

National Library of Scotland

Library Plan 2021-22



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Notes on cover image

Screenshot from a student project exploring Encyclopaedia Britannica in Minecraft, as part of a course teaching data visualisation at the University of Edinburgh; full details and video here: <https://data.nls.uk/projects/data-visualisation-student-projects/>

Section 1: Introduction to the Library Plan

About the National Library of Scotland

The National Library of Scotland is a charitable non-departmental public body primarily funded by the Scottish Government. It 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. It is the largest library in Scotland, with over 29 million items and is among the half dozen largest libraries in the British Isles. It has extensive and varied collections of printed material (maps, music, newspapers, magazines as well as books) and extensive manuscript and archive collections. Our digital collections are growing every year, particularly through electronic legal deposit and our curation of national moving image and sound collections. Since 1710 the Library has had the right, under successive Copyright Acts, to acquire all publications issued in the United Kingdom, and it now seeks to obtain, through legal deposit, books, magazines and other publications that are within the scope of the Library's Collection Development Policy.

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 is as significant as the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries. While the book or printed material will be at the heart of the collections, libraries, like many other sectors, are seizing the opportunity presented by digital technology. This is a major theme of the Library's new strategy.

Reaching People: Library Strategy, 2020-2025

Over the past year the Library has developed and consulted upon a new strategy for the period 2020-2025. In 2015, the National Library of Scotland launched 'The Way Forward: Library Strategy, 2015-2020' as the first of two five-year strategies to take the Library to its centenary in 2025. 'Reaching People: Library Strategy, 2020-2025' is the second strategy, concluding in the year the Library celebrates its 100th anniversary.

There are strong elements of continuity between the two. This is clearest in our continued focus on safeguarding collections and improving access to them. These two areas were strongly supported in our public consultations and link directly to our statutory function as Scotland's legal deposit library.

However, there are important differences between them. The first five years of our 10-year journey to our centenary in 2025 focused on building infrastructure, capacity and resilience, while growing partnerships, reputation and income. The second period concentrates on sharing information, knowledge and experiences with a diverse audience in Scotland and around the globe.

It also has a greater explicit commitment to ensuring that equality and inclusion underpins our work for the next five years and beyond. Work has already started on a new Equalities and Inclusion Plan and the actions arising from this are threaded through the Library Plan.

As part of the new Strategy we agreed five priorities. These were as follows.

- Strategic Priority 1: **Safeguarding collections** - We are the guardian of the published and recorded memory of Scotland for current and future generations.
- Strategic Priority 2: **Improving access** - We make it easier for people to access the collections.
- Strategic Priority 3: **Engaging audiences** - We put audiences at the heart of everything we do and offer a rich variety of ways for people to participate and engage with their heritage.
- Strategic Priority 4: **Supporting learning, research and discovery** - We encourage and support research, learning and discovery.
- Strategic Priority 5: **Developing the organisation** - We will continue to be a great organisation to work for and with, developing new ways of doing, delivering and partnering.

The Plan for the year is structured around these five priorities.

Purchases will remain largely unchanged. The base budget for Collection Purchases comprises the grant allocated by the Scottish Government (£1000k) plus the amounts generated from Endowment Funds (£18k).

Note Reference 11 – Trust Funds/Externally Funded

These budgets are variable each year as they depend upon project funding. The change across both these unit budgets reflect either the end (Externally Funded) or the start (Trust Funds) of projects.

Note Reference 12 – Finance

The increase here results from a number of changes. These include increases in the costs of the Apprentice levy, the transfer of budget from another part of the Library until it is reallocated and the funding to allow the next tranche of interns to be included.

Scenario Planning & Sensitivity Analysis - Prospects beyond 2021/22

The ability of the Library to deliver on the strategy over this period is based upon having a clear understanding of its medium and long term financial prospects.

With this in mind, as part of our budget planning, we also prepare outline budgets i.e. for the period 2022/23 and 2023/24. These budgets are designed around a number of key assumptions which allows us to undertake a degree of scenario planning/stress testing to determine the sensitivity to the risks faced. The advent of COVID has highlighted how important it is to 'stress test' these assumptions.

A number of scenarios are possible. From these it is clear that the Library, like all publicly funded organisations, faces significant financial challenges going forward. The stress testing indicates that the Library is most vulnerable to:

- Reductions in Scottish Government funding – particularly any reductions received without significant prior warning; and
- Unfunded changes to the Scottish Governments Pay Policy and general pay pressures e.g. pension increases.

It is useful to consider three general scenarios – Positive/Neutral/Negative. These are indicated below along with the features of each.

Scenario	Features	Potential 2022/23 Position (£k)	Potential 2023/24 Position (£k)	Covered by Reserves?
Positive	SG Grant Revenue Funding Increase Positive income generation Ongoing pay restraint	Surplus of £45k	Deficit of £85K	√
Neutral	SG Grant Revenue Funding Fixed Ongoing pay restraint	Deficit of £55K	Deficit of £197K	√
Negative	SG Grant Revenue Funding Decrease Limited income generation Pay & cost pressures require recognition	Deficit of £220K	Deficit of £450K	X

It is important to note that there has not been a significant difference in the outcomes when compared to previous exercises. It is also important to note that both 'Neutral' and 'Negative' scenarios indicate substantial and increasing deficits. As such the Library continues to identify compensating savings and may need to speed implementation of these should the circumstances require.

Delivering funding for the strategy

As highlighted above, the Board has approved that a new Library strategy for the period 2020-2025.

Part of the role of financial management is to ensure that the resources are available to support the Library's strategic ambitions. The Library will continue to focus on the following:

- External Funding – one of the features of the past number of years has been the success in attracting external funding into the Library. We will be working to ensure that this continues in 2021/22 and beyond.
- Fundraising – targets will be set for 2021/22 fundraising and the achievement of these will be crucial in supporting significant elements of the strategy. An updated Development/Fundraising Plan is being developed for 2021/22.
- Re-purposing – where we can, we will be re-purposing existing resources to focus on the Library's strategic aims.
- Scottish Government – for 2021/22 the Scottish Government has made significant contributions to the Library's new strategy. Funding for the Collections Purchase Fund (CPF) will continue at current levels and the Library has continued to receive funding for much needed IT / Digital investment.

In overall terms, by effectively working together with partners such as the NLS Foundation and by delivering the required change programme, we are confident that this challenge can be managed and that over the period the Library will make good progress in delivering its strategic goals within a sustainable and balanced budget.

Risk Management

In setting a budget, the Library must take into account the risks that may impact upon successfully delivering the financial plan. These are currently considered to be the following;

- Reduction in Grant in Aid income for whatever reason e.g. general public spending restraint and/or Scottish Government prioritization changes.
- COVID-19 – the ongoing disruption that the virus causes across organisations and society more generally.
- Affordability of future Scottish Government pay policies – especially in relation to the overall Grant in Aid funding settlement.
- Deferred Maintenance, with particular reference to items that have a collections protection element.
- The ability to generate sufficient efficiencies to match the real terms reduction in Grant in Aid funding; and
- Ongoing management of running a HLF grant programme.

Many of these have been incorporated into the scenario planning outlined above.

The Library also attempts to manage risk by budgeting prudently and, when it can, setting aside appropriate reserves. It also has a risk management process which operates at the strategic, corporate and departmental levels. This process will be used to manage those risks that arise in managing a budget and finances over the coming years.

Section 5: Capital Projects & Investment

Details of the principal capital projects the Library will be involved in over 2021/22 have been detailed in Page 28 above. These fall into two broad categories:

- Capital Maintenance – work which will be undertaken as part of the Library's annual and ongoing capital maintenance programme. The annual budget for 2021/22 is £575k and will be supplemented by other Estates budgets and capital reserves when these are available.
- Digital Road Map – work that is part of the Digital Road map. For 2021/22 the budget is £175k and will be supplemented by other elements of the Digital budget and capital reserves when these are available.

Capital funding largely derives from the Scottish Government and at the beginning of February they announced the results of the most recent Capital Spending Review which outlines capital allocations for the next five years.

The results for the Library were positive with the main headlines are as follows

- Capital Purchases / Collections Purchase Fund continues at £1 million for the five years.
- The Library receives funding for Collections Protection work (Sprinklers / Smoke Extract) from 2022/23 for three years. The total grant is £4.3 million.
- The capital funding for Digital Infrastructure (IT) and Capital Maintenance increases from 2023/24. By the end of the period the Capital Maintenance grant is £1.1 million annually.

In overall terms, existing funding is continued and in some areas enhanced. It confirms funding for the Collections Protection work and should allow the Library to make some significant inroads into backlog maintenance works etc.

The table below has the indicative capital allocations up to 2025/26.

Description	2020/21 (£000s)	2021/22 (£000s)	2022/23 (£000s)	2023/24 (£000s)	2024/25 (£000s)	2025/26 (£000s)
Purchase Grant	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
IT Investment	275	275	275	300	300	400
Maintenance & Repair	475	475	475	700	700	1,100
Collections Protection	0	0	500	1,900	1,900	0
	16,380	16,630	17,260	19,040	19,170	17,900

Capital Maintenance

During 2019 the Library completed an update to its Property Asset Management Plan (PAM). The aim of the PAM is to ensure that property assets are maintained and developed in such a way to best support the Library's key business goals and objectives.

The Plan covers the period up to 2021, it analyses the current position and also identifies the areas where the Library needs to concentrate its efforts over the next three years. These can be summarized as follows:

- There will be a focus on tackling deferred maintenance.
- Effective management of the estate is heavily dependent on data capture, management and reporting. Enhancements are required across many areas of Estates to develop better and more efficient asset management, environmental condition monitoring and sustainability reporting.
- Improvements to the estate, specifically George IV Bridge, are overdue. A Feasibility Study on the possible redevelopment of the George IV Bridge site was completed in 2020 and a Task & Finish Group has now been set up to identify work that could be carried out on a scale that is affordable and deliverable over the life of the new 2020-2025 Strategy.

Over the coming year the capital budget will focus on the second and third bullet points. The Estates team will support the work of the George IV Bridge Task & Finish group.

There will be the investment in the following:

- At the Causewayside site to help upgrade the Air Handling Units and to prevent water ingress into the lower levels of the building.
- On Sustainability / Climate Change measures including replacing diesel vans with electrically powered models and on the installation of air source heat pumps.
- Refurbishment of the security suite at the George IV Bridge building. This follows on from the redevelopment of the security suite at Causewayside in 2019 and means that there will be resilience across the estate should one of the security suites become unavailable.
- Extend the open protocol platform for the building management information systems.
- Work to allow the mass digitisation project with a third party to progress.

Digital Road Map

During 2021/22 investment will be made in additions to digital storage to match the growth in the collections.

Section 6: How we support a successful Scotland

The preparation of the Library Plan has been informed by the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF).

The [National Performance Framework](#) was relaunched in 2018 and sets eleven national outcomes that it wants to achieve. These outcomes are designed to support delivery of the Scottish Government's Purpose, which is:

To focus on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increased wellbeing and sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Although our work contributes to some extent to all of these outcomes, the Library is most closely aligned to five and we will monitor our performance against these. The table below shows how the Library's outcomes match to the Scottish Government's national outcomes.

Scottish Government National Outcomes					
National Library of Scotland Outcomes	We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely.	We are well educated, skilled and more able to contribute to society.	We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy.	We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally.	We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.
We are the guardian of the published and recorded memory of Scotland for current and future generations.					
We make it easier for people to access the collections.					
We put audiences at the heart of everything we do and offer a rich variety of ways for people to participate and engage with their heritage.					
We encourage and support research, learning and discovery.					
We will continue to be a great organisation to work for and with, developing new ways of doing, delivering and partnering.					

We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely.

- Our collections help to enhance Scotland's international reputation for the quality of its literary, scientific and cultural heritage, and for treasuring this heritage.
- The Library has the largest collection of Scottish Gaelic material in the world.
- Research into family history is supported, helping many people trace their Scottish family background.
- Our exhibitions attract many foreign visitors and add to their understanding of Scottish identity.
- Over 48% of all users who responded to the last Audience Survey said that the Library helped them better understand Scotland's culture and history.
- We continue to host the Scots Scribe residency and promote the Scots language.

We are well educated, skilled and more able to contribute to society.

- The National Library of Scotland is widely acknowledged as the premier library for many of Scotland's research communities.
- We contribute to and create innovative resources for use in schools including 'Scotland on Screen' and the 'National Library Learning Zone'.
- We link with Scottish universities, colleges and schools on innovative research projects.
- Over 85% of higher education students who completed the last Audience Survey said that the Library helped advance their education.
- By supporting the knowledge economy, we contribute to a modern, successful Scotland.

We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy.

- Our collection of business information resources is one of the largest collections of company and market data in the United Kingdom, and is a key potential resource for Scotland's business community.
- Over 20% of business users and independent researchers who completed the last Audience Survey said that using the National Library of Scotland had helped them develop their business.
- We are the only National Library in the United Kingdom that provides direct access to an extensive range of market research reports, company and news data and guides to starting and running a business directly via the web, free of charge, to registered users.
- We can deal with business enquiries in person, by phone or email or via our Library online chat service.
- We have worked with other collaborators to develop the Business & Intellectual Property Centre in Glasgow.

We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally.

- We provide free access to all our collections both online and onsite.
- We continue to seek community benefits through our procurement activities. This includes fair work practices such as the Living Wage.
- We provide work experience and volunteer opportunities.
- More than one in nine of our users who completed the last Audience Survey said that using the National Library of Scotland had helped them improve their career prospects/employment opportunities.
- We have an active outreach programme that works with schools, local community projects and community libraries across Scotland.
- All our educational resources link to the Curriculum for Excellence and are promoted to schools across Scotland.

We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.

- We have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by over 69% from 2008-09 baseline levels.
- Energy consumption has been reduced by 51%.
- There has been a decrease in total waste arisings of almost 79% when compared against 2008-09 levels.
- Library transport and business travel miles dropped by a further 10% during 2019-20.