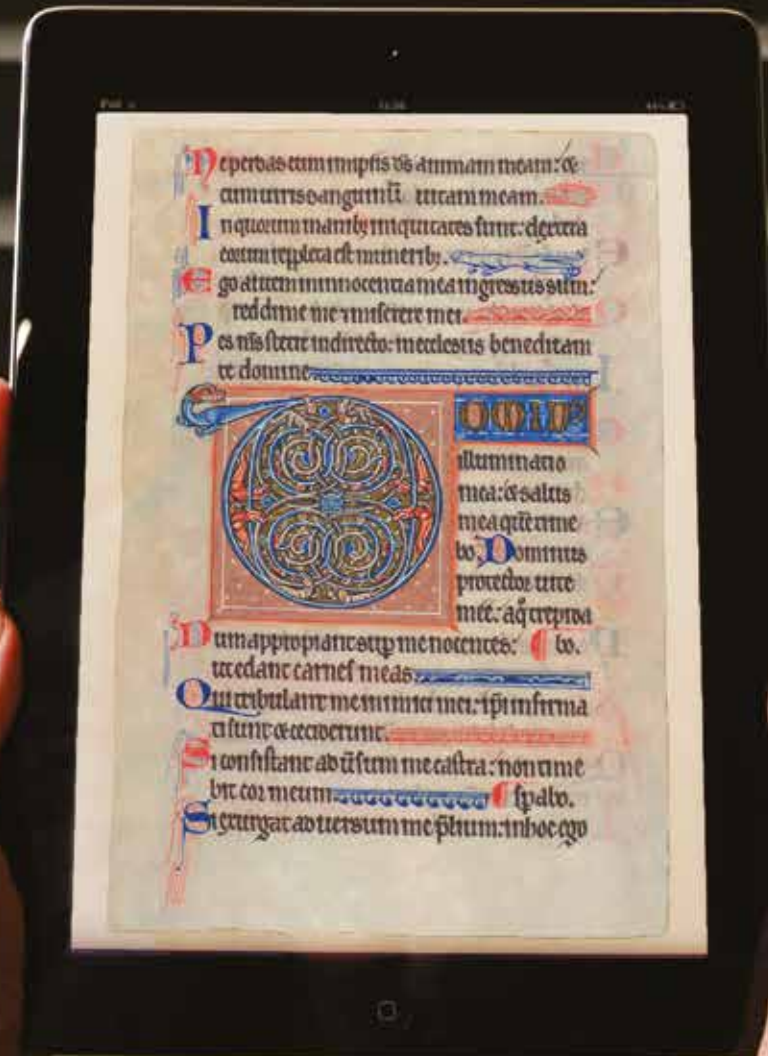


# THE WAY FORWARD: LIBRARY STRATEGY 2015-2020



# About the Library



## Original holdings

We have many rare and original items including the last letter written by Mary Queen of Scots and a copy of the Gutenberg Bible of 1455.

## 24 million items

## Centuries of history

Our oldest manuscript dates from the 5th or 6th century and is a letter written on papyrus to the heirs of Eustochios. Our oldest printed item is a Japanese prayer scroll which dates from 764.

Our collections contain more than 24 million items in multiple formats including books, manuscripts, archives, websites, newspapers, maps, music, moving images and sound.

## 4,000 new items every week



As one of only six legal deposit libraries, we have the right to claim everything published in Britain and Ireland. We take in more than 4,000 new physical items a week.



## John Murray Archive

The Library is home to the John Murray Archive which contains over one million items from some of the greatest writers, politicians, explorers and scientists of the late 18th to the early 21st centuries including David Livingstone, Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Jane Austen and Charles Darwin.

## 200km of shelving

We have some 200 kilometres of shelving – enough to stretch from Edinburgh to Inverness.



The image shows a close-up of a book spine with intricate gold-tooled designs. The spine is dark brown with a repeating pattern of floral and scrollwork motifs. A central vertical strip is a darker, maroon color with the text 'BURNS'S POEMS' in gold. At the bottom, it says 'KILMARNOCK 1758'.

## Introduction

The National Library of Scotland preserves the memory of the nation with collections that span the centuries, from earliest times to the digital age. Our collections document the influence of Scots at home and abroad, while reflecting the ideas and cultures of the world.

They cover all aspects of human endeavour in multiple formats, including books, manuscripts, archives, websites, maps, music, moving images and sound. We are the custodians of over 24 million items held in trust for the people of Scotland. Everyday around a thousand new items arrive in our buildings or onto our data servers.

We support education, research, business and innovation and our work enhances the reputation of Scotland as a country with a rich cultural heritage and a vibrant future. We are committed to providing easy access to our physical and digital collections and delivering services that are open and available to all. Our determination is to make the knowledge held within our collections as widely available as possible.

By breaking down barriers that prevent people engaging in education and learning, we help to reduce inequalities. We do this by sharing our content, particularly through our website, in our buildings and through our work with communities across Scotland. This can help to improve individual life chances and will contribute to a more successful Scotland by promoting equality of opportunity, attainment, fairness and partnership. By improving what we do, we will help organisations, businesses, researchers and learners, both young and old, develop in new, positive and productive ways.

We are the custodians of over 24 million items held in trust for the people of Scotland.



## The context

The environment in which the National Library operates is complex and constantly changing. We are living through a digital information revolution, the scope and impact of which will be as significant as the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries.


Libraries, like many other sectors, are seizing the opportunity presented by the internet to shift services and collections online and this activity is at the forefront of the current strategy. Nevertheless, the journey is beset with challenges around sustainable funding, releasing the potential of our vast physical collections and driving efficiency and continuous process improvement. No less significant are the limitations on how we can use and deliver content because of copyright and licensing agreements and legal restrictions, where eLegal deposit content has to be viewed on Library premises and not remotely.

Little of this is unique to the National Library of Scotland. All national libraries around the globe are seeking to overcome obstacles to sharing knowledge and thus improving the prospects of their respective nations. Our partnership with the five other legal deposit libraries in the UK and Ireland (British Library, National Library of Wales, the university libraries of Oxford, Cambridge and Trinity College, Dublin) is of singular importance in collecting, preserving and making available our physical and digital heritage. In Scotland, our relationship with the public, education and specialist library and archive communities will play a decisive role in delivering our strategic priorities. The relationship with our predecessor institution, the Library of the Faculty of Advocates, whose donation of three quarters of a million items helped establish the National Library in 1925, continues to be significant.

Demand for our services will require to be met by pursuing a physical presence beyond Edinburgh; firstly through our partnership at the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow, which will give us a base in Scotland's largest centre of population for the first time, and then more widely across the country. Our commitment to providing a full online listing of our collections and having a third in digital format is a bold declaration of intent that will shift us online in the next decade, in time to celebrate the centenary of the Library's foundation in 2025.

Although digital developments present many opportunities, the physical book will continue to play a central role in the life of the Library.

## Seven trends will provide a backdrop to the period of the strategy:

- the internet and digital technology will continue to evolve and shape the way we do things;
  - forms of knowledge communication will continue to widen, as the book, ebook, ejournal, social media, and data are recast;
  - there will be an increasing expectation that information on what a library holds can be searched, read and mined remotely;
  - libraries will be more open in the way they supply and license information, as well as revealing their day-to-day activities through social media;
  - partnership, sharing and collective enterprise will play an increasingly critical role in the development of libraries;
  - the Library as a physical destination will grow in popularity;
  - the financial environment will continue to present real challenges to the Library in meeting not only its statutory obligations but growing its contribution to supporting research, learning and cultural enrichment.
- 



## Mission, vision and values

**Mission** To make a significant and lasting contribution to global knowledge and the memory of the world.

**Vision** To be recognised as one of the leading national libraries in Europe by using our collections and spaces to generate opportunities for learning and research while improving understanding and participation in Scotland's rich cultural life.

**Values**

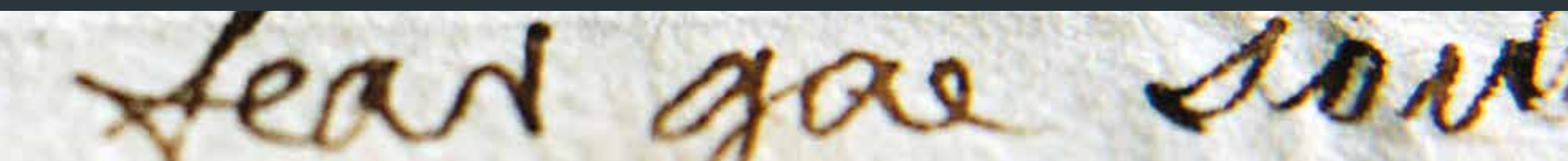
**Excellence**  
Knowledge matters; we design and deliver outstanding services and provide a leadership and support role for the library community.

**Inclusion**  
The collections belong to everyone; we are committed to gaining and sharing knowledge.

**Commitment**  
The Library is a national treasure; we will work hard to grow and develop its collections and reputation.

**Innovation**  
Change is inevitable and welcome; we are proactive in our work, we embrace change in practices, procedures and technology.

**Creativity**  
New opportunities abound; we constantly seek new and innovative ways of delivering our services and engaging people in the cultural life of Scotland.





# The six strategic priorities

# 1

## Safeguarding collections

We will be the guardian of the published and recorded memory of Scotland for current and future generations.

- 1.1 We will collect, preserve and make available a range of materials that capture Scotland's memory and contribution to world knowledge.
- 1.2 We will record, maintain and digitise the national bibliography of Scotland.
- 1.3 We will support the sustainable preservation of collections of national significance to Scotland held elsewhere.

# 2

## Improving access

We will make it easier to access our collections. By 2025 – the centenary of the Library's foundation – we will complete a full listing of the Library's holdings and have a third in digital format.

- 2.1 We will begin a programme of online listing, cataloguing and discovery work that makes visible all of the Library's special and hidden collections.
- 2.2 We will identify the main collection areas for digitisation and take action to make that material globally available.

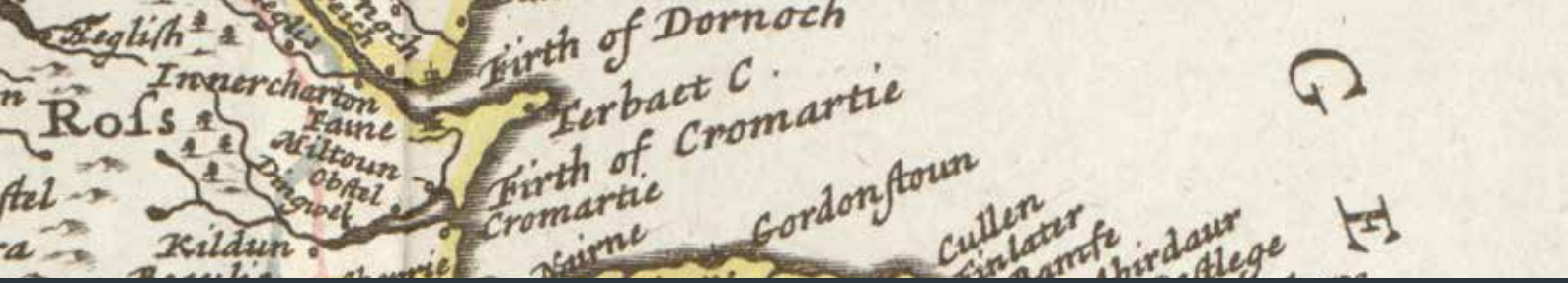
# 3

## Promoting research

We will encourage and promote research as a defining characteristic of the Library.

- 3.1 We will develop research collaborations across the humanities, sciences and business.
- 3.2 We will identify and support a series of research communities in areas aligned with our mission.
- 3.3 We will create a research fellowship programme that attracts scholars from around the world to work with the National Library's collections.





# 4

## Supporting learning

We will ensure our collections and services make an important contribution to the education, learning and advancement of our citizens and the success of our nation.

- 4.1 We will improve equality of opportunity by seeking to remove all barriers which prevent people accessing our collections and services.
- 4.2 We will ensure that activity which supports economic growth and wealth creation is threaded through our work.
- 4.3 We will tailor content for targeted groups in support of the curriculum, lifelong learning and continuous professional development.
- 4.4 We will build on our existing services for the business community.

# 5

## Inspiring engagement

We will design and deliver public engagement programmes that will educate, entertain and inspire the communities of Scotland.

- 5.1 We will promote engagement with the Library and extend our reach across Scotland and internationally.
- 5.2 We will increase the number and diversity of people who know about or use our services.
- 5.3 We will engage with our users and audiences as partners, collaborators, and supporters, seeking opportunities for them to reuse our content and participate via social media and crowdsourcing. We will be a place of researching, making, and creating.
- 5.4 We will focus on increasing engagement and opportunity among young people.

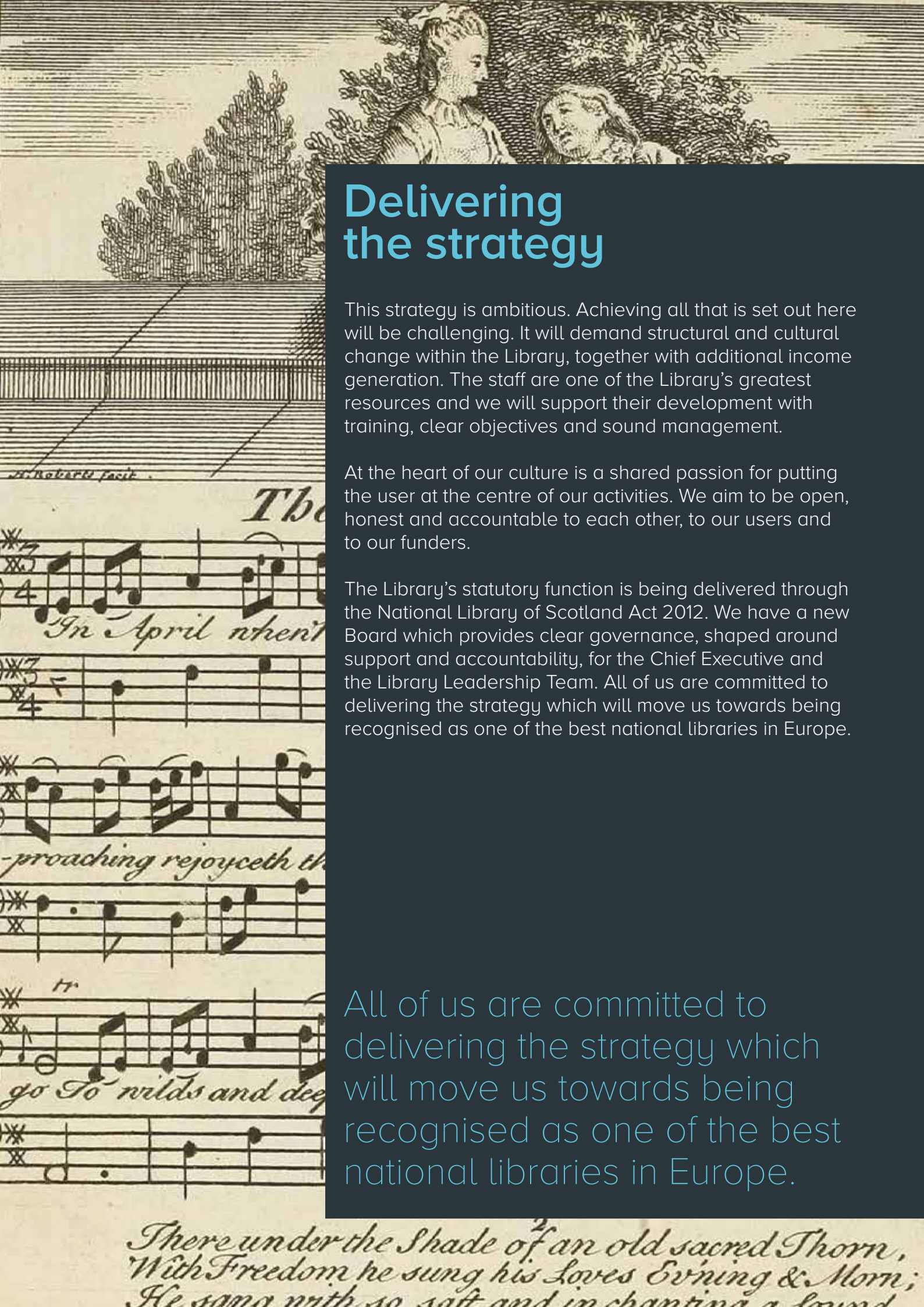
# 6

## Reaching out

We will develop the National Library as an exciting and memorable destination for both onsite and online visitors.

- 6.1 We will extend our online presence to match the scale and depth of our collections and activity, offering an end-to-end suite of services, simple to find, easy to use.
- 6.2 We will improve and extend the Library's estate in Edinburgh to provide high standard public facilities.
- 6.3 We will strengthen our presence in the west of Scotland and progressively develop the Kelvin Hall partnership in Glasgow.
- 6.4 We will explore opportunities to establish our physical presence in other parts of Scotland.





## Delivering the strategy

This strategy is ambitious. Achieving all that is set out here will be challenging. It will demand structural and cultural change within the Library, together with additional income generation. The staff are one of the Library's greatest resources and we will support their development with training, clear objectives and sound management.

At the heart of our culture is a shared passion for putting the user at the centre of our activities. We aim to be open, honest and accountable to each other, to our users and to our funders.

The Library's statutory function is being delivered through the National Library of Scotland Act 2012. We have a new Board which provides clear governance, shaped around support and accountability, for the Chief Executive and the Library Leadership Team. All of us are committed to delivering the strategy which will move us towards being recognised as one of the best national libraries in Europe.

All of us are committed to delivering the strategy which will move us towards being recognised as one of the best national libraries in Europe.

*There under the Shade of an old sacred Thorn,  
With Freedom he sung his Loves Evening & Morn;  
He sang with so soft and in chanting a sound*





# Enablers

## People

We will train and develop our staff, allowing us to establish multi-professional teams of highly motivated and skilled people, driven to succeed and with a clear sense of how they contribute to the Library's strategic priorities.

## Technology

We will invest in technology, services and training that are robust, scalable, efficient, and resilient.

## Estate

We will pursue an estate plan that expands public spaces, secures the collections and optimises the use of all storage.

## Leadership and collaboration

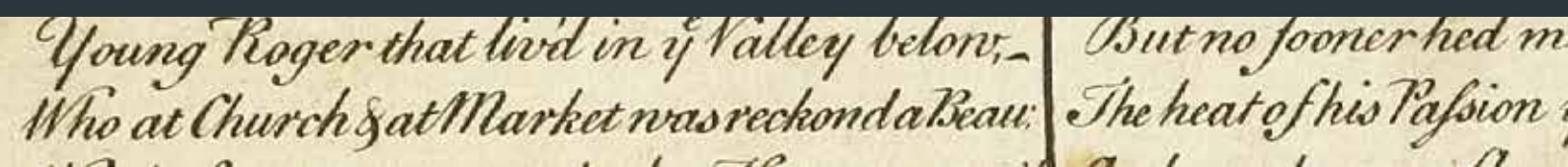
We will be a leader and a collaborator with the aim of advancing our mission and supporting Scotland's libraries and archives in the pursuit of excellence in research, learning and preservation. We will examine the viability of a library partnership network.

## Finance

We will develop multiple income streams to help us deliver our strategic priorities. Government funding (grant-in-aid) will provide the bedrock of the Library's finance, but we resolve to pursue income streams from other sources.

## Continuous improvement

We will be constantly driving change and continuous improvement; encouraging risk-taking, where appropriate, and developing new ways of doing, delivering and partnering. We will measure our performance against an agreed scheme of metrics.





# How we support a successful Scotland

These are some of the many ways we help to meet the national outcomes agreed by the Scottish Government:

## “We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.”

- ✓ The National Library of Scotland is widely acknowledged as the premier library for many of Scotland’s research communities.
- ✓ We link with Scottish universities, colleges and schools on innovative research projects.
- ✓ We increasingly attract people of all ages from all parts of Scotland with a broad range of educative material.
- ✓ We collect everything that is published in Scotland as comprehensively as possible.
- ✓ People from all parts of Scotland make more use of our collections: use of online materials is increasing year on year.

## “We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe.”

- ✓ We provide a range of support to business users.
- ✓ Our Scottish Business Information Service offers registered users free access to market research reports, business databases, international directories, and business and trade journals.

## “We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.”

- ✓ By supporting the knowledge economy, we contribute to a modern, successful Scotland.
- ✓ We seek to build on the current services we provide for Scottish business.
- ✓ By supporting learners of all ages, we help them develop in positive, productive ways.
- ✓ We provide work experience and volunteer opportunities.

## “Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.”

- ✓ We contribute to and create new innovative resources for use in schools including ‘Scotland on Screen’ and the Library’s ‘Learning Zone’.
- ✓ We link with Scottish universities, colleges and schools on innovative research projects.
- ✓ All our educational resources link to the Curriculum of Excellence and are promoted to schools across Scotland.





## “We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.”

We contribute to this outcome by:

- ✓ having an active outreach programme that works with schools and communities across Scotland;
- ✓ developing our services for young people;
- ✓ providing free access to all our collections both online and onsite; and
- ✓ supporting people in using the Library.

## “We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.”

- ✓ We have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 43% from 2008-09 baseline levels.
- ✓ Energy consumption has been reduced by 40%.
- ✓ Targets have been exceeded for the amount of waste that is recycled.
- ✓ We work internationally to set best practice for sustainable collection storage.

## “We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.”

- ✓ Our collections enhance Scotland’s international reputation for the quality of its literary, scientific and cultural heritage.
- ✓ By collecting and recording the knowledge of Scotland we preserve the memory bank of the nation.
- ✓ We support research into family history, helping many people trace their Scottish roots.
- ✓ Our exhibitions attract many foreign visitors and add to their understanding of Scottish identity.
- ✓ We have developed a guide to the Scots language for schools based on the character of Oor Wullie.
- ✓ Our catalogue can be searched in Gaelic as part of our commitment to support the language.
- ✓ We reflect the diversity of the Scottish population through our collections.

## “Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people’s needs.”

- ✓ We have made efficiency savings of 22% in our running costs since 2008 without reducing services to users.
- ✓ We have created an attractive visitor centre which an increasingly large and diverse range of people are now visiting.
- ✓ We have more users who report high levels of satisfaction with our services.
- ✓ We generate income independently and raise funds.
- ✓ Our staff are skilled and motivated.
- ✓ We collaborate with and support the work of universities, other cultural institutions, the education sector and business.
- ✓ We have produced a Partnership Framework to support collaborative working.
- ✓ We conduct regular surveys to ensure we are meeting the needs of our users.



**Item shown on front cover:**

A folio from the Iona Psalter (National Library of Scotland MS. 10000) shown on an I-Pad.  
Probably written between 1180 and 1220.

**Image credits:**

With thanks to Gareth Easton, Maverick Photography, Chris Scott and Sam Wood.

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