



SCOTTISH  
COUNCIL ON  
ARCHIVES

# ANNUAL REVIEW 2020-21

**The Scottish Council on Archives** is an independent advocacy and development body for the archives and records management sector, providing leadership and building capacity.

**LEAD • INFORM • INSPIRE**

# FOREWORD

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When writing the Foreword for last year's report, I had no inkling that 12 months later, virtually all organisations would still be working in such a constrained environment. However, I do genuinely feel that SCA has continued to adapt very successfully to this world, and for that, the Director and the other staff must be congratulated.

Some actions have been delayed – in particular the development of the new strategic plan to run from 2022 – but I feel such caution is amply justified to ensure that the final plan is as closely aligned as possible to the needs of the very different world which is emerging. We cannot be disconnected from the emerging agendas around community and personal identity or climate change and future sustainability in service delivery. We must advocate for the relevance of archives, records and data, and demonstrate how a future world would be poorer for not ensuring the survival and widest use of the information that can be unlocked.

This report illustrates the progress we've made in delivering on our aims and, I hope, encourages readers to support the SCA in the years ahead.

**BRUCE JACKSON, CHAIR**

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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Like almost every other organisation on the planet, the Scottish Council on Archives has adjusted its way of working to reflect the restrictions caused by the ongoing pandemic. On the negative side, it has meant long hours working at home and only meeting colleagues online in Zoom and Teams, missing out on face-to-face human interactions which are so important for our mental wellbeing. On the other hand, the dramatic shift to online delivery of our programmes has resulted in engagement with many more people not just from Scotland but across the world. As we emerge from the pandemic and slowly get back to some kind of normality, the opportunities that have been presented by homeworking and online programming will inform our future blended approach to how we operate.

As you will see from this annual review, we have been busy! SCA has run more events and engaged with more people than ever before. Our small team has upskilled in different communication technologies including YouTube, podcasting and the video platforms which have radically changed how we all talk to and meet with each other. Highlights of the year include very popular webinars on a range of topics, including collections development, copyright, archives and education, emergency planning,

collecting in a crisis, caring for community archives, and why records management matters. Our work with community groups has expanded, and we are particularly grateful for the support of ARA UK and Ireland for the establishment of the new Community Archives and Heritage Group (Scotland), complimenting the work of the existing UK-wide group. The Saving Scotland's History programme, to fund manuscript conservation projects across Scotland, was launched in 2020 with help from National Records of Scotland, SCA and the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust. We also ventured into the world of podcasting, with two series featuring interviews with professionals, academics and users of archives and records.

Our plan to launch the new portal, Your Scottish Archives, has been delayed because of the pandemic. However, we are optimistic that the new resource – which will allow people to search across the archives and records of local authorities, universities, businesses, as well as heritage and community groups – will be ready by late 2022.

I look forward to celebrating SCA's twentieth anniversary next year with all our members, trustees, friends, colleagues and stakeholders.

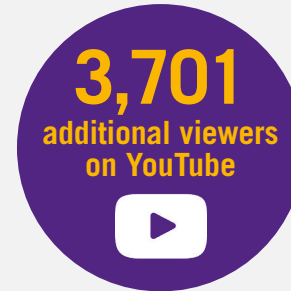
**JOHN PELAN, DIRECTOR**

## TRAINING & EVENTS

Subjects covered include collections development, emergency planning, and collecting in the pandemic, plus thought-provoking sessions on 'Why Records Management Matters', and a series of skills-based webinars for everyone working with community archives.

Delegates came from all over Scotland, from Shetland to Dumfries, North Uist to Peterhead, and from throughout the rest of the UK.

There was also much interest from further afield, with delegates attending from: Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Tanzania, Turkey, and the USA.



## ACCESS TO ARCHIVES



## MEMBERSHIP







#### Scottish Council on Archives

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[www.scottisharchives.org.uk](http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk)

A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC044553).

#### OUR VALUES ►

We are an independent and trustworthy organisation which responds to the needs of our members. By working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, we strive to inspire the highest standards in collection management and service delivery.

#### OUR VISION ►

Scotland's documented past is valued, understood and shared.

#### MISSION ►

Leading Scotland's archives, records management, and conservation sector to inspire and inform the nation.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The invaluable contributions of our trustees, members, funders, volunteers, and partners are critical to the success of every initiative and project we deliver. We would particularly like to thank National Records of Scotland and Scottish Government for our annual grant funding, without which SCA would struggle to function.

In 2020/21, we worked with numerous individuals and partners, including National Records of Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, National Library of Scotland, Built Environment Forum Scotland, Creative Carbon Scotland, OurStory Scotland, Archives and Records Association, Wellcome Trust, International Council on Archives, The National Archives, the Community Archives and Heritage Group, Culture Counts, National Manuscripts Conservation Trust; and archive services in local authorities, universities, communities and other organisations throughout Scotland and the UK.

*We would like to give thanks to the many people and organisations who continue to support SCA.*