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SECTION 1

Foreword by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland

To the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs

I am pleased to present this report under the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (the Act) to reflect the fourth year of activity since the Act was introduced in 2013. The report sets out what was achieved during the year ending 31 March 2017.

This year saw continued progress under the Act. Public authorities must submit records management plans for my agreement, and once agreed, they must implement their plans and keep them under review. As most plans are agreed subject to improvement activities, we devoted more attention to review aspects and to ensuring that they remain relevant.

The assessment team continued to engage constructively with authorities as they developed their plans for submission.

This year we reached a significant milestone when we issued our 200th invitation to an authority to submit a plan.

In total we have agreed 148 plans and sent invitations to 212 authorities. I am pleased to report that we will therefore achieve our five year target to invite all of the 250 named authorities to submit a plan by 2018.

The plans that I have agreed show that authorities are following good practice and taking a consistent approach as they continue to show a strong commitment towards achieving compliance. Agreeing plans under improvement terms is not considered a weakness but a sign of positive, open and honest engagement with the process. The main areas where improvement is required continue to be in business classification, retention mechanisms, audit trail and transfer of records of enduring value to an archive. The latter is an issue mainly for those authorities which have not had to consider this before. We will continue to work closely with authorities to help them improve on those areas.

I am pleased to report that I did not find it necessary to use the provisions afforded under section 4 of the Act to return an authority's plan. I consider that to be a positive sign that we have engaged well with authorities who understand their obligations under the Act. Preparation of plans is not therefore being viewed as a simple box ticking exercise.

With so many plans agreed under improvement, we have developed a new process for assessing improvement activities.

We recognised that there was a need to develop a flexible tool, both to assist and support compliance and facilitate meaningful and regular dialogue between the Keeper and authorities.

Last year I reported that a joint solution had been agreed with an invited Stakeholder Forum and resources allocated to start the process of assessing improvement models. I am pleased that this year the new tool has been piloted within an authority and is now ready for use in 2017. It will permit me to monitor progress under the Act carefully over the coming year.

We maintained an active outreach programme again this year and helped to support the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI) and its need to access vital information and records. We ran two general surgeries about the Act in Edinburgh and Glasgow and facilitated a forum event for the SCAI to engage with public authorities. Though the number of authorities who attend surgeries is reducing, they still attract significant interest and continue to perform an important role in ensuring that the assessment team remains visible and approachable. We also responded to many requests for face-to-face meetings, and delivered seminars and presentations, both in authorities and at conferences in Scotland and further afield.

The Act continues to allow us to reach out to practitioners and senior managers and therefore remains an enabler. It also attracts interest from other jurisdictions. The assessment team presented to senior Irish civil servants at an invitation workshop run by the National Archives of Ireland in Dublin and provided detailed briefing to support the Minister for Parliamentary Business when he attended the 'Leave No Trace' workshop at the Open Government Partnership global summit in Paris in December 2016.

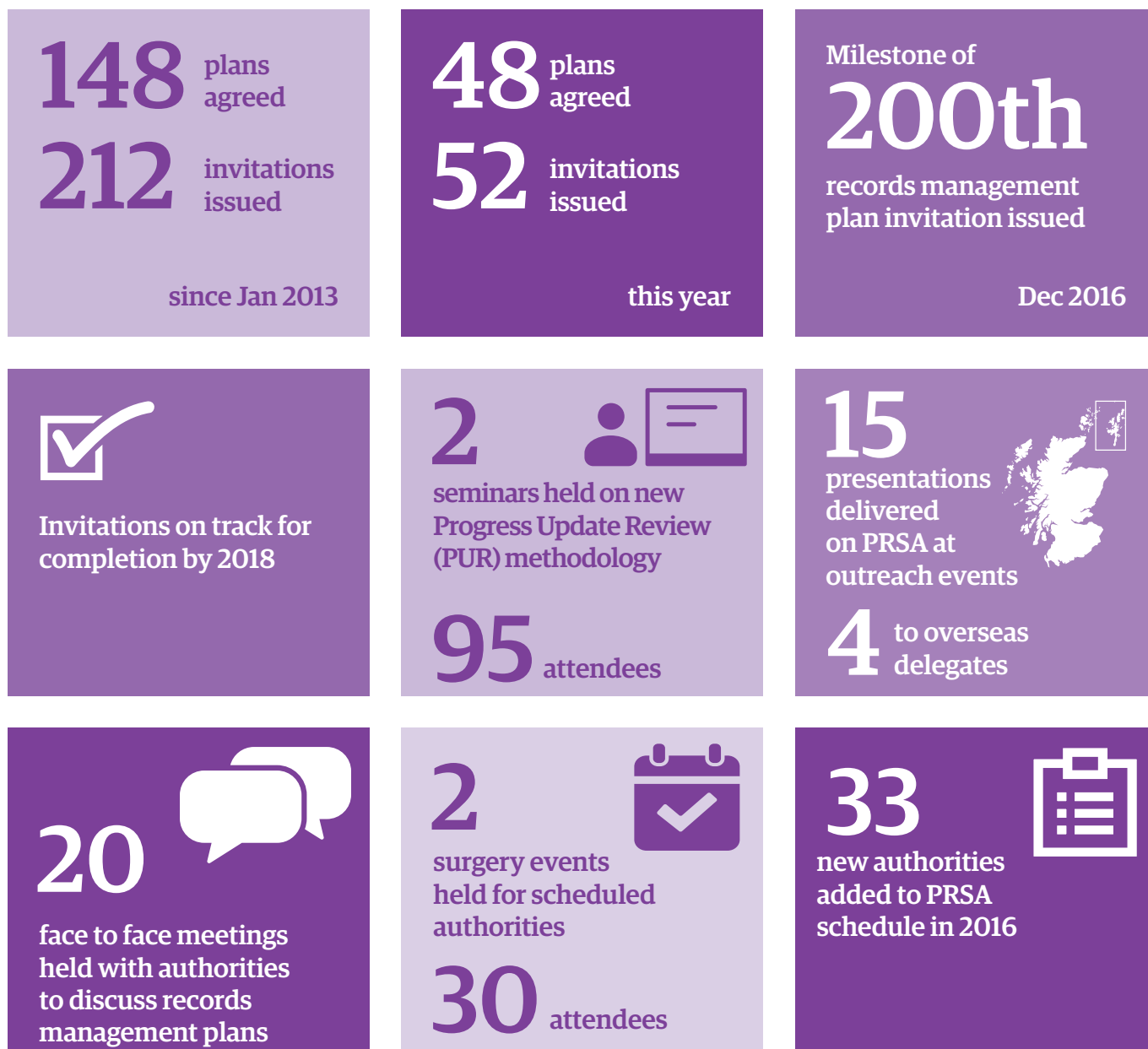
We continue to build on the lessons learned and engage widely with authorities to promote the benefits of the Act and a wider understanding of it. We will continue to listen and support them as they develop, submit and review their plans in the future.



Tim Ellis
Keeper of the Records of Scotland
1 September 2017

SECTION 2

Review of the year



▶ April 2016

Records Management Plans agreed for Highland Council and Licensing Board, Lothian Valuation Joint Board, Commissioner for Ethical Standards, Tayside Valuation Joint Board and the Scottish Children's Reporter and Principal Reporter. Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (PRSA) spring surgery held in Edinburgh, attended by 13 representatives. Paper on PRSA delivered at FARMER Conference, Dundee. Joint PRSA workshop held with the ADRC Scotland (Edinburgh University).

▶ May 2016

Plans agreed for East Renfrewshire Council and Licensing Board, NHS Lanarkshire, the Lord Advocate and Procurator Fiscal Service, Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board, Board of Trustees for the National Galleries of Scotland. Visits to the Scottish Land Court and integration joint boards for the Lothians area to discuss plans.

▶ June 2016

Plans agreed for Caledonian Maritime Assets, HM Inspector of Prisons, Orkney Islands Council and Licensing Board, City of Edinburgh Council and Licensing Board. Presentation on PRSA at Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture. Visit to the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service to discuss plan.

▶ July 2016

Visits to Scottish Borders Council and Scottish Canals to discuss plans. Presentations on PRSA to visiting archive students from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, USA and delegation of archivists from The People's Republic of China.

▶ August 2016

Plans agreed for Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board and Renfrewshire Council and Licensing Board. Visit to the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission to discuss its plan. Presentation on PRSA to Health Archivists in Scotland Group meeting, Dundee. Report on joint workshop with ADRC held in April is published.

▶ September 2016

Plans agreed for NHS Forth Valley, NHS Orkney and NHS Borders. Autumn surgery held in Glasgow attended by 17 representatives. Presentation on PRSA to visiting registrars from Iceland. Keeper's fourth PRSA annual report to Scottish Ministers is laid before Parliament.

▶ October 2016

Plans agreed for NHS Ayrshire, NHS Tayside and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Presentation on PRSA to NHS Grampian Senior Leadership Team in Aberdeen and meeting with integration joint boards for the Grampian area. Paper on PRSA delivered at inaugural records management seminar for Irish civil servants in Dublin. Visits to the General Teaching Council for Scotland and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service to discuss plans.

▶ November 2016

Plans agreed for Grampian Valuation Joint Board and East Ayrshire Council and Licensing Board.

▶ December 2016

Plans agreed for the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland, Highland Valuation Joint Board and the Water Industry Commission for Scotland. First of two Progress Update Review (PUR) seminars held to discuss new assessment methodology for improvement plans, attended by 55 authorities. Annual target of inviting 50 authorities to submit plans achieved.

▶ January 2017

Plans agreed for the National Library of Scotland and the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland. Paper on PRSA delivered at Northumbria University conference 'Is there a democratic deficit in archives?' in Newcastle.

▶ February 2017

Plans agreed for Scottish Futures Trust, Aberdeen City Licensing Board, Scottish Water, Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA) and the Scottish Sports Council (sportscotland). Second PUR seminar attended by 40 authorities.

▶ March 2017

Plans agreed for Highlands and Islands Airports, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll Council and Licensing Board, Angus Council and Licensing Board. Presentation on PRSA at Scottish Council for Archives 'Skills for the Future' event. Visit to Community Justice Scotland to discuss plan. Following success of the 2016 surgery events, new surgeries arranged for 2017.

SECTION 3

Aims, obligations and assessment



Image courtesy of NHSScotland

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (the Act) has been in force since January 2013.¹ The main aim of the Act is to improve the quality of record keeping by named Scottish public authorities. It requires them to prepare, implement, and keep under review a records management plan which sets out proper arrangements for the management of their public records. The plan must be submitted to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) for his assessment and agreement.

The origins of the Act can be traced to the findings of the Historical Abuse Systemic Review: Residential Schools and Children's Homes in Scotland 1950-1995 (the Shaw Report), published in November 2007. That report can be found on the Scottish Government's website.²

The Keeper published a Model Records Management Plan and Guidance Document to help authorities understand what is required. These were developed in consultation with a stakeholder forum in 2012 and can be found on National Records of Scotland (NRS) website.³

The Act requires the Keeper to prepare an annual report for Scottish Ministers to inform them of progress, but where any shortcomings are identified to report them openly and honestly.

We publish a rolling programme of invitations to authorities on the NRS website setting out the timetable for inviting submission of plans. Appearance on the timetable is agreed in advance with an authority and, once submitted, the authority's plan is reviewed by the Keeper's assessment team. The team can be contacted at NRS on 0131 535 1418 or public_records@nrscotland.gov.uk



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The PRSA Assessment Team: (L-R Back Row) Hugh Hagan, Bruno Longmore (Head of Government Records), Pete Wadley; (L-R Front Row) Claire Sillick, Robert Fotheringham.

1 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/12/section/1/enacted>

2 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/11/20104729/0>

3 <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/public-records-scotland-act-2011/resources>

“We remain on track to meet our ambitious target of inviting all authorities to submit their plans by 2018.”

“Since the Act came into force the Keeper has agreed 148 plans and issued 212 invitations.”

► Progress

This year we reached another significant milestone when the 200th invitation to submit a plan was sent to an authority. A total of 48 plans were agreed and the full list is available at pages 22 and 23.

We remain on track to meet our ambitious target of inviting all authorities to submit their plans by 2018. This year we invited 52 authorities to submit plans. Since the Act came into force the Keeper has agreed 148 plans and issued 212 invitations.

As we approach the end of the invitation timetable the flexibility built into the submission process has reduced. While we continue to engage and provide assistance to those authorities who have yet to submit a plan, our ability to offer postponements or additional time to prepare submissions is much curtailed. We will continue to work closely with those authorities yet to submit plans to ensure that they are aware of their obligations and that their submissions are as robust as possible.

► Updating the Act

Named authorities who come under the Act are listed in the schedule. It was not considered necessary to invoke the Scottish parliamentary process this year to update it, but we monitored any legislative changes to identify new or redundant public authorities. We aim to update the schedule next year.



Tim Ellis, Keeper of the Records, receives North Lanarkshire Council and Licensing Board's records management plan from Fiona Hughes.

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“We continue to encourage authorities to send us informal drafts”

“Plans are undoubtedly better prepared and strengthened by pursuing this voluntary option”

► Submission of plans

The assessment team engaged constructively with authorities as they developed plans for submission. The period between invitation and submission of a plan can take up to a year to complete. That allows time for considerable dialogue between the assessment team and authorities, helping to deliver more robust submissions.

We continue to encourage authorities to send us informal drafts of plans for advance comment. While we cannot review supporting evidence at that stage, many submitted plans are undoubtedly better prepared and strengthened by pursuing this voluntary option.

► Main issues identified in plans

We found that the areas which require most development include business classification, retention mechanisms, audit trail and transfer of records of enduring value to an archive. The latter is an issue mainly for authorities which have not had to consider such transfer arrangements before. Given the background to the Act and its origins in the findings of the Shaw Report, the increase in the number and quality of transfer arrangements now in place is very encouraging.

We continue to be impressed by the volume and quality of evidence submitted with plans. This confirms that a lot of good work is taking place across the public sector in Scotland to improve records management arrangements. The Act is clearly one of the main drivers for this.

This year it was not necessary to use the provisions under section 4 of the Act to return an authority’s plan. That is a positive sign that we successfully engaged with authorities who understood their obligations and do not regard the preparation of a plan as a simple tick box exercise.

“Agreeing plans on improvement remains an important and positive way forward both for authorities and the Keeper.”

► Improvement models and assessment of progress

Most of the plans agreed to date have been on an ‘improvement model’ basis.

Such models offer positive evidence of the frank and honest approach taken by authorities about their current provision, which openly recognises any shortcomings. Acknowledging gaps in records management arrangements and stating what measures will be taken to improve them, is considered good records management practice.

Final assessment reports highlight the need for authorities to continue to make progress under their agreed improvement models. Agreeing an authority’s proposals for improvement is key to ensuring the continuing viability and success of the Act. These reports, setting out the basis for the Keeper’s agreement of plans, are published on the NRS website.⁴



Robert Fotheringham addresses delegates at the PRSA spring surgery held in Edinburgh, April 2016.

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⁴ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/public-records-scotland-act-2011/assessment-reports>

“We engaged with authorities to develop a voluntary mechanism that would allow them to report on their reviews sooner than five years”

► The Progress Update Review (PUR) mechanism

Section 5(1)(a) of the Act requires authorities to keep their plans under review. Section 5(1)(b) states that an authority must, if the Keeper so requires, carry out a review of its plan, but in accordance with subsections (2) and (4) of section 5 he must not determine a review date which is earlier than five years after the date on which the plan was last agreed.

These provisions are designed to work together to ensure agreed plans remain fit for purpose. As reported last year we engaged with authorities to develop a voluntary mechanism that would allow them to report on their reviews sooner than five years. This will help authorities maintain momentum and ensure that the Keeper is better informed about progress and regulate compliance. He will also be better prepared to report more accurately to Scottish Ministers.

Working in partnership, we developed the new Progress Update Review (PUR) process and piloted it with a volunteer authority in 2016. We also produced specific guidance and convened two Stakeholder Forum events in December 2016 and February 2017 to advise authorities on progress and how the new process will work.



Tim Ellis addresses delegates at the Stakeholder Forum held in New Register House, Edinburgh, December 2016.

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The PUR mechanism enables authorities to self-assess and report on what progress they consider has been made under their agreed plans. Any self-assessment is undertaken on a voluntary basis, permitting authorities to comment on improvements and in turn receive a 'health check' of their records management provision. A successful pilot was conducted with East Lothian Council and resources have subsequently been allocated to roll out the PUR scheme across all Scottish public authorities in 2017.

▶ Alex Fitzgerald, Information Governance Team Manager, East Lothian Council

"I volunteered to pilot, and help shape, the Progress Update Review mechanism as I saw an opportunity to both strengthen the improvement process for East Lothian and to also secure greater 'buy in' from Senior Managers for the on-going culture change. Without an active review process the Records Management Plan could lapse into an occasional exercise in strategy setting, rather than as a positive framework that supports real change within an organisation."

The process benefits from having been developed in response to requests from stakeholders as a means of demonstrating their compliance. It helps them keep their plans under review and maintain momentum towards enhancing records management provision within their authorities. The assessment team also benefits from improved communication with colleagues and regular appraisals of how agreed plans are being reviewed, updated or modified. In turn, that enables the Keeper to monitor and assess accurately any improvements made to wider public record keeping.

► The PUR process

Using a template, an authority will be invited to undertake a self-assessment of the fourteen elements of their agreed plan to reflect their current records management status. This provides the authority with an opportunity to highlight any new initiatives and innovations they may have implemented. They can demonstrate and publicise the good work they are doing and receive objective feedback from the assessment team on progress made since their plan was first agreed.

“This reflects the aim behind the PUR mechanism that it provides authorities with an optional ‘health-check’ tool.”

As a voluntary exercise, authorities have the flexibility to decide whether to complete a PUR template when invited and largely determine the extent of any evidence they may wish to provide. Only where elements were accepted under improvement, or where the Keeper’s agreement was conditional upon the authority implementing a specific policy or supplying particular documentation, would submission of evidence be required. This reflects the aim behind the PUR mechanism that it provides authorities with an optional ‘health-check’ tool. It does not undermine an authority’s statutory right under section 5(6) of the Act to revise its agreed plan and then submit it to the Keeper for agreement. Rather, it provides authorities with a practical way of establishing at which point their improved or evolving plan is ready for resubmission under this provision.

Regardless of the nature of any progress made, or the extent of supporting evidence supplied, the assessment team will report on all submissions received. Authorities will be commended for their engagement with this process and it is hoped that through widespread participation, the desire to bring about cultural change in record keeping which initially inspired the Act can then be realised.

The following flowchart describes how the new PUR assessment process will work.

Progress Update Review Workflow

Authorities will be invited to submit an update one year after initial agreement of their Records Management Plan (RMP)

Authorities will be sent a template referring to all 14 elements of their agreed RMP but which will highlight those elements where the authority attained the Keeper's agreement on an improvement model basis

The authority will have two months to complete the self-assessment template

Following receipt of the authority's submission, the Assessment Team will respond within two months by sending out an Interim Report

The authority will have one month to respond to the Interim Report

Upon agreement of the Interim Report, a Final Report will be produced which will be delivered to an authority's CEO and Key Contact.

The authority's Final Report will be published on the NRS website



Example of information guidance leaflet on the PRSA prepared by NHS Dumfries & Galloway.

We will continue to assess new submissions, ensuring that the five year programme remains on target, but we must now also prepare for assessing voluntary updates under the PUR process in 2017. While this will be additional work for the assessment team, its value will be to cement the good relations developed with public authorities which have already delivered significant success under the Act. It also allows the Keeper to better assess and report accurately on progress made.

► Craig Geddes, Council Records Manager, East Renfrewshire Council

“The PUR is a lean and clean mechanism for making sure that Records Management Plans are kept fresh and relevant. The review mechanism provides public authorities with an efficient way to comply with their statutory obligations and to get best value from their information resources”.

SECTION 4

Engagement



The Act continues to promote positive change. The clear and reasonable objective of improvement over time encourages engagement, and facilitates collaboration and joint working. We have developed and strengthened close working relationships with authorities and, as a result, they continue to deliver robust records management plans under the Act.

Our programme of proactive engagement means that we encourage and receive regular feedback from records management colleagues. This allows us to remain alert to changes and practical concerns across the public sector, to review our processes accordingly and ensure that our engagement remains relevant and appropriate. It also allows us to learn about progress being made under the Act, now in this fourth year of implementation. Results remain encouraging.

We were not required to update the schedule to the Act this year by means of a Scottish Statutory Instrument, but we remain vigilant to the creation of new bodies that require to be added to it.

► Proper arrangements for archiving records under the Act

“Respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of the Keeper issuing such guidance and of the draft suggested”

The Act requires public authorities to have ‘proper arrangements’ in place for the management of their public records. These include the transfer to an archive of records selected for permanent preservation. Last year the Keeper prepared supplementary guidance about what he considers to be proper arrangements for archiving public records. This was submitted to public consultation and 35 responses were received; 4 from professional bodies, 24 from public bodies, the remainder from individuals. Respondents were overwhelmingly in favour of the Keeper issuing such guidance and of the draft suggested. They proposed a number of additions and clarifications, and several of these were taken into the final version. The Keeper’s report on the consultation and the finalised guidance were later published on the NRS website. The guidance helps authorities understand how the Keeper interprets ‘an appropriate archive repository’ and agrees the steps necessary under proper arrangements when archiving records selected for permanent preservation. The Keeper’s Proper Arrangements Guidance is now available on the PRSA pages of the NRS website.⁵

⁵ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/public-records-scotland-act-2011/resources>

► Outreach activities

Outreach continues to be vitally important to the success of the implementation process. The Act provides the impetus for collaboration, but our commitment in providing and managing the space in which this collaboration takes place is central to wider success. The assessment team, and public authority plans, continue to benefit from the sharing of experience and the practical solutions being developed.

PRSA outreach and engagement events during 2016-17



Visiting Borders Council



Plan submission by Scottish Legal Complaints Commission



Plan submission by NHS Tayside



Icelandic Registrars visit to NRS



The Adam Dome, General Register House



University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee visit to NRS



Northumberland University conference



Glasgow surgery



Plan submission by sportscotland

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► General surgeries and continuous engagement

“This year we engaged directly with 30 public authorities at surgery events held in Edinburgh and Glasgow.”

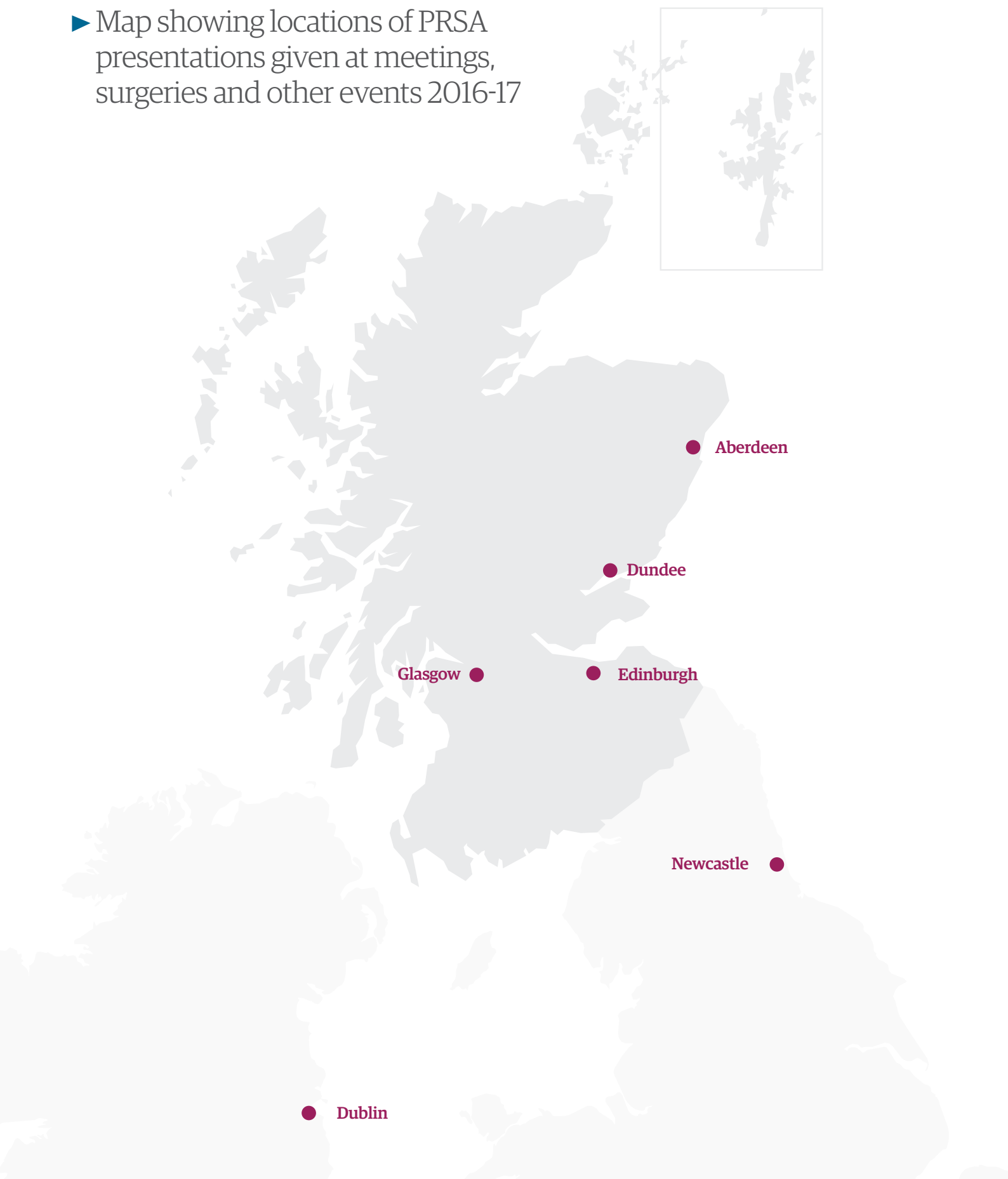
General surgeries remain central to our commitment to meaningful engagement. Not only does this allow the assessment team to remain high profile and accessible to colleagues, it also facilitates networking and helps share local experience. This year we engaged directly with 31 public authorities at surgery events held in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Government Records Branch client management colleagues participated in these surgeries addressing the issue of archiving and transfer arrangements (Model Plan element 7).

Surgeries started in 2012 and most authorities have attended at least one event, yet they remain popular and demand continues to be high. Emphasis has changed over the years from a need to inform authorities about their obligations under the Act to addressing specific challenges under certain key elements of the Keeper’s Model Plan. Hearing directly from practitioners who have already been through the assessment process is very popular, and for this reason many authorities attend surgeries more than once. We therefore consider that while the emphasis of general surgeries may change, they continue to serve an identifiable need. We will keep this under review.

► Dr John Scally, Chief Executive and National Librarian, National Library of Scotland

“Information is at the centre of what we do as a national library and as an organisation. I am therefore committed to ensuring that we manage records that are authentic, reliable, of integrity, and useable. The National Library of Scotland’s Records Management Plan has been developed to meet the requirements of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 and sets out how we will manage our records to a high standard.”

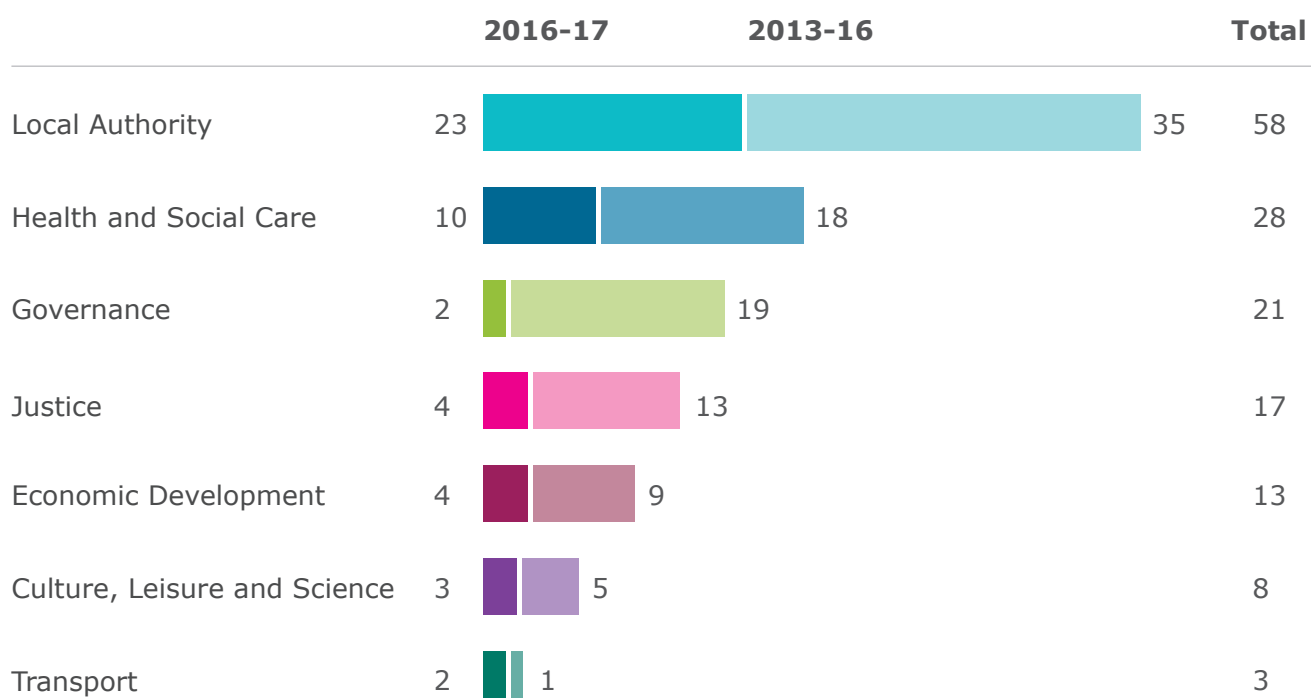
► Map showing locations of PRSA presentations given at meetings, surgeries and other events 2016-17



Organisation	Location	Date
FARMER conference	Dundee	5 Apr 2016
PRSA surgery	Edinburgh	21 Apr 2016
Administrative Data Research Centre	Edinburgh	26 Apr 2016
Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture	Edinburgh	15 Jun 2016
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee	Edinburgh	19 Jul 2016
Delegation from People's Republic of China	Edinburgh	25 Jul 2016
Health Archivists' Group	Dundee	2 Aug 2016
PRSA surgery	Glasgow	21 Sep 2016
Delegation of Icelandic registrars	Edinburgh	23 Sep 2016
NHS Grampian Senior Leadership Team	Aberdeen	18 Oct 2016
National Archives of Ireland	Dublin	21 Oct 2016
PUR seminar 1	Edinburgh	14 Dec 2016
Northumbria University	Newcastle	24 Jan 2017
PUR seminar 2	Edinburgh	27 Feb 2017
Skills for the Future	Edinburgh	22 Mar 2017

Records management plans agreed by sector

A total of 48 plans were agreed in 2016-17 out of 148 plans agreed since 2013



Aberdeen City Licensing Board	03/02/17
Angus Council	27/03/17
Angus Licensing Board	27/03/17
Argyll and Bute Council	27/03/17
Argyll and Bute Licensing Board	27/03/17
Ayrshire Valuation Joint Board	19/05/16
Board of Trustees for the National Galleries of Scotland	24/05/16
Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd	08/06/16
City of Edinburgh Council	29/06/16
City of Edinburgh Council Licensing Board	29/06/16
Commissioner For Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland	04/04/16
East Ayrshire Council	29/11/16
East Ayrshire Licensing Board	29/11/16
East Renfrewshire Council	16/05/16
East Renfrewshire Licensing Board	16/05/16
Grampian Valuation Joint Board	29/11/16
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prosecution in Scotland	09/06/16
Highland & Western Isles Valuation Joint Board	13/12/16

Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Culture, Leisure and Science
Transport
Local Authority
Local Authority
Justice
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Local Authority
Justice
Local Authority

Authority	Date of Agreement	Sector
Highland Council	04/04/16	Local Authority
Highland Licensing Board	04/04/16	Local Authority
Highlands and Islands Airports	17/03/17	Transport
Keeper of the Registers of Scotland	17/01/17	Governance
Lanarkshire Valuation Joint Board	09/08/16	Local Authority
Lord Advocate	16/05/16	Justice
Lothian Valuation Joint Board	04/04/16	Local Authority
Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland	08/12/16	Governance
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	03/10/16	Health and Social Care
NHS Borders	09/09/16	Health and Social Care
NHS Dumfries and Galloway	21/03/17	Health and Social Care
NHS Forth Valley	09/09/16	Health and Social Care
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	10/10/16	Health and Social Care
NHS Lanarkshire	16/05/16	Health and Social Care
NHS Orkney	09/09/16	Health and Social Care
NHS Tayside	03/10/16	Health and Social Care
Orkney Council	23/06/16	Local Authority
Orkney Licensing Board	23/06/16	Local Authority
Principal Reporter	15/04/16	Health and Social Care
Procurator Fiscal	16/05/16	Justice
Renfrewshire Council	17/08/16	Local Authority
Renfrewshire Licensing Board	17/08/16	Local Authority
Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA)	15/02/17	Economic Development
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration	15/04/16	Health and Social Care
Scottish Futures Trust	01/02/17	Economic Development
Scottish Sports Council (sportscotland)	15/02/17	Culture, Leisure and Science
Scottish Water	14/02/17	Economic Development
Tayside Valuation Joint Board	12/04/16	Local Authority
The National Library of Scotland	17/01/17	Culture, Leisure and Science
Water Industry Commission for Scotland	13/12/16	Economic Development

“We continue to encourage authorities that have been through the assessment process to share their experience with colleagues by speaking at surgeries. This is both popular and valuable.”

We continue to encourage authorities that have been through the assessment process to share their experience with colleagues by speaking at surgeries. This is both popular and valuable. It is reassuring to report that colleagues remain keen to volunteer for this task, which they find both personally and professionally rewarding. We express our particular thanks this year to our speakers Heather Mackay of Visit Scotland and Robert Nicol of Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Valuation Joint Board.



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Invitation speaker, Robert Nicol, Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute Valuation Joint Board, addresses delegates at the PRSA autumn surgery held in Glasgow City Chambers, September 2016.

We continue to rely on the goodwill of participating authorities to help deliver surgeries. Many supply venues free of charge, reflecting a continuing commitment to support the engagement process and we are extremely grateful to those authorities for their generosity. The Keeper wishes to record his thanks to Glasgow City Council for their support in running this year’s autumn surgery.

As we approach the end of the invitation process, we continue to encounter authorities that require assistance to help them prepare for submission. Such authorities benefit from face to face meetings and we remain happy to provide such support as this ultimately results in more considered submissions and a better understanding of good records management practice. Fourteen such meetings took place this year. They included meetings with the Scottish Transport Commissioner, Community Justice Scotland, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council), General Teaching Council, Scottish Land Court and Scottish Legal Complaints Commission.

► 'From a Culture of Caution to a Culture of Confidence: Lessons Learned from Implementing the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011'

In April 2016 a workshop event was run in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh School of Law and the Administrative Data Research Centre Scotland (ADRC). Participants were drawn from our list of public authority Key Contacts reflecting a broad representation of the sector. They included Scottish local authorities, NHS territorial boards and special boards, as well as a number of smaller public bodies. Also represented were regulators and private consultants with experience of working with public authorities, and academics and researchers with interests in data sharing.



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Delegates at workshop run in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh School of Law and the Administrative Data Research Centre Scotland (ADRC), April 2016.

“Participants discussed ways in which authorities could move from the current culture of caution surrounding public records to one of confidence.”

The workshop was based on the premise that good records management and information governance is critical to the delivery of good public services. They enhance transparency, guarantee citizens’ rights and facilitate evidence-based policies for the wider public good. The capacity of public authorities to attain consistent levels in records management and information governance is currently being challenged by a prevailing culture of caution around the use of public sector data. The workshop provided a forum for discussion between key stakeholders to consider the wider benefits of using public sector data and to connect the work of records managers with public authority commitment to service users.

A culture of caution has been clearly identified in the public records arena. Ministers want the Act to address what impact that may have on records management practice within public authorities. The workshop therefore considered best practice and barriers to achieving success in records management and information governance. In particular, participants discussed ways in which authorities could move from the current culture of caution surrounding public records to one of confidence.

The workshop was structured into four sessions:

1. Planning records management and information governance
2. Reviewing records management and information governance
3. Data sharing
4. Destruction of records and data retention.

It facilitated honest, open and valuable discussions within the records management and information governance communities about how to overcome challenges and persistent barriers, and how to promote best practice. Participants acknowledged the positive impact the Act is having within authorities, but they also identified that further work and engagement is necessary to address current cultures which often manifest in overly risk-averse behaviours, contrary to the public interest.

It was agreed that on-going discussion and sharing of best practice will help address individual anxieties around records management and information governance and break down fears across the public sector. Successes may be slow to come, as good records management and information governance require constant review and assessment, but evidence exists from the implementation of the Act that authorities are striving to comply and that change is taking place.

The workshop allowed us to understand the cultures in which records managers operate and what was needed to improve this. It also enhanced the confidence of Scottish public authorities in using and sharing their data more openly when in the public interest to do so. The workshop report was published and can be accessed online.⁶

► Progress Update Review (PUR)

As reported in section 3, stakeholders have expressed the hope that regular communication with the Keeper through feedback about on-going developments would ensure prioritisation of records management within authorities. Keen to maintain the momentum, enthusiasm and good work inspired by the Act, work started in 2015 on developing a process by which authorities can share updates on changes to their agreed plans and record any advances made in record keeping.

⁶ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/public-records-scotland-act-2011/latest-developments/2016>

The challenge was to establish a process which allowed authorities to maximise the benefit of keeping their plans under review by using their own internal reporting mechanisms to update the Keeper without adding further burdens. Conscious that the new mechanism's utility and uptake relied on stakeholder support, we developed the Progress Update Review (PUR) mechanism as a collaborative tool in which the views of record managers were actively sought. A new Stakeholder Forum met four times between March 2015 and February 2017 to discuss the issues and develop ideas.

The resulting PUR mechanism remains in the final stages of development, but it is due to be rolled out in 2017. It will provide the Keeper with accurate information with which to report progress to Scottish Ministers. It is designed to help deliver the cultural change needed across the public sector which lies at the heart of the Act.

► Integration Joint Boards

“Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) are obliged to comply fully with PRSA and will be invited in due course by the Keeper to submit a records management plan for his agreement.”

The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 (the Act) requires Health Boards (HBs) and Scottish Local Authorities (SLAs) to work together effectively to agree a model of integration. In almost all cases HBs and SLAs have opted to delegate the responsibility for planning and resourcing service provision for adult health and social care services to an Integration Joint Board. Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) are designated Bodies Corporate and have been added to the Schedule of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (PRSA). They are therefore obliged to comply fully with PRSA and will be invited in due course by the Keeper to submit a records management plan for his agreement.

IJBs will access partner authority records for business purposes. Those records will be covered by partners' plans but the IJBs will also create defined corporate information and records in their own right. In practical terms, these will be managed on the systems of the partner authorities. An IJB plan must, therefore, accurately reflect this arrangement and be supported by evidence such as their partners' operational information policies and procedures.

IJBs will not be invited to submit plans until 2018 at the earliest. It is anticipated that by then all HBs and SLAs will have achieved agreement and their plans will be in place. This should make it easier for IJBs to confirm that their records are managed appropriately and in line with the operational policies and procedures of their partner authorities.

▶ Adam Coldwell, Judith Proctor and Pamela Gowans, Chief Officers for Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and Moray IJBs

“Integrating services which were traditionally delivered independently by Councils and the NHS will make a real difference for service users ensuring that provision is seamless. Robust information governance is essential to this success. The development of a generic Integration Joint Board RMP, working collaboratively with the Keeper’s assessment team, will ensure that this can be achieved.”

We held a number of productive meetings this year with Chief Officers, Health and Social Care Partnerships, local authorities and NHS Boards to discuss how best to help IJBs meet their obligations under the Act. A meeting was held with Chief Officers responsible for Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray IJBs in October 2016 which crystallised our thinking. With their help we achieved agreement with the national Chief Officers for a proposed way forward. This will see IJBs develop their own plans rather than enter into common plans with partner authorities. We will continue to pursue proposals next year as we engage with colleagues to consider what IJB plans might look like and help them through the submission process. We remain committed to a collaborative solution to ensure that the process is as straightforward as possible and jointly agreed.

► Conferences and wider talks

We were again invited to participate at a number of key events this year.

In April 2016, we delivered a paper at the UK & Ireland Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research (FARMER) Conference in Dundee. The conference theme was "Activation and impact: the societal role of records and record-keepers". Speakers were invited to consider what records do in people's lives that nothing else does, and how public awareness of the unique functions of records can be enhanced? Given the origins of the Act in the findings of the Shaw Report and the emphasis placed on societal rights, this topic was ideal for a paper about it. "The Impact of Public Records Beyond Record Keepers" set out how the Act is raising awareness of the value and business benefits of good record keeping. It emphasised the moral argument behind the Act which brought the importance of records management to the attention of wider society and connects it with accountability and democratic rights.

"The PRSA paper struck a chord with Canadian delegates and helped publicise further our activities in Scotland to a wider international audience."

Though FARMER is a UK and Ireland Forum, the conference attracted international delegates and participants. This year a large delegation from Canada presented on the work of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the experience of indigenous communities who contributed to its proceedings. The challenges they experienced in locating and accessing records featured heavily in the Commission's report. The PRSA paper therefore struck a chord with Canadian delegates and helped publicise further our activities in Scotland to a wider international audience.



PRSA assessment team liaise with Scottish Canals over the authority's plan.

In October 2016, following an invitation by the National Archives of Ireland, we also participated in the first records management seminar event for Irish civil servants held in Dublin. A presentation was given about the Act to over 100 participants. This reflects the wider interest the Act is attracting from overseas jurisdictions, particularly in the principles which underpin it and the approach we have developed in Scotland.

“The main message was that the Act is simply an enabler and that legislation can only ever be a starting point.”

In January 2017 a further conference paper was given at the ‘Archival Accountability Gap: Is there a Democratic Deficit in Archives’ conference held at Northumbria University, Newcastle. The conference explored the needs of the future generation of users and discussed the vital issues of records management in developing countries. It considered the importance of records in the investigation of tragedies and transgressions, such as the Hillsborough disaster, exploring how new ideas about the way in which records and archives should be created have emerged from them. It also considered the impact of recent government initiatives, such as Sir Alex Allan’s review of digital records, in addressing shortcomings in record creation and disposal.⁷ Also, how we can apply democracy to the creation and selection of records and what happens when things go wrong.

A paper ‘The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011: an agent for positive and lasting change?’ fitted well with the conference themes. It reflected on Scottish Ministers’ ambitions for the Act, the influences of the Shaw Report and experiences of vulnerable people on its development and our experience of the journey. It reflected on the lessons learned and the process developed since the Act came into force in 2013. The main message was that the Act is simply an enabler and that legislation can only ever be a starting point. It is the development and investment in relationships, cooperation and joint working between the Keeper, as regulator, and public bodies which are the main drivers for achieving positive and lasting change.

In February 2017, a further paper was given at an Archives and Records Association Freedom of Information Core Training Day held at Glasgow School of Art. It looked at The Code of Practice on Records Management by Scottish Public Authorities under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (The Section 61 Code) and the impact of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011. Speaking at such training events ensures that the next generation of archivists and record keepers understand their responsibilities under the 2011 Act.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/records-review-by-sir-alex-allan>

► Skills for the Future

The Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) runs the Opening Up Scotland's Archives scheme funded through the Heritage Lottery 'Skills for the Future' programme. The programme supports archives in Scotland by helping to improve skills, broaden opportunities and develop the sector.

NRS hosted two 'Skills for the Future' trainees this year under this scheme to help develop our Digital Preservation Programme. They worked in collaboration with Scottish local authorities to develop two tailored products – digital preservation guidance and a digital capacity planning tool which will enable local authorities to compile a high quality estimate of the scale of their digital holdings. Both products will support local authorities in meeting their 'Archiving and Transfer Arrangements' (Element 7) of their records management plans to meet better their digital record keeping requirements under the Act. The projects benefitted from high levels of engagement with local authority archivists, records managers and ICT administrators.

From July 2016 to March 2017, staff from 17 Scottish local authorities were directly involved in the projects, either by attending workshops, interviews or answering questionnaires. The trainees presented updates at two Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group (ASLAWG) meetings. Early indications are that these products are empowering local authorities to embark on their digital preservation journey, which in turn will support them in the long-term retention of digital archival records reflecting the lives of all citizens.

The SCA invited the assessment team to deliver a paper on the Act to this year's student cohort. This allowed us to reinforce the importance of managing current records robustly to new archive professionals, to safeguard the archives of tomorrow but also to protect the rights of Scotland's citizens today.



HLF Skills for the Future Trainees – SCA's 'Opening Up Scotland's Archives' project.

Image courtesy of Scottish Council on Archives

This year, we gave formal presentations at meetings of records management staff and senior managers of public authorities at their own premises. These included Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture, The General Teaching Council for Scotland, NHS Grampian Senior Leadership Team, Chief Officers of Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray Integration Joint Boards and the Chief Officers of the Lothian Integration Joint Boards.

There remains a strong demand for us to hold face to face meetings across Scotland. We see these as valuable opportunities to engage directly with records managers and further promote the Act, not just to practitioners but to senior managers who frequently attend such meetings. Discussions range from questions about the impact on front line services to the potential wider benefits of improved information management. Meetings were held with Scottish Land Court, Water Industry Commission for Scotland, Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture, South Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service, Scottish Borders Council, Scottish Canals, Scottish Legal Complaints Commission, sportscotland, Aberdeen City Council, Scottish Police Authority, The Office of the Scottish Road-Works Commissioner, Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council) and Community Justice Scotland.

► Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry was set up on 1 October 2015. It is Scotland's first statutory national Inquiry into the abuse of children in care and is due to report within four years. Its overall aim and purpose is to raise public awareness of the abuse of those children during the period it covers. It provides an opportunity for public acknowledgement of their suffering and a forum for validation of their experience and testimony.⁸

The period covered by the Inquiry is within "living memory" of any person who suffered abuse. The definition of 'abuse' extends beyond the physical and the Inquiry will be entitled to consider other forms of abuse at its discretion. The Keeper is committed to assisting the work of the Inquiry.

Last year we prepared an initial list of potentially relevant record sources in NRS estimated at over 1,000 metres of government records alone. We met with the Inquiry team again this year to take forward the Keeper's offer to host a meeting with public authority key contacts. It was agreed that this would help the Inquiry deliver advice and guidance to a large number of relevant authorities at the same time.

⁸ <https://www.childabuseinquiry.scot/>

“The event helped authorities to understand better the SCAI terms of reference and their obligations to assist its investigations by locating and furnishing the Inquiry team with the records and information they need.”

The event took place in New Register House in March 2017. Interest in this event was understandably high and it attracted 32 delegates representing 30 public authorities. Delegates came from a wide range of public bodies, but principally from Scottish local authorities for whom the Inquiry’s demands represent a particularly important obligation. The event helped authorities to understand better the SCAI terms of reference and their obligations to assist its investigations by locating and furnishing the Inquiry team with the records and information they need.

► Post Shaw Initiatives

We continue to contribute to initiatives stemming directly from the findings of The Shaw Report. These include Reclaiming Lost Childhoods (RLC), a project designed to help care experienced individuals investigate and access information and records about their time in care. Also, Talking Care Scotland (TCS) a survivor-led oral history project which aims to collect the experiences of care experienced adults and make their memories and narratives available through the web. The Keeper is a trustee of TCS offering records and information advice and guidance and similarly contributes to the work of RLC.

► Andrew Kendrick, Professor of Residential Child Care, Academic Lead for the Institute for Inspiring Children’s Futures, School of Social Work and Social Policy, University of Strathclyde

“Care leavers have highlighted the crucial importance of personal records and wider information on their time in care. The Keeper was a key partner in the Reclaiming Lost Childhoods project which brought together care leavers, survivors of historic abuse, service providers, historians and archivists in order to bring together learning about good practice in record keeping and addressing the needs of care leavers and survivors of abuse. The significance of records has again been raised by the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, and highlighted the importance of improving practice in the management and archiving of records.”

This year we engaged with a new post Shaw initiative. 'Back to the Future: creating and sustaining 'living archives' of children's homes in Scotland and Germany' is a project led by the School of Applied Social Science at Stirling University. In keeping with the aims of RLC, 'Back to the Future' seeks to assist current residents of care trace their records and develop an archive of their experiences there. The project currently awaits the outcome of a grant funding application.

► Recognition and contact with other jurisdictions

“Mr FitzPatrick indicated that the Act is about securing improvement for the future so that future generations don't experience the frustrations of the past.”

We also provided detailed briefing for the Minister for Parliamentary Business, Joe FitzPatrick MSP, when he attended the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Global Summit seminar in Paris in December 2016. Mr FitzPatrick spoke about the impact of the 2011 Act at an international workshop 'Leave no trace? How to combat 'off the record' government'. He indicated that the Act is about securing improvement for the future so that future generations don't experience the frustrations of the past. This will set firm foundations for a better system of record keeping for wider public benefit.



Joe FitzPatrick MSP, Minister for Parliamentary Business, signs Scotland's Open Government Partnership Action Plan at the OGP Global Summit in Paris, December 2016.

Image courtesy of Evan Abramson,
Open Government Partnership

In what has become a regular event, we again presented to the class of post graduate students from the School of Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, on their annual trip to Scotland. In July and September 2016 we also addressed two further visiting groups, one a group of archivists from the People's Republic of China and a group of registrars from Iceland.

Overseas groups are particularly interested in hearing about the 2011 Act. Its modern and innovative provisions are often commented upon as being advanced and forward thinking, particularly with regard to its emphasis on protecting rights and promoting transparent and open government.



Hugh Hagan addresses a visiting group of archivists from The People's Republic of China, July 2016.

SECTION 5

Looking Forward



“Almost all submissions agreed by the Keeper contained improvement models. This is seen as positive evidence of a more open and transparent culture.”

This year saw continued progress under the Act. The plans agreed show that authorities are following good practice and taking a consistent approach reflecting a strong commitment towards achieving compliance.

Almost all submissions agreed by the Keeper contained improvement models. This is seen as positive evidence of a more open and transparent culture. Many authorities now publish their plans as a matter of course once they have been agreed, a sign that many are strongly committed to the process. We published a list of those plans that are available on authorities’ own websites allowing others to make use of them. This particularly benefits those who have yet to submit their plans and further promotes good practice.⁹

Different sectors continue to participate in their own discussion and liaison groups. The NHS records management group is well established and meets regularly. The assessment team are invited to attend their meetings, helping to share experience, knowledge and best practice. Such self-help groups ensure that authorities continue to work together in a positive way. It is encouraging to note that these initiatives are being taken forward without the Keeper’s intervention and that workable solutions are being developed and shared by record practitioners. Early indications are that the newly established Integration Joint Boards will also look at setting up an equivalent joint discussion group.

We continue to work closely with the Information and Records Management Society (IRMS) both at Scottish and UK levels, and with the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA). We have benefitted greatly from engagement with these professional bodies and their willingness to involve us in wider events and discussions. The assessment team has been invited to deliver a paper about the Act at the IRMS National Conference to be hosted in Glasgow in May 2017. This affords the opportunity to engage more widely with records and information professionals from across the UK and overseas, and promote greater understanding of the Act.

We also continued to engage with relevant research projects. The Administrative Data Research Centre (ADRC) workshop that we ran jointly with Edinburgh University in April 2016, as highlighted in section 4, extended understanding and reach of the Act within the academic and research communities. It also showed the importance of ensuring that we address an emerging ‘culture of caution’ within authorities, particularly when addressing information requests.

⁹ <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/record-keeping/public-records-scotland-act-2011/resources/published-records-management-plans-rmps>

“The assurances we give for the safe management and sharing of information are underpinned by the PRSA and its principles,”

► Gerry Donnelly, Head of Data Resources, National Records of Scotland

Along with our partners across Government, Health and academia, NRS operates an extensive data linkage service which continues to grow and develop. In the last year we supported a wide range of linkage projects involving topics including health, education, demographics, homelessness, mental health and the environment. In order to improve how we use and enhance the value of the information entrusted to us and ensure that it is properly safeguarded, the assurances we give for the safe management and sharing of information are underpinned by the PRSA and its principles, as set out in our own agreed records management plan and data sharing protocols.

“Like all organisations NRS needs to be prepared when the new General Data Protection Regulations come into force in 2018. We are using the principles of the PRSA to help us to do this and amongst other things we have rolled out a new Records Management Tool to the organisation to help in that task.”

The Act has now been in operation for four years. Nearly 150 plans have been agreed and we have learned a great deal from those submitted to date. All public authorities with agreed plans have appointed a named senior officer with ultimate responsibility for ensuring their plan is resourced. The crucial role played by senior managers is key to ensuring that plans are implemented. In our experience, local initiatives for records and information projects frequently run into the sand because they lack crucial senior management buy-in. A plan which has been signed off by a CEO or senior manager confirms a commitment to implement future good practice in records management and therefore assures ultimate success for the Act. Senior management support for the provisions of a plan ensures that the culture of record keeping in Scotland is changing for the better.

“Senior management support for the provisions of a plan ensures that the culture of record keeping in Scotland is changing for the better.”

“The PUR assessment process for improvement models will ensure that review of plans becomes embedded as a routine action within authorities.”

“We will complete the first phase invitation process within the five year cycle by 2018.”

The Act is also helping to support proper archive provision. The ‘proper arrangements’ guidance published this year was eagerly anticipated by public sector colleagues. It is widely considered to provide the profession with clear direction on how best to ensure records of enduring value are permanently preserved.

Feedback from authorities indicates that the Keeper’s strategy of open engagement is still very much welcomed. It helps many authorities to engage with the process in a meaningful way. Our commitment to the principle of continuous improvement and encouraging progress over the longer term helps records managers give a positive message to their senior management teams. Over time, it will help embed improvements to the management of public sector information.

The Act, and the implementation process, must not falter. Key to that next year will be to roll out the Progress Update Review (PUR) mechanism to assess plans agreed under improvement, as highlighted in section 3. Those authorities with agreed plans have indicated that they are keen to engage with this new process to ensure that record keeping remains a high priority within their organisations. This becomes more important as time passes and more plans are agreed as it stops complacency from setting in. The PUR assessment process for improvement models will ensure that review of plans, as required under the Act, becomes embedded as a routine action within authorities.

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry is having a significant impact on the work of many authorities across Scotland as they deal with the need to access vital information and records. The Inquiry also provided us with an opportunity to promote the Act this year and the wider benefits of good records management. We facilitated a forum event on behalf of the Inquiry to engage directly with several authorities. That helped records and information managers to understand better their obligations to the Inquiry.

We will continue to engage with senior managers in a constructive manner and respond positively to any ad-hoc requests to present talks to them. These regular invitations are a positive indication that senior managers are actively engaging with the process. We will continue to use these opportunities to deliver a strong message about the Act.

Next year we will invite the remaining authorities who were originally listed on the schedule in 2013 to submit their plans for assessment. We will complete the first phase invitation process within the five year cycle by 2018. We will then identify and focus on new authorities, established after the Act came into force, and update the schedule with a new Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) in 2018.

“The preservation guidance and digital records capacity planning tool will be finalised and rolled out to help Scottish local authorities meet their ‘Archiving and Transfer’ obligations under the Act.”

“We will ensure that the momentum is maintained and that the good work already completed delivers lasting improvements.”

We will continue to listen to authorities and support them as they develop their plans, or review them under the new PUR process. We will also continue to improve our own processes and update the supporting guidance to the Keeper’s Model Plan with new examples of best practice as they emerge.

We will focus on improving identified areas of weakness. The PUR assessment programme will be rolled out in 2017 and we will work to ensure that this reporting mechanism becomes instrumental in maintaining the profile of records management within authorities.

As records are increasingly digital and digitally born, there will be both greater opportunities for access and engagement but also greater challenges in protecting the rights and privacy of individuals. Robust management of these records through compliance with our obligations under the Act is increasingly important. We will continue to address these issues under our on-going Digital Preservation Programme. The preservation guidance and digital records capacity planning tool will be finalised and rolled out to help Scottish local authorities meet their ‘Archiving and Transfer’ obligations under the Act. We will also bring forward our planned Digital Continuity service to start a phased and scheduled process of capturing a wide range of Scottish Government websites. This will help ensure that their content remains as widely available as possible in perpetuity.

We will continue to run a small number of general surgeries to meet the demands of authorities who have yet to submit their plans, or inform the many new staff appointed as key contacts in authorities whose plans have already been agreed. We will continue to invite speakers from authorities who have completed the process to share their experience with others. In response to changing requirements, we will develop more focused events geared at specific sectors and address any requirements for new authorities, for example Integration Joint Boards. We will also deliver seminars and presentations, both in authorities and at conferences or seminar events, or provide specific speaker engagements as required.

We will continue to promote the Act as an enabler. As it matures and more authorities achieve the Keeper’s agreement, we will ensure that the momentum is maintained and that the good work already completed delivers lasting improvements.

There is strong evidence to show that the quality of record keeping and the status of records management in Scotland is improving. Though much still remains to be done, from the many plans agreed we know a body of good practice is now in operation. Signs of a changing culture in records and information management is emerging. We aim to embed that within authorities and ensure it is not undermined or eroded. In time, that will make public authorities more efficient and effective, and better equipped to serve the citizens of Scotland.



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