

Scope of the policy

This document explains the statutory position and the geographical coverage of the Highland Archive Service (HAS) and sets out acquisition priorities across all four Archive Centres, as well as the terms of acquisition which will be applied across all collections.

Mission Statement

Highland Archive Service, as part of High Life Highland, enables The Highland Council to fulfil its legal responsibility to preserve and provide access to its public records. Alongside this core function, we are dedicated to collecting, conserving, and making accessible, records that reflect the history and diversity of the Scottish Highlands and its inhabitants. We strive to make these collections as widely accessible as possible in our Archive Centres, through a variety of digital channels, and via an active community engagement programme.

Our mission is to benefit present and future generations, promoting the use of these records in:

- informing local decision-making
- strengthening community and cultural identity
- engaging with communities in ways that enhance learning, representation, inclusion, and equity
- improving health and wellbeing through the study and enjoyment of history
- **Making Life Better** for everyone, across Highland communities and beyond

Statutory and Legal Status

HAS operates within the parameters of:

- Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994
- The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (s.1)
- Data Protection Act 2018 including General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004

Three of the four Archive Centres (Highland, Nucleus and Lochaber) hold records under Charge and Superintendence Agreements with the Keeper of the Records of Scotland and Nucleus also hold a collection under a similar agreement with Historic Environment Scotland.

Geographical coverage

HAS collects records relating to the area covered by The Highland Council. We operate four Archive Centres across the Highlands to encourage the deposit of records and to make local access easier:

- **Highland Archive and Registration Centre**, Bught Road, Inverness IV3 5SS: collects records relating to the former counties of Inverness-shire, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Nairnshire, and part of Elginshire (Moray), and the former burghs of Inverness, Kingussie, Fortrose, Cromarty, Tain, Dingwall, Invergordon, Dornoch, Nairn and Grantown.
- **Nucleus: The Nuclear and Caithness Archives**, Airport Industrial Estate, Wick Airport, Wick, Caithness, KW1 4QS: collects records relating to the former county of Caithness and the former burghs of Wick and Thurso.¹
- **Skye and Lochalsh Archive Centre**, Elgin Hostel, Dunvegan Road, Portree IV51 9EE: collects records relating to Skye and Lochalsh, including the parishes of Brackadale, Duirinish, Kilmuir, Portree, Sleat, Snizort, Strath, Glenshiel, Kintail and Lochalsh.

¹ Records relating to the history of nuclear energy science and technology development at all civil UK nuclear sites are governed by the NDA Acquisitions Policy, which provides for the preservation of nuclear archival heritage across the UK.

- **Lochaber Archive Centre**, Alexander Ross House, Achintore Road, Fort William PH33 6RQ: collects records relating to Lochaber, the parishes of Kilmallie, Kilmonivaig, the Small Isles, the Argyllshire parishes of Ardnamurchan, Morven and Sunart and the burgh of Fort William.

We will not split collections which overlap catchment areas. The main geographical source of origin will determine which Centre is chosen as the place of deposit.

We will not collect records which relate to areas which lie outside the agreed Highland boundaries as described above. Such records will instead be referred to the appropriate record office. However, in certain circumstances, if such records form an integral part of a collection which has a Highland connection, they will be kept together, and catalogue information provided to the appropriate record office.

Acquisition priorities

Our acquisition priorities are to:

- collect records which represent the interests and opinions of our community
- acquire records which are deemed to be of archival value from private individuals, families, businesses, institutions and other organisations to increase the range and depth of our collections
- seek the transfer of records relating to the Highlands held by the National Records of Scotland to the appropriate Archive Centre under Charge and Superintendence
- ensure the transfer of non-current records considered suitable for permanent preservation still held within The Highland Council and High Life Highland, to the appropriate Archive Centre

Acquisition terms

Before acquiring records, we require that:

- all records be non-current and no longer required for business purposes
- the material has a connection to the Highlands
- the depositor has authority to transfer the material, and signs a deposit agreement form confirming that they have agreed to the terms and conditions of the transfer
- the material is unique or deemed to be of archival value
- the records be free of legal or excessive access restrictions

Appraisal and Disposal

- We reserve the right to refuse or return to the depositor any records deemed to be of no historical interest
- Records which fall outside the terms of the HAS Acquisition Policy, may be transferred to a more suitable repository, offered back to the depositor or disposed of confidentially following the written agreement of the depositor, and subject to the terms of any statutory or other regulatory measure
- We do not, as a matter of course, collect artefacts, three dimensional objects, works of art, published works or newspapers. Only where these items are integral to the archive collection will we seek to keep the collection together
- Artefacts will usually be directed to an appropriate museum or gallery and published material to an appropriate library

When advising potential depositors, we will draw attention to the existence of other repositories with similar or overlapping interest, to ensure that material is offered to the most appropriate institution.

Policy Review Schedule

This policy is issued in January 2025 and will be reviewed and updated as necessary every three years or earlier if a response is needed to any changes in legislation.