Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Archive Policy

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Document History

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Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Archive Policy

1. Introduction

Tasglann nan Eilean is the archive service of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Its purpose is to identify, collect and permanently preserve:

(i) the records of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and its predecessor bodies which need to be retained permanently for legal or historical reasons;

(ii) the archives of organisations, businesses, estates or individuals connected to the Outer Hebrides which have been gifted or deposited

and to make these accessible to the widest extent possible for research, education or enjoyment.

2. Policy

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Identify and select records of permanent historical value in line with Tasglann nan Eilean Collections Development Policy and statutory obligations as required by the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011
- take all necessary steps to ensure the preservation of the records
- arrange, sort, and catalogue the records in order to maximise their value as an information resource using appropriate tools and adhering to recognised professional standards
- ensure that information about the records is available to the widest possible range of communities
- publicise the archive and encourage use of the resources contained therein by communities for research, education and enjoyment
- support the development of archival skills amongst community heritage groups throughout the Outer Hebrides.

3. Management and resource

3.1 The Comhairle is committed to providing sufficient resource to enable the archive service to fulfil its core purpose and objectives.

3.2 A professionally qualified archivist will be responsible for the management and preservation of the archives, as per legislation and nationally recognised Standards and Codes.

3.3 Achievement of the policy objectives shall be through the adoption of a number of related policies, procedures and plans that are compliant with best practice and professional standards.

4. Collections Development

4.1 Tasglann nan Eilean is the place of deposit for the records of the Comhairle and its predecessors, as well as the records of other public authorities such as Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board and NHS Western Isles.

4.2 In addition it seeks to acquire other records of enduring value of individuals or organisations connected to the Outer Hebrides.

4.3 Fuller information is available in the Collections Development Policy.

5. Collections Care and Preservation

All historical records entrusted to the care of Tasglann nan Eilean are managed to professional standards in order to preserve them for future generations.

The archives are stored in compliance with BS 5454 *British Standard Recommendations for the the storage and exhibition of archival documents* and in accordance with the Heritage Service Collections Care and Conservation Policy.

6. Collections Documentation

Archives are arranged, described and catalogued to recognised archival standards to preserve their evidential value. Catalogues describing the content of the archive had been made available online to enable the community to discover the sources which are available. Currently, there are catalogues available online, but they are not comprehensive or up to date post cyber attack.

Documentation plans had been in place which reflect a strategic and systematic approach, to ensure that information about the collections is accessible to as wide an extent possible within available resource. These are under review due to the recent cyber attack and will be updated when the situation around data recovery becomes clearer.

7. Access and Engagement

Archives will be made available for the use by researchers in conformity with Tasglann nan Eilean Access and Engagement Policy and nationally recognised Access standards, subject to any legislative requirements or proscriptions that may apply.

8. Records Management

The Archivist is a member of the Records Management Working Group which has a remit to ensure a common approach to Records Management is developed across the Comhairle to facilitate compliance with all relevant record-keeping legislation, including the need to ensure that records of enduring value are selected and transferred to the archive service as required under the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.

9. Related Policies

- Tasglann nan Eilean Collections Development Policy
- Tasglann nan Eilean Access and Engagement Policy
- Heritage Service Collections Care and Conservation Policy
- Tasglann nan Eilean Collections Information Policy
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Records Management Policy

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least once every five years.