotland. It seeks to harness the full range of talents available within (and, indeed, beyond) the archives sector so that key issues for the sector can be addressed. One such issue is preservation, including conservation. It provided financial and administrative support and developed a partnership with the British Library Preservation Advisory Centre and the National Records of Scotland to secure the delivery of 11 Preservation Assessment Surveys across archives in Scotland from 2010 to 2013.

The data gathered in those surveys, combined with data collected from 17 surveys carried out in Scottish archives is analysed and presented in *Our Past, Our Future: A Preservation Survey Report for Scotland* (<http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/pasreport>). In order to address further the issues that featured in the report, SCA has established a Preservation Committee. The key issues identified by the report are:

- 1.1 A need for a reduction in cataloguing backlogs to increase the discoverability of collections and content.
- 1.2 A gap between the ambition for digital preservation surrogates and the current level of digital surrogacy resulting in a need for increased digitisation activity to protect high demand, physically vulnerable material.
- 1.3 A need for improvements in storage facilities and procedures for the management of stored collections to increase the longevity of items.
- 1.4 A need for improvements in environmental management to increase the longevity of items.
- 1.5 A need to increase the proportion of institutions with an up-to-date emergency control plan and a wider need for increased staff confidence in their ability to implement emergency control plans.
- 1.6 Recognition of the high proportion of collections that fall within the date period 1901-2000 and consideration of the associated preservation implications.

2 PURPOSE OF PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The overarching purpose of the Preservation Committee is to take a strategic approach that identifies priority areas for action relating to the preservation and conservation of Scotland's archive collections and associated access issues.

The committee will work to identify practical, actionable and cost-effective means of improving and promoting communication and partnership working with relevant bodies that share an interest in the preservation and conservation of archive collections in Scotland.

3 COMPOSITION OF PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Preservation Committee is composed of experienced archivists, conservators and archive users. It draws its strength from its composition in that it brings together the practical experience and professional knowledge of archivists and conservators with the ideas, insights and 'front of house' experiences of users.

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| CONVENER | Linda Ramsay (Head of Conservation, National Records of Scotland) |
| SCA TRUSTEE REPRESENTATIVE | Irene O'Brien |
| SECRETARIAT | Victoria Brown |
| MEMBERS | Alan MacDonald (Senior Lecturer, History, University of Dundee) Moira Mackenzie (Head of Reader Services, University of St Andrews) Caroline Peach (Director, Preservation Matters, Ltd.) Louise Robertson (Paper Conservator, University of Glasgow) Alison Rosie (Registrar, National Register of Archives for Scotland) Gerry Slater (Policy Adviser, Scottish Council on Archives) Kiara King (Archivist, Ballast Trust) Cheryl Brown (Business Surveying Officer, Business Archives Council Scotland) |

Individuals with related professional expertise or users who have an interest in preservation and conservation issues may wish to join. The intention is to have an active, flexible, representative and dynamic Preservation Committee. We invite expressions of interest from individuals who would like to participate in the group. We ask individuals expressing an interest in joining the group to outline in writing the particular experience and insights they would contribute to the activities and objectives of the group. Please contact the secretariat in the first instance: v.brown@scottisharchives.org.uk.

If for any reason, a member is no longer able to participate in the work and activities of the group, we ask that we are supplied with written notification. This will allow us to address any skills gaps which might be filled by a new group member, and where necessary, to reallocate outstanding actions.

4 EXPENSES, REMUNERATION AND SUPPORT

In line with the SCA Expenses Policy, expenses will be reimbursed to group members upon submission of the claim form and receipts. Whenever possible, members will be asked to use Skype or teleconferencing facilities to minimise costs.

Involvement in the committee is voluntary and unremunerated. However, the secretariat will offer practical assistance, including meeting and event co-ordination. A web presence, communications, marketing and publicity activities will be supported by the SCA Communications Officer.

5 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committee members are asked to commit to attendance at all meetings and to keep up to date with meeting papers and activities. Members are welcome to join meetings via teleconference.

Meetings will be scheduled to address decision and actions points and we will endeavour to ensure that meeting dates accommodate the availability of the majority of members.

Minutes, the action plan and updates on related activities and events will be made available on the SCA website. Members are asked to ensure that they bring copies of relevant meeting papers to committee meetings.

6 PRESERVATION COMMITTEE REMIT

Preservation Committee will provide direction, advice and support to:

- 6.1 The development and implementation of a 2015-2018 Preservation Action Plan for Scotland.
- 6.2 Identify and build partnership opportunities which make possible preservation and conservation related CPD and learning opportunities for a broad range of stakeholders.
- 6.3 Facilitate the exchange of ideas, examples of best practice and skills sharing across the archives and records management sector (and related groups and organisations).
- 6.4 Gather evidence and communicate to decision makers and stakeholders the benefits and importance of the preservation and conservation of Scotland's archive collections.
- 6.5 Monitor and feedback any significant developments in preservation and conservation deemed to have relevance and/or an impact on the goals and activities of the group.

7 STRATEGIC GOALS

The goals and activities of the Preservation Committee are aligned to the SCA Strategic Goals, Charitable Purposes, and Vision and Mission Statements. The SCA corporate Vision is the foundation for all activities, including the Preservation Committee: 'Leading Scotland's archives and records management community to inspire and inform the nation'.

The SCA Constitution and Corporate Plan are available from the website (<http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/goals>).

7.1 Preservation Committee Goals

The objectives of the Preservation Committee are:

- 7.1.1 To develop and implement a series of practical, flexible and cost-effective initiatives that will assist the sector in Scotland to meet different identified preservation needs and priorities and to align these initiatives in support of other projects and standards (e.g. Archive Service Accreditation).
- 7.1.2 To act as a forum for the sharing of best practice and professional experience.
- 7.1.3 To facilitate partnership working with other organisations.
- 7.1.4 To co-ordinate CPD training opportunities, including e-learning tools on various themes, such as handling guidance (with incident control and response given priority).
- 7.1.5 To raise awareness of, and support advocacy for, preservation and conservation issues among users, professionals and decision makers.

8 ACTION PLAN

| Key | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Organisations | Status | Priority | Year |
| ARA: Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) (http://www.archives.org.uk/) | TD: Target Date | H: High | Y1: Year One (2015) |
| ICON: Institute of Conservation UK (http://www.icon.org.uk/) | IP: In Progress | M: Medium | Y2: Year Two (2016) |
| NMCT: National Manuscripts Conservation Trust (http://www.nmct.co.uk/) | OG: Ongoing | L: Low | Y3: Year Three (2017) |
| NRAS: National Register of Archives of Scotland (http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/national-register-of-archives-for-scotland) | C: Complete | | |
| NRS: National Records of Scotland (http://nationalrecordsofscotland.gov.uk/) | | | |
| PC: Preservation Committee (http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/preservation) | | | |
| SCA: Scottish Council on Archives | | | |

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|---|--|--|--|
| (http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/) | | | |
| TNA: The UK National Archives (http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/) | | | |

Preservation Committee Goal 1

To develop and implement a series of practical, flexible and cost effective initiatives that will assist the sector in Scotland to meet different identified preservation needs and priorities and to align these initiatives in support of other projects and standards (e.g. Archive Service Accreditation).

| Ref | Action | Implementers | Priority | Year |
|-----|---|--------------|----------|------|
| 1.1 | Consult with the sector (via a survey) to identify most needed kinds of basic equipment and whether these could be purchased by SCA on behalf of the sector and used/loaned out to services who requiring them (e.g. data loggers) and/or survey conservation sector to source specialist equipment held in studios that can be loaned out/shared/used (e.g. book vacuum wedge) | SCA / PC | H | Y1 |
| 1.2 | Explore the practical administration, associated costs and co-ordination of box buying and equipment borrowing schemes and how co-operative box/equipment scheme and access to conservation and preservation guidance could be offered as part of a membership benefit of SCA. | NRS / SCA | M | All |
| 1.3 | Publicise any known external Scottish funding opportunities or programmes related to Preservation and Conservation (e.g. NMCT potential for collaboration on conservation grant scheme, highlighting upcoming HLF Catalyst Umbrella workshops on how to access external funding sources which could be of assistance in obtaining funding for conservation/preservation related initiatives). | SCA / PC | M | All |
| 1.4 | Monitor developments in the demand for, and benefits of, adopting a consortium approach to storage, particularly for environmentally sensitive materials (e.g. photographs and film). | SCA / PC | M | All |

Preservation Committee Goal 2

To act as a forum for the sharing of best practice and professional experience.

| Ref | Action | Implementers | Priority | Year |
|-----|---|--------------|----------|------|
| 2.1 | Devise survey for sector to gather information and feedback on a variety of needs and potential activities related to conservation/preservation, building on the findings of the Preservation Survey Report for Scotland. Can also relate it to the forward planning stages in the ARA Accredited Conservator Restorer (ACR) application | SCA / PC | H | Y1 |
| 2.2 | Deliver survey to sector and gather, analyse and publish feedback. | SCA | | Y1 |
| 2.3 | Review existing policies and documentation (e.g. collections management and care, conservation policy, handling, security, incident response, disaster planning, digitisation strategies, pre-digitisation surveys, handling during digitisation, cleaning programmes, volunteer programmes, repackaging strategies, risk assessment, environmental management plans) and devise templates/model guidance to be shared on SCA website, with links to Archives Accreditation Scheme model documentation. | SCA / PC | M | All |
| 2.4 | Use social media and website to promote and make available preservation guidance, related events and training opportunities. | SCA / PC | M | All |

Preservation Committee Goal 3

To facilitate partnership working with other organisations.

| Ref | Action | Implementers | Priority | Year |
|-----|---|------------------|----------|------|
| 3.1 | Identify and approach potential partners in working to deliver objectives and activities of group (e.g. ARA-UK, ICON, NMCT, West Dean, British Library). | SCA / PC | M | All |
| 3.2 | Explore contributing/planning preservation and conservation workshops/seminars for Skills for the Future trainee cohorts and host organisations across 2015-18. | SCA / NRS / NRAS | M | All |

Preservation Committee Goal 4

To co-ordinate CPD training opportunities, including e-learning tools on various themes, such as disaster planning, incident response and handling.

| Ref | Action | Implementers | Priority | Year |
|-----|--|--------------|----------|------|
| 4.1 | Identify upcoming preservation and conservation workshop/CPD opportunities in Scotland (forwarded to SCA office) and offer assistance in publicising. | PC | M | All |
| 4.2 | Consult with training and CPD providers to explore opportunities for joint delivery/partnership working in offering training opportunities. | SCA | M | All |
| 4.3 | Identify gaps in training provision in Scotland and consult with the sector to gather feedback on their top priority training and development needs (<i>survey content</i>). | SCA / PC | H | Y1 |
| 4.4 | Explore the feasibility of devising and making available a 'skills register'/map of conservation expertise/services on SCA website. | SCA | M | Y1 |

Preservation Committee Goal 5

To raise awareness of, and support advocacy for, preservation and conservation issues among users, professionals and decision makers.

| Ref | Action | Implementers | Priority | Year |
|-----|---|----------------|----------|--------|
| 5.1 | Publish and publicise final PAS report. | SCA / NRS | H | Y1 |
| 5.2 | Wider sector canvassed for examples of best practice, including content/examples of addressing user expectations, promoting dialogue. | SCA / NRS | H | Y1 |
| 5.3 | Group to submit suggestions for case studies and other content for a Preservation section of the SCA website and for a preservation/conservation themed <i>Broadsheet</i> . | PC | M | All |
| 5.4 | Assess impact of closure of BLPAC on survey results and update with outstanding data and how group might address implications, etc. | SCA/PC | M | All |
| 5.5 | Delivery of a key awareness and profile raising event. | SCA / NRS / PC | H | Y1,Y2 |
| 5.6 | Identify and investigate potential partners to host, help fund and work in partnership to deliver an event. | SCA / NRS / PC | H | Y1, Y2 |
| 5.7 | Assess and evaluate achievements and activities of group against plan at end of each year. | SCA / PC | M | All |



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