



**CORPORATE PLAN  
2004-9**

**ANNEX**

**PUBLIC SERVICES POLICY**



## **1. Introduction**

This document sets out the Public Services Policy of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), and is one of a series of policy documents which expand upon the overall objectives of RCAHMS which are:

**1.1 to survey and record the built environment of Scotland;**

**1.2 to compile and maintain in the public archive and database known as the National Monuments Record of Scotland a record of the archaeological and historical environment; and**

**1.3 to promote an understanding of this information by all appropriate means.**

## **2. Scope**

RCAHMS aims to provide a public service relating to the built heritage of Scotland based on information gathered during the course of RCAHMS survey and recording, as well as that contained within the RCAHMS archive and database. Public enquiries which fall outside the scope of RCAHMS may be forwarded to other organisations with the appropriate specialist knowledge. RCAHMS has a User Panel which meets annually and user surveys and audience development assessments are regularly undertaken. A suggestions box is permanently available in the public area.

## **3. Objectives**

The objectives of RCAHMS in the operation of its public services are threefold:

**3.1 to promote to a wide audience the work of RCAHMS**, undertaking an active promotion and outreach policy which includes:

- 3.1.1 implementing the Education Policy (q.v.) to promote accessibility by the widest possible audience to the work, skills and practices of RCAHMS and the resources of its archive and database;
- 3.1.2 promoting the work of RCAHMS through Open days, exhibitions and other activities, such as public lectures and conferences at John Sinclair House;
- 3.1.3 promoting RCAHMS work through personal contact when on fieldwork and at events outside the office, e.g. conferences, seminars, etc;
- 3.1.4 production and marketing of RCAHMS publications and exhibitions;
- 3.1.5 undertaking programmes of access activities at external events including staff lectures and participation in Local History Week, Scottish Archaeology Month, local or family history fairs and similar events;
- 3.1.6 maintaining and updating the website on a monthly basis to regularly inform the public of developments, accessions, projects and other RCAHMS activities;
- 3.1.7 developing links with local groups through Sites and Monuments Records, community websites, and local museums, archives and libraries;
- 3.1.8 actively seeking and responding to the views of users through user panel, seminars, periodic surveys and a suggestion box;
- 3.1.9 developing and maintaining information and self-help leaflets for use on RCAHMS premises, during fieldwork and on the website, to facilitate the use of the NMRS;
- 3.1.10 contributing articles and placing advertising in Scottish interest and history magazines; and
- 3.1.11 developing links with TV and radio companies and local and national newspapers, via the Scottish Executive Press Office.

**3.2 to provide access to information and material held in the collections of the NMRS** achieved by members of the public through the following methods of consultation:

- 3.2.1 by visiting the NMRS in John Sinclair House, where facilities for research are available in the reading room;

Within the reading room, members of the public have access to:

- CANMORE, the NMRS database and CANMAP;
- works of reference, manual indices, catalogues and a microfiche copier;
- books and photographs on open access; and
- staff who provide assistance to visitors.

Staff on duty will assist the public by:

- obtaining items from the collections that are not on open access, e.g. drawings, on request (appointments are advised for some classes of material);
- ensuring careful handling of all archival material so that items are not damaged in use and maintaining a high level of security and conservation for the collections held by NMRS;
- providing information on the charging policy which is reviewed annually;
- administering copyright on behalf of the Crown (through delegated authority from the Queen's Printer for Scotland) and for owners of collections deposited in NMRS; and
- advising of other relevant sources of information and material

3.2.2 by correspondence, telephone, fax or e-mail; and

3.2.3 by remote, online access to the NMRS database, using CANMORE and CANMAP.

3.2.4 Members of the public may purchase copies of material held in the NMRS subject to copyright restrictions.

**3.3 to provide a high standard of service.** RCAHMS staff are committed to achieving the highest standards of service to the public at all times, as specified in the published Code of Service (see Appendix).

#### **4. Charging Policy**

4.1 There is no charge for visitors making routine consultations in the NMRS, for general curatorial advice on the collections or guidance on how to use the NMRS. Routine enquiries dealt with by telephone, e-mail or by letter similarly do not incur a fee.

4.2 A charge is made for the following services (full details are contained in the price lists which are updated annually):

- 4.2.1 staff time when dealing with complex enquiries requiring considerable staff input (over ½ hour);
- 4.2.2 printed reports or data supplied on disk;
- 4.2.3 photocopies, which are supplied for personal use only;
- 4.2.4 photographic and digital copies of items in the collection;
- 4.2.5 copyright and reproduction fees; and
- 4.2.6 RCAHMS publications

#### **5. Accessibility**

5.1 Online enquiries: CANMORE (NMRS database) is operational 24 hours per day and seven days per week. E-mail enquiries can be dealt with only during normal office hours.

5.2 Opening hours are Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm.

5.3 Public holidays: normal public holidays apply (Christmas, New Year, Spring bank holiday, Easter and Autumn weekend); exact details are available on the web site ([www.rcahms.gov.uk](http://www.rcahms.gov.uk)).

5.4 Appointments are required only for access to the vertical aerial photograph collections, the RIAS Collections or when large quantities of material are required including special collections.

5.5 Car park: limited car-parking is available to the rear of John Sinclair House.

5.6 Disabled access is available both in/from the car park and to the first floor via a specially adapted lift for wheelchair/pedestrian access. In addition, the CANMORE database has been designed for the partially sighted.

#### 5.7 Health and safety

5.7.1 in the event of a fire alarm, all staff and visitors are instructed to leave the building immediately. Special arrangements are in place for disabled visitors.

5.7.2 a no-smoking policy operates in John Sinclair House.

### **6. Restrictions**

6.1 The preservation and safekeeping of the collections are paramount considerations, and regulations to safeguard these are in place. Hence:

6.1.1 personal photography, tracing and scanning of material in the collections is not allowed;

6.1.2 coats and bags must be deposited in the lockers provided at reception;

6.1.3 laptop computers may be used, but the use of ink and the consumption of food or drink in the public area is forbidden. Notes must be made in pencil;

6.1.4 the use of mobile telephones is not allowed in any part of the reading rooms; and

6.1.5 RCAHMS is not liable for the personal property of visitors.

### **7. Copyright**

7.1 Material in the collections has come from a variety of sources and the copyright of items falls into the following categories:

7.1.1 material created by RCAHMS staff (Crown copyright);

7.1.2 material where the copyright has been assigned to RCAHMS;

7.1.3 material which is out of copyright;

7.1.4 material which is the copyright of private individuals;

7.1.5 material which is the copyright of existing or defunct organisations; and

7.1.6 material of unknown provenance.

7.2 RCAHMS will provide copies of material in the NMRS collections for research purposes and will wherever possible provide the correct information to users on the copyright of collections items. RCAHMS does not accept responsibility for the illegal use of material in publications, exhibitions etc.

## Appendix

### CODE OF SERVICE

Staff in RCAHMS are committed to providing the highest standard of service in everything that they do. This code of service sets out the standards you can expect RCAHMS to meet.

#### ***A1. Standards of Service***

At all times, staff will

- be helpful and considerate;
- behave in a polite and professional manner;
- provide an efficient and accurate service; and
- ensure that the comfort and safety of visitors to RCAHMS premises are considered

#### ***A2. Public Enquiries***

- All staff dealing directly with the public will be identified by the use of name badges or identity cards.
- Telephone calls will be answered quickly and staff will give their name. If the enquiry cannot be dealt with immediately, staff will inform the caller when a reply will be given and by whom.
- Letters will be answered within 15 working days, unless the enquiry is complex, in which case the sender will be notified about the timescale involved and a full response will be made within six weeks.
- Access to the National Monuments Record of Scotland (NMRS) is available to members of the public between 9.30 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday. Public holidays are detailed in a separate leaflet, and are available on the web site ([www.rcahms.gov.uk](http://www.rcahms.gov.uk)).

#### ***A3. Services***

- There is no charge for consulting the NMRS, but there may be a charge for some services (for example, photocopies, laser copies, computer print-outs). Customers will be informed of any costs involved prior to the commencement of work. Details of the range of charges are contained in a separate leaflet.
- Photographic orders (up to 24 prints) will be despatched within 15 working days and customers placing orders greater than this will be advised about the time their order will take, but it will be within six weeks. An alternative 'Fast Service' is available, at an increased charge, for orders of photographic material required within a shorter timescale. An invoice will be sent out and payment must be received prior to despatch of material.
- Information requested from the computer database will be despatched within 15 working days, unless the request is complex, in which case the enquirer will be contacted and an estimate of the time and cost involved will be given, but it will be within six weeks.

#### ***A4. Survey work***

- Staff will always approach a property owner, tenant, and/or their representatives to obtain the appropriate permissions prior to commencing any survey work.
- Staff will be punctual for arranged meetings and will always make contact as soon as possible in the event of a delay or cancellation.

#### ***A5. Invoices***

Staff will ensure that the payment of all invoices for the supply of goods, services etc. will be made within 30 days of receipt (unless a different payment cycle is stipulated).

#### ***A6. Complaints***

Complaints will be dealt with immediately by staff wherever possible. In any event, a full response will be made to the complainant within two weeks. Complaints in writing should be addressed to The Secretary, RCAHMS, John Sinclair House, 16 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh, EH8 9NX. E-mail: [@rcahms.gov.uk](mailto:@rcahms.gov.uk).