

Strategy 2012 – 2022

National Records of Scotland

Introduction

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) is a new body, created on 1 April 2011 by the merger of two highly respected national institutions, the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) and the National Archives of Scotland (NAS).

NRS has a wide and diverse community of stakeholders and plays a central role in the cultural, social and economic life of Scotland, supporting several of the Scottish Government's key National Outcomes and measuring its Population Purpose Target. We continue to perform the registration and statistical functions of GROS and the archival functions of NAS, including maintaining the archives as one of Scotland's five National Collections, and our leadership role for Scottish archive and record professionals. We are building on existing close relationships between the two former bodies, particularly the service for family history under the highly successful ScotlandsPeople brand. Combining the resources of the former NAS and GROS creates a stronger organisation with wide skills in recording, acquiring, processing, preserving and making available records and information.

The next few years will see considerable reductions in public spending and NRS therefore needs a clear set of priorities in order to ensure that the resources we have are used wisely and professional standards maintained. The priorities set out in this document are nevertheless ambitious. Even within a timescale which reflects this, we will need to approach their achievement creatively, not only by reviewing the use of resources we have internally, but by working in partnership with other organisations where possible increasing our efficiency, and using ICT to support business innovation and maximise revenues from services for which we charge.

Our Vision for 2022

By 2022, NRS will be renowned for the values which are important to both our staff and our stakeholders:

World leading and Scottish

Professional and motivated

Friendly and accessible

Dynamic and innovative

Trustworthy, secure and respected

Well run

We will achieve this by focusing on a set of priorities for 2022 centred around four key themes and five strategic objectives.

Key themes

NRS provides support to Scottish Ministers and its work contributes towards several of the Scottish Government's key priorities. Four key themes encompass our work:

Preserving the past

We preserve the nation's records in our care so that they are available for current and future generations, holding them securely and ensuring that information which is restricted or of a sensitive personal nature is protected from unauthorised access. We advise other bodies on the care of records and archives, and maintain the National Register of Archives for Scotland, which keeps track of archives in private hands and facilitates access to them.

Recording the present

We run Scotland's Census and administer the registration of births, deaths, stillbirths, marriages, civil partnerships, divorces and adoptions, maintain the National Health Service Central Register and the Scottish Register of Tartans, and produce geographic data which is used throughout the public sector. We advise a wide range of public authorities on the care and management of the records they create, including in digital formats. We are responsible for agreeing arrangements for the management of public records created or held by named public authorities or by contractors who carry out any functions of those authorities.

Informing the future

We collect, produce analyse and publish official demographic statistics, drawn from the Census and other sources, to inform government policy, medical, academic and other research. We provide onsite and online facilities for people researching all aspects of Scottish life, including historians, genealogists and academics. We provide a range of education services. We are responsible for identifying records from public bodies including Scottish Government, the courts, government agencies and the Scottish Parliament which are of permanent historical value and ensuring that these are added to the nation's archives. We enhance our existing collections by acquiring other historical records of national importance and have the power to make suitable arrangements for the disposal of other material including by transfer to another appropriate repository.

Working effectively

We strive to work as effectively and efficiently as possible in all areas of our operations, reaping the benefits of the merger which created NRS to reduce our costs and our impact on the environment. We will use skill, expertise, knowledge and information technology to provide our services as efficiently as possible, and develop existing and new revenue streams. We will ensure that NRS staff are highly motivated, have the special skill sets appropriate to their responsibilities and that these are developed to meet new challenges. We will explore the potential for further collaborative work, specifically with the Registers of Scotland and through data linkage and sharing agreements.

Strategic objectives

NRS has five overarching strategic objectives deriving from the four key themes:

1. To preserve the nation's records in our care, ensuring that the security of the information they contain is maintained, and to promote the preservation of records held elsewhere.
2. To promote improvements in the management of records including digital formats, by the public sector in Scotland in order to support good governance, accountability and efficient use of public resources.
3. To produce statistics and gather and record historical and contemporary information, about Scotland and its population.
4. To promote and extend the use of our records, data, expertise and statistical information, raising awareness, understanding and enjoyment of Scotland past, present and future.
5. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our organisation.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Objective	Priorities	Key themes	Scottish Government National Outcomes
<p>1. To preserve the nation's records in our care, ensuring that the security of the information they contain is maintained, and to promote the preservation of records held elsewhere.</p>	<p>All of Scotland's national archive collection is housed securely in appropriate environmental conditions</p> <p>NRS has a fully integrated, secure and trustworthy Digital Data Archive which allows data to be transferred from depositors, preserved, catalogued and, where possible, made available to NRS users</p> <p>NRS's staff are able to deal with digital records as easily as with traditional media</p> <p>NRS promotes and supports the preservation of archival heritage across Scotland.</p> <p>NRS maintains a secure data store for holding sensitive data sets.</p>	<p>Preserving the past</p> <p>Recording the present</p> <p>Informing the future</p>	<p>We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity</p> <p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>

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<p>2. To promote improvements in the management of records including digital formats, by the public sector in Scotland in order to support good governance, accountability and efficient use of public resources.</p>	<p>The number of public bodies failing to comply with the public records (Scotland) Act 2011 reduces each year.</p> <p>NRS's own records management procedures are recognised as an exemplar for others.</p> <p>NRS and its depositors work in partnership to ensure that as much selection, appraisal and listing work as possible is done before records are transferred to NRS.</p>	<p>Preserving the past</p> <p>Recording the present</p>	<p>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</p> <p>We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity</p>

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<p>3. To produce statistics and gather and record historical and contemporary information, about Scotland and its population.</p>	<p>NRS successfully delivers its statutory functions in regard to the registration of births, marriages, deaths and other events, and supplies key statistical data about vital events.</p> <p>NRS is central to a system allowing electronic notification of events across the public sector which is self-funded, helps reduce fraud and allows people to register events securely from home.</p> <p>NRS provides demographic analyses to support policy making in the public sector.</p> <p>NRS is the central point of information about registered Tartans.</p> <p>We have successfully conducted a decennial information gathering exercise in 2021, as directed by Scottish Ministers in 2014.</p> <p>NRS selects and acquires public records and private archives which enhance the national collection.</p>	<p>Preserving the past</p> <p>Recording the present</p>	<p>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</p> <p>We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity</p> <p>We live longer, healthier lives</p> <p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>

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<p>4. To promote and extend the use of our records, data, expertise and statistical information, raising awareness, understanding and enjoyment of Scotland past, present and future.</p>	<p>We produce a range of demographic statistics, analysis and advice which is available in a variety of formats and which meets our users needs.</p> <p>We work in collaboration with the academic community and other users to maximise the use made of our records and data for a wide variety of research purposes.</p> <p>Improvements to NRS's services are properly marketed and promoted.</p> <p>Access to the information held by NRS has been extended and improved and users are able to find the information they need quickly and easily, whether onsite or online.</p> <p>NRS continues to be a world leader in genealogy, providing a single, joined up service across Scotland which can be accessed online, is self-funding, and uses a variety of information sources to enrich the experience of users.</p> <p>NRS's education services are widely</p>	<p>Preserving the past</p> <p>Recording the present</p> <p>Informing the future</p>	<p>We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe</p> <p>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</p> <p>Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens</p> <p>We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity</p> <p>We live longer, healthier lives</p> <p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>

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	<p>used by learners of all ages including universities, research bodies and other HE and FE institutions, Scottish schools and adult and community education groups.</p> <p>NRS's outreach services provide informative and enjoyable ways for all online and onsite visitors to understand and use our information and other resources.</p> <p>NRS provides, and assures the uniqueness of, an identifier for every user of Scottish public services, enabling public authorities including the NHS to manage individuals' records as they move around the country and across borders.</p> <p>We have, in partnership with others, established a national data linkage centre which facilitates and promotes research and production of statistics about people in Scotland, to help inform policies to make lives better.</p> <p>Users of the NRS website and its satellite websites are able to access the information they require quickly and easily, maximising the use made of NRS outputs.</p>		
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<p>5. To improve effectiveness and efficiency of our organisation</p>	<p>NRS is maximising revenue in order to offset our costs.</p> <p>NRS is working both internally and externally in ways which achieve more for our stakeholders, avoid duplication and derive economies of scale.</p> <p>NRS is using technology which supports its business and helps to deliver effective and innovative services to them.</p> <p>NRS has reduced its carbon consumption and outputs.</p> <p>NRS's services are efficient and easy to use, whether in person or online.</p> <p>NRS is seen as an excellent place to work, with an appropriate balance of statisticians, archivists, conservators, and appropriately skilled administrative and ICT staff who are all well-supported and highly motivated.</p>	<p>Working effectively</p>	<p>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</p> <p>We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production</p> <p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>