

SCA Preservation Committee Action Plan 2019-21



SCOTTISH
COUNCIL ON
ARCHIVES

A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC044553)

SCA Preservation Committee Action Plan 2019-21

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1. Role of Scottish Council on Archives (SCA)

The Scottish Council on Archives provides leadership and builds capacity for the archives and records management sector in Scotland. SCA works in partnership with many organisations throughout the UK to support and promote the management and use of archives services and collections. 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 ([Available here](#)).

In order to address further the issues that featured in the report, SCA 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 the 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 SCA Preservation Committee

The Preservation Committee is composed of 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 | Linda Ramsay |
| CO-ORDINATOR | Victoria Brown (SCA Programmes and Development Manager) |
| MEMBERS | Christopher Cassells (Business Surveying Officer, Business Archives Council Scotland) Kiara King (Archivist, Ballast Trust) Alan MacDonald (Senior Lecturer, History, University of Dundee) Caroline Peach (Director, Preservation Matters, Ltd.) John Pelan (Director, Scottish Council on Archives) Alison Rosie (Registrar, National Register of Archives for Scotland) Suzanne Shouesmith (Student Member, Abbotsford House) Gerry Slater (Policy Adviser, Scottish Council on Archives) |

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 and Operations 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.

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. Committee Remit

Preservation Committee will provide direction, advice and support to:

- 6.1 The development and implementation of a 2019-2021 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. Preservation Committee Objectives

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).
2. To act as a forum for the sharing of best practice and professional experience.
3. To facilitate partnership working with other organisations.
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).
5. To raise awareness of, and support advocacy for, preservation and conservation issues among users, professionals and decision makers.

8. Preservation Committee Outcomes and Activities

Outcome 1

Archive services have improved access to preservation related guidance, resources and training.
Activities

- 1.1 Develop and deliver an evidence-based programme of capacity building training on preservation related topics (e.g. a 'Meet the Funders' event, Environmental Monitoring workshop).
- 1.2 Identify and make available preservation related guidance and case studies (with reference to the Accreditation Standard)
- 1.3 Publish and distribute the Disaster Planning Guidance and deliver an associated launch and training event.
- 1.4 Develop a conservation and preservation skills map

Outcome 2

Awareness of preservation related issues is increased, within and beyond the archive sector.

- 2.1 Deliver a profile-raising event(s) on a preservation related topic
- 2.2 Promote preservation related initiatives and news via social media, e-magazine, conferences and website
- 2.3 Keep decision makers informed of preservation related developments and issues

Outcome 3

The archive sector has increased preservation related collaborations and partnerships

- 3.1 Identify partner organisations and enable collaborative working to address preservation issues
- 3.2 Identify funders and sponsors to assist in resourcing preservation initiatives



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