

NRS

Annual Business Plan

2022-23

Our Vision

To preserve the past, record the present and inform the future.

Our Mission

Increase our reach and impact and be recognised as a trusted, expert, and professional organisation.

Our Ethos

We put people at the heart of what we do and deliver in accordance with our values.

Our Values

- **Professional:** Collaborating to share our professional skills and knowledge whilst increasing our skills and expertise.
- **Respectful:** Listening and respecting different views, learning from others and expanding our knowledge to grow together.
- **Accountable:** Being responsible for what we do, delivering with transparency and clarity of purpose.
- **Customer Focused:** Knowing our customers to understand their needs, delivering a positive experience and encouraging feedback to improve what we do.

About NRS

National Records of Scotland (NRS) is a non-Ministerial department of the Scottish Government, supporting the Registrar General for Scotland and the Keeper of the Records for Scotland. Our work underpins the fabric of Scottish society; telling the story of our nation through the records we hold and the data about the people of Scotland we gather and produce.

As the official Scottish national archive we are guardians of over 800 years of irreplaceable national documents spanning the 12th to the 21st centuries, touching on virtually every aspect of Scottish life. We are the Scottish official source of demographic statistics and administer the census of Scotland's population. We produce information about our population, households, migration, vital events (such as births, deaths and marriages), life expectancy and electoral statistics which help inform policy decisions across central and local government and the private and third sectors.

We support Scottish public bodies' compliance with the Public Records Scotland Act 2011 and, as expert advisers in information and records management, we fulfil a leadership role for the archive sector and work to preserve physical and digital records. We make our information as accessible as is reasonably possible while preserving it for the future, and are committed to making more information available over time through digital channels. We work in partnership with the Scottish Government and the wider public sector to deliver a national Data Linkage Framework to facilitate ethical research that protects privacy whilst benefiting Scotland and informing national investment priorities.

Evaluation of our 2020-21 Business Plan Commitments

We said we will do:

Continue to refocus our delivery priorities to manage the implications of the COVID-19 outbreak for as long as required, including new working arrangements, temporary service measures, and publication of COVID-19 statistics.

What we did:

- We have continued to support staff wellbeing during the pandemic, expanding our internal guidance and sources of support, including the development of significant new intranet content. We also ran a Q&A event, inviting questions on any COVID-related topic from colleagues, which led to high levels of engagement across all business areas.
- Following an NRS-wide exercise, we continued to bring back services to our buildings based on their criticality. The Service Restart & Delivery Team, including members from Estates, Health and safety and IT among others, has helped to drive this important process. The ongoing nature of the pandemic and the need to safeguard staff and visitors within a set of distinct challenges with our estate, have made this a complex undertaking.
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we continued to successfully publish a range of analyses on COVID mortality to support monitoring and understanding of the pandemic in Scotland.

What we said we will do:

Work with a range of partners to deliver the live Census in Spring 2022 with successful and lasting benefits for Scotland.

What we did:

- We successfully launched Scotland's first ever principally digital Census on the 28th February. The tireless work of our teams, our suppliers, partners and stakeholders, has helped to drive engagement across the country. Our communications work, including community engagement and national and local media activities, has ensured that important messages around the legal responsibility of completion reached as many households as possible.

What we said we will do:

Continue to deliver high-quality public services to our customers through our online channels and manage the transition to re-open in person and other services in line with Scotland's response to COVID-19. In doing so, we will also support the delivery of registration services through local authorities across Scotland. We will feed into the digital archiving strategy as we plan priorities for new and enhanced digital services over the coming years.

What we did:

- As part of our ongoing commitment to improve accessibility of our records, we have continued to use digital approaches, adding more than a million key releases to our ScotlandsPeople online library, including Cabinet papers and kirk session documents.
- We also implemented a new online seat booking system, making it easier for our customers to access the records that are important to them.
- With the use of service restart route-map work was completed to restore our in person and other services to respond to customer demand. We continued progress towards future working model provision which we developed, implemented and communicated with our stakeholders.
- Through ongoing engagement with local authorities around remote provisions and formal stakeholder engagement remote registration service was developed and brought into force following the granting of Royal Assent to the UK emergency coronavirus bill on 25 March and Commencement Regulations being made on 26 March.

What we said we will do:

Deliver high-quality statistics in line with UK standards and through enhancement of our statistical services.

What we did:

- We have delivered a range of demographic statistics products to our agreed publication schedule, giving valuable information on population and household estimates, life expectancy figures and migration analyses, among many others topics. As testament to the quality of their work, the redesigned Registrar General Annual Review was recognised at the Analysis in Government awards
- We have delivered a number of improvements across our teams involved with data linkage, published new admin data based estimates of the population in Scotland and established 'Future of Census' approach with high level plan and objectives.
- Our NHSCR team have successfully delivered the address database used for Census 2022. To deliver on essential directorate priorities we completed a number of improvements and implemented a new team structure to improve capacity and resilience.

What we said we will do:

Deliver NRS archive services, working with stakeholders to address the consequences of the disruption experienced during 2020-21 and recognising that there may be continued limitations given the current issues from COVID-19. We will continue to plan our programme of investment in digital archiving and long-term storage whilst also continuing to grow our engagement with our stakeholders and the wider archive and recordkeeping sector.

What we did:

- We have submitted a full archive accreditation application with supporting evidence in December 2021. Comfort analysis was conducted and actioned between January and March 2022.

What we said we will do:

Grow and invest in our people, developing our organisation to enhance the way we operate, through investing in skills, knowledge management, leadership and capacity of our organisation. We will continue to mature our governance to support our people-based approaches.

What we did:

- We have started developing our People Strategy, which is based on the combined findings from several staff surveys conducted over the past year. As part of this strategy we have launched the NRS-wide Leadership Forum to encourage and develop leaders within the organisation. We have also improved access to Learning & Development support and developed our staff wellbeing programme.
- We also filled two critical strategic roles to support the delivery of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activities across NRS. We published our Mainstreaming Duty report and our short-term Equality Outcomes, and have established an EDI Assurance Group to coordinate activities, promote the positive use of Equality Impact Assessments and share best practice.

What we said we will do:

Improve our programme management, information governance, delivery infrastructure and our estate to support our long-term goals.

What we did:

- Following a concerted effort from the project team, with support from staff in all business areas, we successfully obtained accreditation under the Digital Economy Act for our Data Linkage Service. Gaining this important external validation of our information management arrangements was critical to our aspirations to work with others to support research and understanding of a range of key issues facing society.
- We have achieved both Public Services Network (PSN) re-accreditation and Cyber

Essentials Plus Re-accreditation, as well as established Information Security Management System to support DEA accreditation.

- We have completed all planned Census security activities before going live, including IT Health Checks for all our suppliers. We recruited cyber security resource and put infrastructure in place for 24x7 monitoring and support during live Census operations. Independent Information Assurance Review found that strong controls were also in place to detect and respond to threats that may impact the census when it is in live operation and found that security controls in place have built upon and improved on those in place during the 2019 census rehearsal.
- We have grown our Delivery Directorate to develop capacity and capability across Delivery, Portfolio, Governance and Business Change to continue to mature, plan and prioritise our strategic portfolio. In addition to managing and overseeing delivery of a number of corporate projects, we secured a 'Substantial' assurance review from Internal Audit for our Programme and Project Management.

What we said we will do:

Mature and improve our IT services through investment in our infrastructure, with a focus on major programme delivery including Census, digital archiving, additional COVID-19 service responses and other business improvements.

What we did:

- Industry leading disaster recovery solution has been installed and rolled out across our core services including Registrations, Statistical Services, Vital Events and Census and full tests have been successfully carried out. Runbooks have also been created for all critical services and processes have been updated to ensure disaster recovery is maintained.
- Our core IT infrastructure was migrated from on premise locations to data centres offering improvements in environmental management, security and resilience, significantly reducing risk and improving the work environment for staff.
- We have supported working from home during the pandemic, issuing hundreds of items of corporate equipment. We have supported the return to office of all identified strategic services, embedded a first line support team to improve our service management and put in place robust incident management to support the delivery of Census 2022.

Our 2022-23 Annual Business Plan Commitments

1. We will develop a “ways of working” programme and implement further wellbeing initiatives that underpin our aspirations to be a strong, forward looking and sustainable organisation that invests in, engages and supports our people. We will continue to develop the skills and capacity of our people to enrich their roles and to facilitate our growth and delivery of our priorities. We will continue our journey to promote understanding and to value diversity and inclusion for those within our organisation and the diverse people we serve, this will include a refresh of our Equality Outcomes. We will also build on and maintain our strong risk and health and safety procedures for the benefit of our staff and customer.
2. We will continue to maintain and improve our service and product offering, identifying areas of continuous improvement, innovation and partnership. We will continue to embrace new digital and technological solutions to enable the way we work, engage, operate and deliver our services.
3. We will continue to drive the success of the Census Programme during 2022/23 with the conclusion of our Collect and Census Coverage Survey activities and the development of administrative data, processing and statistical estimation methodology. We will aim to deliver our first set of high quality Census Outputs around one year from the completion of the data collection phases of Scotland’s Census. We will capture learnings to inform future Census’ and transitioning the skills, knowledge and developments to broader NRS initiatives.
4. We will build on recent successes to further develop and strengthen our statistics, data sharing agreements and survey data, seeking collaborative opportunities with other organisations.
5. We will make the individual results from the 1921 Census available on Scotlandspeople and commence work to refresh our customer strategy and platforms
6. We will continue to mature our information governance, data and records management, physical and cyber security arrangements in order to support the development and expansion of our statistical, archive and other information services. We will secure Archive Re-Accreditation, deliver the first stages of a tactical storage plan informing and shaping our future physical archive storage requirements and further develop our strategy for achieving a fully integrated digital archiving process which can handle digital records in bulk.
7. We will engage with our key internal and external stakeholders to build a future business strategy that fully understands their current and future needs. We will focus on the core enablers required to ensure we can deliver our ambitions in a fair, accessible and sustainable way, underpinned by a realistic strategic route-map.

8. We will shape and prioritise our strategic portfolio of projects and programmes to deliver the change we require as an organisation over the next 5 years. We will establish and embed a holistic, risk based, framework that matures our project and programme capability, supports and enables strategic change, ensuring we are focusing our resources and finances to deliver best value.
9. We will develop an Estates Strategy which supports the delivery of our organisational commitments over the next 5 years, including enhancing our customer facing services, ensuring archive and information storage meets our needs, enabling new ways of working to be implemented and providing a foundation to deliver our climate change and sustainability commitments.
10. We will work to become a more efficient organisation, continuing to deliver high-quality services to meet our KPIs, customer satisfaction, improving our allocation of resources and building the capability we need as an organisation to deliver our priorities.