

Subject: Request for information relating to Digital preservation policy and practice.

FOI reference: FOI/19/01610

Date received: 09 July 2019

Date responded: 30 July 2019

Information requested:

In the context of Digital preservation policy and practice with respect to notions of sustainability, your request asked for:

1. Please provide information outlining the business/funding model that underpins your organisation's digital preservation activities, including any current or planned strategies to improve or safeguard the long-term economic sustainability of those operations.
2. Please provide information outlining the strategies, policies or practices your organisation has in place to improve, enhance or maximise the accessibility and usability of your organisation's digital heritage collections. This should also include any strategies for promoting the content of, and encouraging participation in, your organisation's digital collections.
3. Please provide information outlining any strategies, policies or practices your organisation has in place to ensure the reduction or minimisation of the environmental impact of the systems and services utilised in your digital preservation activities. This should include any "climate change mitigation" steps taken with respect to your digital preservation activities as part of the public bodies climate change duties under part four of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

NRS Response:

All of the information requested is available from the NRS website (links below). Under section 25(1) of FOISA, we do not have to provide information if it is already reasonably accessible. If, however, you do not have internet access to obtain this information from the website(s) listed, then please contact us again and we will send you a paper copy.

Please provide information outlining the business/funding model that underpins your organisation's digital preservation activities, including any current or planned strategies to improve or safeguard the long-term economic sustainability of those operations.

- Our overall financial strategy is to operate with a mixed finance model based on funding allocated by Scottish Government, making up the bulk of our funding, and non-profit making income generation from various public services we offer, delivering a significant minority of our funding.

- You can find NRS's latest accounts here:
<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//about-us/NRS-annual-report-and-accounts-2017-18.pdf> (page 12 is likely to be relevant)
- Details of our charges can be found here:
<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/visit-us/scotlandspeople-centre/fees-and-charges> and <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/content/our-charges>

Please provide information outlining the strategies, policies or practices your organisation has in place to improve, enhance or maximise the accessibility and usability of your organisation's digital heritage collections. This should also include any strategies for promoting the content of, and encouraging participation in, your organisation's digital collections.

- We deliver a number of services designed to maximise access to our collection. Our strategy is to maximise the use of digital technology to make images of our collection widely available. Given the size and nature of our collection it is not feasible or publically beneficial to digitise the entire collection so we maintain onsite services to facilitate access to as much of the collection as possible.
- ScotlandsPeople Website: <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/> is widely available to internet users and we are actively working to increase the record collection available online.
- ScotlandsPeople Centre, Historic and Legal Search rooms and other on-site services provide additional access to material that is not available online for researchers <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research>
- Local Family History Centres – delivered in partnership with local authorities to provide access to our digitised images alongside local archive collections supported by local authority archivists. We are currently working with partners to expand the network of Centres across Scotland. More details can be found at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/local-family-history-centres>
- We capture, preserve and make publicly available archival snapshots of selected websites through our NRS Web Continuity Service: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/researching-online/web-continuity-service>.
- A key caveat to granting wide access is the requirement to preserve our collection. If granting wide access is detrimental to conserving items we must prioritise conservation and seek alternative means where possible to facilitate access: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/conservation>.
- Contextual information about how we manage our archival collections: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/records-policies>
- ScotlandsPlaces Website: <https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/> is a free resource that contains records about Scotland and can be searched by place name. The records are drawn from three national resources; the National Library of

Scotland, the National Records of Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland.

Please provide information outlining any strategies, policies or practices your organisation has in place to ensure the reduction or minimisation of the environmental impact of the systems and services utilised in your digital preservation activities. This should include any “climate change mitigation” steps taken with respect to your digital preservation activities as part of the public bodies climate change duties under part four of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

- Information on our Climate Change Duties and Environmental Policy:
<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/about-us/corporate-information#sustain>