



Potential users  
Novices

**Family history**  
**Scottish heritage**  
Ordering records  
**Modernisation**

Touchpoints



*"They're Scotland's official record keeper - for many things. Be it for things like statistics or family histories and suchlike."*

## Profile

They haven't heard much about NRS, but may be interested in engaging further.

**Potential digital services:** ScotlandsPeople, NRS website

**In-person:** Learning and outreach events

**Location:** Mainly remote - national and international

## Who they are

These are likely to be younger users between 30-40, either from a Scottish family that has moved away, or from a new community established in Scotland.

They first heard of NRS through a TV show about ancestry and know that their Dad has been working on their family history for the last 4-5 years. More recently, they've been reminded of NRS through Covid-19 statistics announcements on social media.

Whilst they've heard of National Records of Scotland, they haven't used any of the services or heard of any other associated websites or services.

## Engagement with NRS



## What motivates them?

They think they may use NRS in the future if they need to:

1. Replace their birth certificate
2. Research their family history
3. Research for a study project
4. Take part in the Census
5. To access statistics
6. Research a tartan for their family name

## What might they find challenging?

**Clarity and understanding:** These users don't feel NRS will hold information relevant to them and their day-to-day life.

**Ease of use:** They find the interfaces outdated and difficult to use

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Discoverability and ease of use:** Allow these users to find what they're looking for by ensuring that NRS is optimized for search engines. Ensure NRS search functionality is usable and useful for users to find what they're looking for. Design with empathy, and don't expect registration with these users, a frustrating experience could dissuade them from engaging further with the service.

**Communication and partnership:** Ensure clear messaging increases brand awareness, unique offerings may help users with unique needs. Set expectations around timings and allow users to meet the service on their own terms to become proactive.



Life planners  
Novices

Marriage

Discovering NRS

Expectation Timing

Family history

Touchpoints



"I know exactly what to put in [to find the document] so it's very easy."

## Profile

They have a new interest in NRS services but are familiar with using other, modern digital services.

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople website:

Extract services, NRS website: extract services

**Locations:** Remote users, national and international

## Who they are

They primarily use digital services and are looking to solve a problem such as understanding how to get married in Scotland, or how to find out more about their family history through online research.

They might explore several different NRS services, to find out what tartans are associated with their family or want to learn how to read Scottish handwriting. This is likely a passion project or driven by personal need.

## What motivates them?

1. Understand what they need to do to get married in Scotland
2. Replace their birth certificate
3. Research their family history
4. Take part in the Census

## What do they find challenging?

**User journeys and signposting:** these users aren't sure where to start, they might dip in and out of service but are easily turned off engaging further when they come up against blockers

**Awareness and perception:** setting expectations over what records NRS have and how they can support

**Clarity and understanding:** the global navigation headers don't always make sense to them. They lack clarity in what they can do with NRS

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Discoverability and ease of use:** Allow the users to find what they're looking for from search, without and across the sites, and ensure NRS searches are optimized for search engines. Design with empathy, and don't expect registration with these users, a frustrating experience will dissuade them from engaging further with the service.

**Communication and partnership:** Ensure clear messaging increases brand awareness, unique offerings may help users with unique needs. Set expectations around timings and allow users to meet the service on their own terms to become proactive.

## Engagement with NRS





Life admins  
Occasional

Fast delivery

Search

Surprisingly easy

Official documents

## Touchpoints



## Profile

Something changing in their lives has led them to NRS to complete a one-off transaction.

**Locations:** Prefer to be remote, likely national

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople: Extract services, NRS website: extract services

## Who they are

They are digitally confident between 35 and 44, and often the admin leader for their families. Generally, they will and live in one of Scotland's major cities, and a professional worker.

They found out about National Records of Scotland through a family member but hardly knew anything about the services before they used them.

They first found NRS through a search engine result 'How to replace birth certificate in Scotland'.

They had prepared themselves for a long, drawn-out experience to complete their tasks with NRS. Considering this, they find it surprisingly easy to complete their tasks information online and feel that the guidance to complete tasks is straightforward.

## What motivates them?

1. Replacing their birth or marriage certificate – for legal documents such as a passport, visa or job application
2. Taking part in the Census
3. Fast delivery of documents to complete applications
4. Easy to use application forms and ordering services

## What do they find challenging?

**Availability:** They often require copies of records for legal purposes so communicating delivery times and ensuring that they can receive their documents when they are needed is important.

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Availability:** completing their orders and receiving their certificates quickly is very important because they need the documents for legal purposes.



"It was quite a simple process. I'm pretty computer literate."



## Confidence builders Occasional

**Time-sensitive**  
**Record replacement**  
**Reassurance**  
**Clarity**

### Touchpoints



### Profile

An often-stressful change in their life, has led them to NRS to complete a one-off transaction.

**Locations:** Prefer to be remote, likely national

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople: Extract services / family history, NRS website: extract services

Learning and outreach events

### Who they are

They are likely between the ages of 45-54, living on the west coast of Scotland and working part-time. They're digitally literate but lack confidence with unfamiliar, confusing services.

They found NRS through a search engine but thought that they would only be there to support other government services. They lack confidence in their ability and due to the pressure of needing their documents quickly feel stressed and overwhelmed. They are highly likely to call NRS staff for support and guidance which they find helpful and reassuring.

### What motivates them?

1. Replacing their birth or marriage certificate – for legal documents – passport, visa, job application
2. Fast delivery of documents to complete applications
3. Easy to use application forms and ordering services
4. NRS staff help and support to guide them
5. Researching their family history
6. Taking part in the Census

### What do they find challenging?

**Awareness and perception:** their first impressions of NRS are that it isn't for them or for personal matters.

**Experience level of users :** they are digitally literate but lack the confidence in completing their tasks online because they aren't clear about the service offering. This results in them asking for help from NRS staff.

### How can NRS improve their experience?

**Discoverability and ease of use:** SEO optimisation, designing clear paths to the information that these users are trying to find through service signposting and clear content will make it faster for these users to find information online than on the phone or by email, this would be useful for them and for NRS.

*"I went on the NRS site and clicked to get marriage certificate. I wasn't confident in my own abilities. So I phoned up and the lady was really, really helpful."*

### Engagement with NRS





## Budding researchers Learners

**Research  
Analysis**  
Trusted sources  
**Help from staff  
Studying**

### Touchpoints



*"It's difficult to find information as the catalogues don't tell you what's in the record just that they exist so have to go and see the record to see if it's what you need."*

### Profile

They could be NRS super-users of the future, they're starting their professional journey using NRS to support their studies.

**Locations:** Remote, nationwide

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople, Scotland's Places, National Records of Scotland (online catalogues), Statistics & Data, The Scottish Register of Tartans

### Who they are

They're usually aged between 25 and 35 and are in early career or postgraduate education. They use NRS to find information to support their research and analysis. They've used NRS services prior to continuing their education and find the functionality easy to use, however would benefit from communicating with NRS staff to further develop their experience in using the services and awareness of the full capabilities of NRS.

### Engagement with NRS



### What motivates them?

1. Finding official, trusted records and data sources to support research projects
2. Being able to access datasets in the format that is most useful to them to be able to analyse for their research needs
3. Finding official information sources to enhance the context of their research on relevant Scottish Places and Tartans

### What do they find challenging?

**Awareness:** digital NRS services have an inconsistent, dated interfaces which makes the family of branded services less clear which negatively impacts their levels of trust in the services.

**Experience level of users:** they want to access specific data and records relevant for their research.

**Engagement with NRS staff:** they need a lot of support and guidance to engage productively with the records on their own terms.

### How can NRS improve their experience?

**Discoverability and ease of use:** Clear content, signposting and setting of expectations across the site can improve the experience of these users and their engagement with staff.

**Availability of records:** increasing numbers of digital records will make searching and using NRS services easier.

**Commercial models and transformation:** These users would be interested in dedicated accounts saving them time and money.



Tartan enthusiasts  
Experts

Familiar  
Straightforward  
Terminology  
Registration  
Design

## Touchpoints



"It's being constantly updated and new tartans being put online so I'm impressed"

## Profile

They're individuals with a personal passion for tartan that has led to designing tartan for others

**Location:** Remote, usually in the UK or North America

**Digital NRS Services used:** Scottish Register of Tartans

## Who they are

Tartan enthusiasts first started designing tartans for commemorative purposes. They tend to be aged between 45 and 54 and found the Scottish Register of Tartans through an online search. They've used the service to register six tartans over the last 10 years.

When designing tartans, they share the images with their family or clients for feedback. They make design changes using the website until they are happy and then go on to apply for a registration. They find searching and registering tartans easy and the cost of the registration service reasonable.

## What motivates them?

1. Creating unique personal and commemorative tartans
2. Comparing tartans designs with existing registered tartans
3. Tartan registration: to ensure that their design is officially recognized and searchable in the register
4. Search the register for personal interest tartans: tartan they have seen or their last name
5. Sharing their registered designs through a name search

## What do they find challenging?

**Clarity - unfamiliar terminology:** when they first used the service they found a lot of reading to initially understand the language and rules of tartans. Terminology like Sett and Thread Count made was unclear

**Ease of use – designer search:** when they search for designs using characters with the Designer name field results do not appear

**Colour matching:** they need to select a best match from the colours available on the website. This results in the tartan register image being inconsistent with the actual design colour

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Discoverability and ease of use:** designing a search and registration service that supports the findability of particular tartans

**Clarity and signposting:** onboarding new users with clear explanations of tartan terminology

## Engagement with NRS





## History enthusiasts Occasional

Easy to use

Help and support

Simple tasks

Supportive digital accounts

### Touchpoints



*"I learned one or two tricks that would be handy to use. It was useful – I could find a lot more info."*

## Profile

These users are confident using NRS services, and are on long term research journeys, mostly working in their spare time.

**Locations:** Local and remote, within Scotland and beyond

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople, Scotland's Places, National Records of Scotland, Scottish Handwriting, The Scottish Register of Tartans

**In-person NRS Services used:** Historical search rooms, ScotlandsPeople Centre, Learning events.

## Who they are

They're in their 50s-60s, investigating history or genealogy as a hobby or personal practice. They've engaged with NRS over a period of 10 years. It's not part of their daily routine, but they always return to NRS services for more information on their line of research, or how to manage their current data and information.

### Engagement with NRS



## What motivates them?

1. Support and advice from NRS and its staff
2. Ability to save and return to key information

## What do they find challenging?

**Experience level of users:** these users haven't been taught how to conduct research and are working in their own time. They want to access clear help and support, digitally or in person.

**Ease of use:** these users want to get back to their research as quickly and smoothly as possible. Changes or updates to NRS services need to connect their expectations and changes to interfaces.

**User journeys and signposting:** these users want to go directly to their work and find what they need.

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Availability of records:** family researchers will want to know when new records are available

**Communication and partnership:** these users would love to feel part of the NRS research community and be able to reach out with questions.

**Commercial models and transformation:** they want to return to their work exactly where they left off, storing information in dedicated accounts.

**Service consolidation:** Simplifying home pages and search functions will help these users find what they're looking for.



## Information seekers Occasional

**Digitisation**  
Simple tasks  
Help and support  
Supportive digital accounts

### Touchpoints



*"We appreciate what NRS does to encourage and support us."*

### Profile

These users develop experience using NRS services, often returning to them and others for more information.

**Locations:** Primarily remote users, who will come to relevant events.

**Digital NRS Services used:** National Records of Scotland, Scottish Handwriting

**In-person NRS Services used:** Learning and outreach

### Who they are

They are often age 50-70, and include users who manage archives they have inherited or contributed to, or who need information for a Freedom of Information request or equivalent. They are seeking advice and information and will use NRS as one of a range of services they might need to help them with their responsibility. They don't have a lot of time, and need support, information and expertise.

### Engagement with NRS



### What would motivate them?

1. Support and advice from staff
2. Key information and new updates
3. Ability to search and return to key information

### What do they find challenging?

**Experience level of users:** these users haven't been taught how to manage archives or conduct research. They are working in their own time and want to access clear help and support, digitally or in person, without feeling like they might be judged for not understanding.

**Ease of use:** these users want to get back to their work as quickly and smoothly as possible.

**User journeys and signposting:** these users want to go directly into the services and find what they need.

### How can NRS improve their experience?

**Communication and partnership:** Targeted information and communication is important to these users, they will be looking for updates and easy guidance.

**Discovery and ease of use:** These users are task oriented and want to find key, structured information with a clean IA.

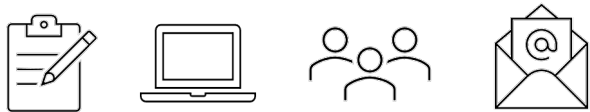




Information gatherers  
Experienced

Genealogy  
Scottish history  
Experts  
Digitisation  
Useful

### Touchpoints



"If you find an error, they get back to you and fix it in a few days. It's an excellent service it would be nice to see the same approach to the other datasets."

## Profile

They engage with NRS to fulfil their passion for the journey that research takes them on.

**Location:** Remote but excited by search rooms visits

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople, The Scottish Register of Tartans, Scotland's Places, National Records of Scotland, Scottish Handwriting

**In-person NRS Services used:** Historical search rooms, ScotlandsPeople Centre

## Who they are

Often ages 55-64, and enthusiastic about specialist subjects in Scottish history and family genealogy. They are confident and experienced in using NRS, they happily directly email staff for help.

They visit the search rooms every few years. Due to the travel distance they may plan a trip as part of a holiday to Scotland. In the meantime, they may ask a Scotland-based family member or friend to visit the search rooms on their behalf to find records.

## What motivates them?

1. Finding official, trusted documents and information to support family history or special interest research projects
2. Finding information on relevant Scottish Places and Tartans to enhance the context of their research
3. The ScotlandsPeople search function is intuitive and the records are well-curated and comprehensive
4. Digitised records are easily accessible to them from their home
5. NRS staff are helpful because they will email rescanned documents

## What do they find challenging?

**User journeys and signposting:** whilst they are avid users of ScotlandsPeople they don't utilise the full suite of NRS services to them. Other tools could be used more widely to benefit their research

**Availability of records:** they are unable to access some of the records that they need because they cannot regularly visit the search rooms

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Availability of records:** Increasing digital availability is very important from these users. They like using the archives and they will go of they can travel to Edinburgh but would visit by choice over necessity.

**Communication and partnership:** These users have a lot of expertise and insight to give back to the records. They can help with meta-analysis and community contribution to records.

### Engagement with NRS





Knowledge sharers  
Experienced

Scottish history

Access to information

Family history

Modernisation

Touchpoints



*"Kids have high expectations because they are using technology so much. There needs to be dynamic, interactive learning content on Scottish history"*

## Profile

Their personal and professional passion for history leads them to use NRS services

**Location:** National

**Digital NRS Services used:** Scottish Archives for Schools, ScotlandsPeople, Scotland's Places, Scottish Register of Tartans, Scottish Handwriting

**In-person NRS Services used:** Local family history centres, Historical Search Rooms

## Who they are

Professionals aged 35-44, most often, and confident and experienced using NRS services because they have used them for personal and professional research for years. They tend to collect the information that they find online and in records for personal and professional needs.

They have a personal interest in Scottish and family history and are passionate about teaching others about archival records and history.

## Engagement with NRS



## What motivates them?

1. Finding historical information and artefacts about Scottish history, locations and historical events
2. Bringing history to life for their students
3. Fulfilling personal historical interests through research
4. Findability of information and ease of use of digital services

## What do they find challenging?

**Availability and access to records:** As professionals they are unable to visit search rooms during its regular opening hours due to their work commitments and location

**Awareness and perception:** The resources they find to support teaching lack of rich media formats which makes it more difficult to engage their students

**Ease of use:** resources hold a limited range of content and subjects which limits what they can find out about their topic of interest

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Access to records:** increasing opening hours for in-person services so that they have more flexibility to continue their research

**Ease of use:** publishing further content on topics of interest and engaging digital content

**Commercial models and transformation:** These users may value accounts that support use according to their needs.



# Information preservers

Experts

Preservation

Best practice

Networking

Safety and security

## Touchpoints



## Profile

Their professional duties lead them to NRS to seek and share guidance to preserve records for the future

**Location:** National

**Digital NRS Services used:** NRS website - governance and policies

**In-person NRS Services used:** Learning and outreach

**Integrated NRS Services used:** Public Records of Scotland Act, National Register of Archives

## Who they are

Professionals aged 45-54 that work with NRS and their professional network to ensure that they and their organisations follow best practices in protecting and preserving records and personal data.

They are in constant dialogue with NRS and others within their network following, testing and adapting guidance and best practices.

## What motivates them?

1. Engaging with a community of professionals fostered by NRS
2. Networking to get advice and guidance
3. Access to standards, policy guidance, best practice and governance
4. Protection of archival and digital records and personal data
5. Information safety and security for now and the future
6. Checking NRAS register for survey information so that they can conduct archive surveys

## What do they find challenging?

**Signposting and engagement:** they would prefer more ways to contact other professionals outside learning events to share knowledge and develop better practices

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Signposting and engagement:** an online forum that professionals could use to share knowledge and best practice to access regularly.

**Discoverability and ease of use:** making it easier for these users to find their data through service signposting and content will ease service frustrations and allow them to use the phones or email only when they need it, this would be useful for them and for NRS.

## Engagement with NRS



*"It's the wider community that have brought myself and NRS together. We're all part of a network, really, which is very good."*



Expert analysts  
Experts

Data sets

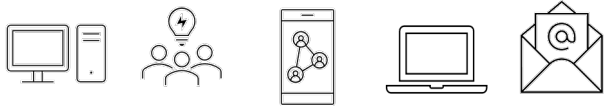
Communication

Analysis

Approachable

Helpful

### Touchpoints



## Profile

Familiar with NRS, its staff, and datasets, they access data to support professional analysis.

**Locations:** National, working remotely

**Digital NRS Services used:** NRS Scotland Statistics & Data, Scotland's Census

## Who they are

They're senior professionals working independently or as part of a wider research team. They are often in the age 45-54 and need access to up-to-date, specific data extracts for ongoing analysis. Their presentations are used to inform academic research, future planning or government policy, and they require a range of UK wide and Scotland specific data sources for comparison.

They regularly access the data sets that they need through browser bookmarks and communicate with NRS staff and other statisticians or analysts on social media to question data.

## What motivates them?

1. Finding the best fundamental sources of data
2. Accessing raw data in spreadsheets for analysis
3. Being able to manipulate workbooks to extract only needed data
4. Extracting data for ongoing analysis and presentation
5. Being able to access to safeguarded data
6. Providing evidence to inform policy and resource planning
7. A good working relationship with approachable NRS staff

## What do they find challenging?

**Clarity and understanding:** they deal with data sets from many sources and countries so want to understand the meaningful differences between comparative datasets.

**Availability of data:** they would like to be made aware of when new data that could be of use to them will be published.

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Communication and partnership:** They publish information that is relevant to the increasingly interested cohort of potential users who might engage with statistics released by NRS. Partnering with these users and their publications can reach a wider audience.

**Availability of records:** These users are always interested in new data sets and are likely to engage over social media, particularly if their specific research is targeted and shared.

### Engagement with NRS



*"We have sensible conversations about how we make pragmatic compromises in how we see, aggregate and desensitize data."*



Information publishers  
Experts

Scottish history

Search rooms

Efficiency

Access to records

### Touchpoints



## Profile

Passionate academics that rely on original archival records for their research, careers and students.

**Location:** Remote and local – national and international

**Digital NRS Services used:** ScotlandsPeople, Scotland's Places, Scottish Handwriting, NRS – Online catalogues and research guides.

**In-person NRS Services used:** Historical and ScotlandsPeople Centre, Learning and outreach events.

## Who they are

They have doctorates in their field of research, age 45-54 with an interest in Scottish history. Their research is used to teach others as well as being published in books, client reports or academic papers. They're experts in creating research plans to identify documents of interest, however maybe limited in visiting the search rooms by their working hours or locations and may visit on annual research trips to Scotland, during holidays.

### Engagement with NRS



## What motivates them?

1. Publishing their work in books, client reports or research papers
2. Creating learning materials for students
3. Identifying specific records and documents of interest
4. The atmosphere of the Historical Search rooms
5. Engagement with NRS staff

## What do they find challenging?

**Ease of use – access to documents:** Limited opening hours and document limits reduces the volume of research

**Ordering documents:** Processes for finding and ordering documents – paper-based, email and telephone ordering systems and separate digital accounts for searching catalogues online and in search rooms

**Service cost:** the volume of research that they have to do can be expensive due to the number of records that they need to view.

## How can NRS improve their experience?

**Availability of records:** These users are always interested in more access to digital record sets and are likely to engage with records online regularly to continue their research

**Commercial models and transformation:** These users may want a subscription-based single digital account that supports their frequent use of multiple NRS services

*"I think the archive has always striven to maintain a good level of service. There has been an increasing willingness to be more flexible." ...  
"We can make that happen."*