**Notes of the Search Room User Group meeting held on 6th August 2019 in meeting room 1, New Register House at 13:30 Hours**

**Attendees**
Jane Milne (NRS), Dee Williams (NRS), Iain Ferguson (NRS), Alison Lindsay (NRS), Janet Bishop (JB, ASGRA and genealogist), Bruce Bishop (BB, genealogist), Val Wilson (VW, ASGRA & Genealogist), Ken Nisbet (KN, Genealogist),

**Apologies:** Emma Williamson (NHS NSS).

### 1. Previous minutes of 23RD April 2019

1.1     The notes of the last meeting were accepted.

### 2. Centre software

2.1     Since the last meeting a search functionality had been added whereby it was now possible to sort search results by Registration District or 'RD' (click on 'RD Name' at top of column to sort).

2.2     The zoom function now works correctly and customers can click on the area of the document that they want to zoom into.

2.3     The numbers of recently completed and approved Registers that had been scanned had been queried at the last meeting. NRS was able to confirm that to date they had received 75% of the 2018 Registers for births, deaths and marriages, which had been scanned and the images made available on ScotlandsPeople for search room users. For 2019, only 3 Registration Districts have been received and scanned.

2.4     JB pointed out that some 2016 death images were missing. NRS agreed to investigate why some images were missing.
> *Dn. Since the meeting NRS has established that some death images are missing for 2016. NRS are in the process of checking which areas have missing images and will load them as required.*

2.5     The genealogists asked why there was a delay for the loading of indexes for modern day events on ScotlandsPeople. They require up to date information when they are searching for beneficiaries of an estate. NRS explained that when an event happens, like a death, the index is created on the civil registration system by the local registrar. However, indexes need to be separately loaded on to ScotlandsPeople and hence a delay occurs.
> *Dn. Since the meeting NRS has established that the delay for indexes is up to 2 months.*

2.6     The OPR search functionality was still being worked on such that better results would be received when forenames, parent names and wildcards are used.

2.7     The genealogists reported that it was taking up to 20 minutes for credits to appear on their accounts. NRS explained that the system carries out background checks before adding credits to an account. This usually takes a few minutes but

sometimes it can take up to 30 minutes. An email confirming the time delay is sent after a credit purchase.

2.8     The genealogists highlighted that the extension of the number of characters for order numbers on ScotlandsPeople had affected how they are displayed on their screens and therefore new orders are going to the bottom of the screen. NRS explained that it wouldn't be possible to change this with the current contract but this is a helpful consideration for a future specification.

2.9     An issue had been raised whereby it wasn't possible for search room users to readily order an extract for an adopted person because the index entry didn't include an option to 'Order Certificate'. The current arrangement will be reviewed by NRS.
     *Dn. NRS to review their procedures for ordering certificates for adopted persons.*

2.10    JB asked whether a feature could be added such that the address fields for orders could be cleared. Currently the system automatically populates fields using information for previous orders. When ordering for clients the address information needs to be changed.
     *Dn. NRS to evaluate whether a 'Clear contents' function can be added to orders.*

## 3.  Search rooms

3.1     New printers for the search rooms were in the process of being procured though no installation date was yet available. Numbers of printers for each search room will be rationalised but the new models should produce superior quality prints.

3.2     Free wifi is now available in both ScotlandsPeople search rooms. Following a request at the last meeting, NRS had requested that the period of time that customers can be logged in be extended. IT specialists extended the time to 2 hours which was the longest allowable on the system. The genealogists found that they were still being logged out during the 2 hour period if there was no activity.

3.3     A computer that gives access to virtual volumes had been installed in seat 40 of the Dundas search room during June 2019. BB asked whether it could be linked to a printer to save him walking up stairs to obtain prints.
                         *Dn. NRS to check if a printer can be linked to the virtual volumes computer located in the Dundas search room.*

## 4.  Records

4.1     NRS was still working to release the Kirk Session and Prison Register type records. A discussion took place around how Kirk Session will be made available, the fact that the volumes are un-indexed and how some of the earlier entries can be difficult to read. The option of having a working group was raised to consider what guidance for Kirk Session records might be made available on ScotlandsPeople and BB and KN offered to participate if such a group was formed.

4.2    JB queried why the contents of a Register of Corrections Etc. (RCE) are not included on modern day certificates? NRS agreed to investigate.

*Dn. NRS provided the wording at the end of these minutes that explains the RCE process and why the contents are not included on modern day certificates.*

## 5.  Any Other Business

5.1    KN requested further details regarding the recent 'flood' in the New Register House Dome area that had been recently reported in various newspapers and on social media and asked whether records had been destroyed as reported? NRS confirmed that there had been water ingress but that NRS staff had been quick to remove records from the affected areas and that no records had been destroyed. NRS conservation staff had ensured that the records were dried in a controlled manner.

*Dn. The official NRS response for this event is included below:*

- *In 2009, there was an incident involving water ingress at New Register House, which at that time was managed by the former General Register Office for Scotland.*
- *This matter was quickly resolved and, with assistance from the then National Archives of Scotland, all of the affected records were conserved, no records or information were lost and these remain part of our collections.*
- *NRS carry out five-year building condition surveys. As part of our long term maintenance of New Register House, NRS is currently developing the specification for a comprehensive repair with the support of conservation architects and surveyors.*

## 6.  Date of Next Meeting

6.1    The date of the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 26th November 2019 at 13:30 in meeting room 1, New Register House.


Dee Williams
Head of ScotlandsPeople Service
New Register House
Edinburgh
EH1 3YT

14 August 2019

## What is the RCE?

The Register of Corrections Etc. (RCE) was created with effect from 1 January 1966. It succeeded the Register of Corrected Entries which was in use prior to that date. Entries made in either register have the same legal force and effect.

The RCE is used for the purpose of recording all authorised amendments to, and corrections of, entries in the birth, still-birth, death, marriage and civil partnership registers, and also the particulars of subsequent events relating to those entries.

If there is an RCE on a record this is shown as a link from the original register entry which can be viewed in the SP Centre and online for historical records.

However, if an official certificate of an event is ordered then the certificate must be produced following the instruction on the RCE page. Each RCE page states how to annotate the register and what information should be shown on any subsequent certificate issued.

For historical certificates, the RCE can be printed onto the back of the certificate but not for modern records.