



Department of  
**Culture, Arts  
and Leisure**

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# **Archives Policy for Northern Ireland Consultation Document**

**and Marketing Strategy  
for the Public Record  
Office of Northern  
Ireland**

**and Equality Impact  
Assessment**

November 2004



Department of  
**Culture, Arts  
and Leisure**

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# **Archives Policy for Northern Ireland**

**Consultation Document  
and  
Equality Impact Assessment**



### Contents

Introduction	2
Foreword	3
Executive Summary (Recommendations and Action Plan)	5
Section 1: A Treasure House of Information and Knowledge	10
Section 2: Guiding Principles	13
Section 3: Fast Forward to a Better Informed Future	15
Section 4: Reaching Out to Engage the Community	18
Section 5: Making Archives Easier to Use	22
Section 6: Raising the Profile	25
Section 7: Protecting the Past for Future Use	27
Section 8: Managing the Records	29
Appendix 1: Marketing Strategy for the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland	33
Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment	45
Appendix 3: Legislation proposals	57

### Introduction

The Department is interested in your views on the proposals in the Archives Policy for Northern Ireland Consultation Document, on the Marketing Strategy for the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and on the Equality Impact Assessment.

The Archives Policy for Northern Ireland Consultation Document is a shortened version of the full Archives Policy for Northern Ireland Consultation Document. If you want to read the full version it is available on the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure website.

Your responses should be returned to the Response Co-ordinator at the address below no later than 4.00pm on Monday 31 January 2005.

All responses may be made available to the public on request or to the Northern Ireland Assembly. If you wish your response to be treated as confidential please indicate this and this will generally be respected unless it is considered that public interest must take precedence, in which case you will be contacted by the Department before disclosure.

Should you require these documents in an accessible format such as braille, audio - tape or large print please contact the Response Co-ordinator (see below).

Robert Heyburn  
Response Co-ordinator  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure  
2nd Floor  
Interpoint  
20-24 York Street  
Belfast BT15 1AQ  
E-mail: Robert.Heyburn@dcalni.gov.uk  
Telephone: 028 9025 8850  
Fax: 028 9025 8883  
Text phone: 028 9052 7668

## **Foreword By Angela Smith MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary Of State In Northern Ireland**

### **A Rich Community Legacy to be Protected**

Archives are an important element in our culture, our community and personal identity. They are an essential component in Northern Ireland's public and corporate history. There is therefore a duty upon us all to ensure that this vital asset is better cared for, better understood and more widely used.

The purpose of this consultation document, which is based on the Department's full Report 'Archives Policy for Northern Ireland', is to enable as many people as possible to consider the new policy proposals. To achieve this, this document details what we need to do as a community to ensure that records are kept and managed to the highest standards possible and that they meet the needs of a diverse range of users.

One of the strategic goals in the first 'Corporate Strategy of the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure' is to preserve and make available to the widest possible audience our cultural and information resources, an integral part of our Cultural Capital - with a supporting objective to develop further and enhance their quality and range.

In furtherance of these objectives the Department identified, among other tasks, the need for a wide-ranging review of the archive services in Northern Ireland. The review was managed by the Department's Research Team in Policy, Evaluation and Research Unit and supported by a Planning Group made up of stakeholders, users and others interested in archives.

The extensive consultation included a series of working groups, surveys, consultations with focus groups and a special conference that was facilitated by the Sustainable Northern Ireland Partnership and was attended by a cross-section of people with an interest in archives within Northern Ireland, elsewhere in the United Kingdom and in the Republic of Ireland.

I wish to express my gratitude to all those bodies and individuals who contributed their time and ideas to a most comprehensive process that has produced this important report.

I am confident that this new approach will help to ensure greater efficiency in the preservation and development of archives as a unique community asset and enhance access for people throughout Northern Ireland.

Reponses to this document will help inform the final policy document.

**Angela Smith MP**

# Executive Summary

## Recommendations: An Action Plan

### 1. Fast Forward to a better Informed Future Acquiring and Accessing Archives

- 1.1. PRONI should be the place where all public archives are kept and the main place of deposit for private archives. It should have the authority to continue to receive private archives. This should be examined as part of the review of the Public Records Act (NI) 1923.
- 1.2. Access to the material held in PRONI should be improved, particularly for people in rural communities, by more flexible loan arrangements, making best use of computer technology, developing local partnerships and working with communities to create their own archives.
- 1.3. Codes of conduct and ethics should be adopted by museums and libraries for which DCAL is responsible.

*(See Section 3 of Archives Policy Consultation Document)*

### 2. Reaching Out To Engage The Community Opening the Doors to the Public

***PRONI (in partnership with others where appropriate and relevant) should:***

- 2.1. Take a leading role in the development of an education and learning policy on archives. A full-time Archive Education Officer for PRONI should be appointed to work with schools and to develop learning resources. The work of the Education Officer would be enhanced by setting up an Education Centre.
- 2.2. Appoint a Community Outreach Officer to attract more users from disadvantaged urban centres and from rural areas.
- 2.3. Develop a multi-media educational and outreach website to reach more people.

- 2.4. Contribute to the development of a cultural website that would include archives.
- 2.5. Contribute to more radio and television history programmes.
- 2.6. Promote academic and cultural tourism through partnerships with universities, further education colleges and other institutions, and with universities overseas through undergraduate, postgraduate and lecture programmes; and attract genealogical organisations here and elsewhere to use the archives.

*(See Section 4 of Archives Policy Consultation Document)*

### **3. Making Archives Easier to use**

***PRONI (in partnership with others where appropriate and relevant) should:***

- 3.1. Move to a new building with easier access for the public, particularly those with disabilities.
- 3.2. Set up a Family Records Centre, with the General Register Office and in partnership with others, to meet the needs of local and overseas users, particularly those interested in genealogy.
- 3.3. Introduce more flexible opening hours.
- 3.4. Catalogue all archives and convert these to an electronic format that would enable them to be viewed by computer from other locations.
- 3.5. Devise a co-ordinated programme for microfilming and digitising selected archives which might include cross-border projects.
- 3.6. Develop electronic delivery of services to customers so that, for example, they could receive copies of documents by e-mail.
- 3.7. Identify the opportunities for obtaining income that could then be reinvested to further enhance customer services.

***The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure should:***

- 3.8. Support a website to allow users to search across the catalogues and electronic resources of archives, museums and libraries in Northern Ireland.
- 3.9. Ensure that institutions holding archives adopt national and international standards and best practice in cataloguing, digitisation and microfilming in order to improve access.

***The General Register Office should:***

- 3.10. Open the older registers of births, marriages and deaths to all by computer technology. While microfilm copies of any such records should be available free, access to computer on-line information is likely to incur a charge.

*(See Section 5 of Archives Policy Consultation Document)*

## **4. Raising the Profile – Creating Greater Community Awareness**

***PRONI should:***

- 4.1. Appoint a Communications Officer to promote archives by liaising with the press and media, as well as the general public, and those in relevant departments of government.
- 4.2. Make more use of the media - TV, radio and print to bring archives to the attention of a wider audience.
- 4.3. Encourage greater use of archives by marketing campaigns aimed at specific groups, including non-users (especially young people, women and the ethnic minorities) – *see the Marketing Strategy for further details*; raise awareness of archives and how they can be used to groups such as the retired community, academics, local historians, etc by providing them with information on archive services and offering an events programme of workshops, lectures and exhibitions using venues within and outside of PRONI.
- 4.4. Enhance Internet access by making catalogues and selected archives available electronically.

- 4.5. Ensure that any new archive building is one that will attract new audiences and that reflects what PRONI does to best advantage.
- 4.6. Generate more cash from grants and sponsorship to fund projects that will help people enjoy and use archives.

*(See Section 6 of Archives Policy Consultation Document)*

### **5. Protecting The Past For Future Use**

- 5.1 A Working Group should be set up to consider how a 'Northern Ireland Preservation Partnership' could be established, funded (including income generation), governed and structured.
- 5.2 Modern storage facilities should be provided for PRONI that meet BS 5454: 2000 standards.

***PRONI and Public Authorities should:***

- 5.3 Develop a digital preservation strategy for records created in digital form and for those that have been transferred from traditional formats (paper, parchment) into digital form.

*(See Section 7 of Archives Policy Consultation Document)*

### **6. Managing the Records**

- 6.1 The Public Records Act (NI) 1923 and related legislation should be re-examined and updated.
- 6.2 The management of public authority records should be audited.
- 6.3 PRONI's records management service to public authorities should be maintained and strengthened.
- 6.4 A detailed standard for records management should be available and regularly updated for all public authorities.
- 6.5 PRONI should provide written advice and guidance on the retention of private archives and should have the authority to charge where appropriate.
- 6.6 The Information Managers Forum should be re-structured

to improve co-ordination and ensure better communication between public authorities in the management of records.

- 6.7 The training needs of record managers in public authorities should be carried out and a training programme devised in which PRONI would have a role.
- 6.8 All public authorities should adhere to the guidelines laid down in the Northern Ireland Records Management Standard (NIRMS), and the Code of Practice on the Management of Records under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 6.9 Dedicated staff resources must be allocated to records management by public authorities.
- 6.10 Best practice guidance on managing electronic records created by public authorities should be set and communicated to everyone.

*(See Section 8 of Archives Policy Consultation Document)*

## **7. A New Way of Working**

- 7.1. A Museums, Archives and Libraries Forum should be formed of curators as well as users and owners of archives to co-ordinate policy and provide leadership.
- 7.2. Adoption of the principles as outlined in Section 2.
- 7.3. Research the future use of volunteers who could contribute to improving access to archives.

## Section 1

### A Treasure House of Information and Knowledge

- 1.1 Archives form the primary record of our past and present - the personal, corporate and public memory of communities throughout Northern Ireland. As such, archives are a treasure house of information and knowledge about Northern Ireland. However, they are not only of value in studying the past but are also relevant to people's lives today.

Archives are used by people seeking information on rights of way, wanting proof of divorce, searching for their birth parents, wanting to know the circumstances surrounding the death of a relative or in tracing family history.

They are a unique community resource that informs, inspires and supports all levels of learning.

### What is an Archive?

- 1.2 An archive can be the organisation that selects and keeps records safely and then enables them to be used by the public. It can also be the actual building where the records are kept.

In this document the word 'archives' means the records created by an individual, organisation or business which have been chosen to keep permanently.

Archives are therefore found anywhere where any decision or action has been recorded by organisations and individuals and may be:

- a single document or a large number of related documents;
- photographs;
- maps and plans;
- files kept by organisations;
- sound and film; and
- digital records.

They do not have to be old. Some documents today may be worth saving because they are records of current decisions or activities of importance to individuals, organisations or the wider community.

### Why Archives are important

- 1.3 Archives tell the story of our past, explain the present and help guide future actions. They are essential for good government, for upholding the legal and moral rights of the citizen, and for an understanding of the past and the present.

An archives policy must be based, therefore on:

- the protection of records; and
- ease of use by the community

### Northern Ireland's Archive

- 1.4 The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) is the main holder of archives within Northern Ireland - from government as well as from many private organisations and individuals. It is, in effect, a 'one-stop shop' for local archives.

### Why Change is Necessary

- 1.5 Change is necessary for a variety of reasons:

#### ***Technology***

Computers and the Internet are changing the needs of society rapidly and the way archives are used.

#### ***Customer Focus***

Government now requires services to be customer-focused and to reach all sections of society. Customers are also requiring more sophisticated services including greater and easier access to all types of information.

#### ***Duplication***

Northern Ireland has more information and cultural bodies than ever before. All of these could potentially acquire archives resulting in the collections possibly being placed at risk through inadequate storage, the use of inappropriate cataloguing methods and from finance and staff being too thinly spread.

### **A New Approach**

1.6 The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, therefore, has set out a new approach to:

- develop new archive legislation;
- shape the future delivery of an archive service and a way to do this;
- ensure that all archives are chosen, protected and managed to the highest professional standards;
- make people more aware of the value of archives;
- develop services that will encourage more people to use them; and
- form partnerships that will support this approach.

## Section 2

### Guiding Principles

2.1 The consultation process led to the following set of principles on archives:

- (1) A civilised society, concerned to uphold the rights of its citizens, to encourage efficient administration and to ensure that its history is accessible to all, should make provision for its archives to be preserved and made available for consultation.
- (2) There should be comprehensive, consistent and up-to-date legislation affecting the management of records and archives.<sup>1</sup>
- (3) There should be adequate funding of archive services in Northern Ireland to meet recognised national and international standards and to ensure that they are effectively exploited as a resource for everyone.
- (4) There should be machinery for co-ordinating policy in respect of archival issues in Northern Ireland across the museum, library and archive domain.
- (5) Public authorities which create records should be required, and private bodies and individuals should be persuaded, to develop effective records management in accordance with the relevant legislative requirements and agreed professional standards to ensure the informed selection and preservation of archival records including those in electronic format.
- (6) Archives should be kept to standards that offer the highest possible degree of protection against ageing and disasters. Archive services should aim to provide accommodation for the preservation and consultation of archives which broadly conforms to national standards and guidance. They should have access to professional conservation services and have a preservation policy that incorporates an up-to-date disaster plan.

<sup>1</sup> See 'New Archive Legislation' at Appendix 3

- (7) Those having responsibility for archives should have the appropriate skills for this work and the opportunities to develop and learn new skills. Where it is not possible to appoint professionally qualified archivists, records managers or conservators, for whatever reason, then the organisation keeping archives must have access to professional advice and must actively seek that advice.
- (8) There should as far as possible be unrestricted right of access to all archives, preservation, legal requirements and continuing confidentiality permitting.

## Section 3

### Fast Forward to a Better Informed Future

#### Acquiring and Accessing Archives

##### Experience in Great Britain

- 3.1 A complex and piecemeal archive system exists in Great Britain. Outside the national archive institutions, archives (textual, graphic, sound and film, etc) are cared for in over 2,000 buildings.

This results in researchers having to visit many different centres to find the material they want. The protection of archives is threatened because many of the institutions are too small to afford in-house conservation units or specialist ICT software. They also have major problems in providing facilities for storage and access and have difficulty finding time for staff training.

There is now a unique opportunity to prevent this happening in Northern Ireland and to plan a long-term strategy to save Northern Ireland's archives for present and future generations as efficiently and effectively as possible. After all, Northern Ireland is a relatively compact geographical area with a population of just 1.7 million so it makes sense to have an integrated archive service.

##### Access for Local Communities

- 3.2 The Internet and other technologies have meant that keeping archives in local communities is no longer as important. Central services can now be made available locally by computer. This may be more cost-effective than setting up local archive centres or expecting museums and libraries to care for archives.

Local networks, of course, can help raise awareness of archives and enable more people to use and value them but may mean records and finance being too thinly spread for effective protection.

## Benefits of an Integrated Approach

3.3 The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) aims to protect Northern Ireland's heritage, the materials and records that form part of our cultural capital. Archives must be managed efficiently.

To achieve this, an integrated approach in which PRONI is the main centre for both public and private archives is needed, because:

- it has a well-established position as a centre of expertise in this field
- it is the most efficient way of managing the archival heritage both in terms of archival storage and access, especially the additional costs arising from the implementation of new Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Environmental Information Regulations
- PRONI already has substantial funding for the preservation of archives so it would be wasteful and uneconomic to have local archive centres for what is unique material that requires specialised storage and handling.

Libraries, museums and heritage centres, therefore, should only accept private archives as a last resort after consultation with PRONI and the owners of the collections.

To ensure the protection of specialist archives such as audiovisual archives, DCAL will determine how best to ensure that this vital part of our heritage is preserved and is easily used and will explore the possibility of setting up a Northern Ireland Film and Sound Archive.

To carry out the wider role and to ensure greater access for the rural community in particular, PRONI will need:

- sufficient resources to provide Internet access to catalogues and archives;
- more flexible arrangements for the loan of archives for exhibitions;
- local partnerships with district councils, libraries and others to provide Internet access to archives; and

- to work with communities to create their own archives and use these in creative and relevant ways.

How PRONI obtains archives from individuals and bodies and enables these to be used, and its proposed greater role, will be examined as part of the review of the Public Records Act (NI) 1923 and included in new legislation.

Codes of conduct and ethics in collecting archives by PRONI and other bodies for which DCAL is responsible should be adopted to ensure consistent standards.

### **Public Records**

- 3.4 PRONI should continue to be the sole body to accept and hold public records. Any new legislation should ensure that management of public records should be the same throughout central and local government and non-departmental public bodies.

### **Private Archives**

- 3.5 Owners of private archives can choose to deposit them wherever they wish. Most of the present holders of private archives are public sector heritage bodies in which case DCAL and other Departments have a policy role. However, some private archives are also still held by the bodies that created them, in which case departmental involvement is limited when it comes to managing these archives.

## Section 4

### Reaching Out to Engage the Community

#### Opening the Doors to the Public

- 4.1 Archives have a role to play in education, to those pursuing family or local history interests and lifelong learning. They are a rich source of information and understanding for all such groups. Government also wishes to see the archives contributing substantially to the National Grid for Learning and other information networks.

The Museums, Archives and Libraries Council's *Inspiring Learning for All* framework supports this approach and DCAL's draft *Learning Strategy* will also put education and learning at the heart of museums, archives and libraries and other information and cultural bodies.

To achieve this, steps should be taken to:

- find out what existing and potential users want and expect
- build a welcoming environment that supports the needs of many different people
- create a learning culture that responds to users and the wider community.
- recognise that disagreement about history and heritage is central to the problems of Northern Ireland
- build partnerships between PRONI, museums, libraries and education, youth and community groups and others.

#### The Weaknesses

- 4.2 The following weaknesses need to be tackled:

- (1) The lack of a detailed or co-ordinated education, learning and outreach policy on archives.
- (2) The absence of an Archive Education Officer within PRONI as the major holder of archives and a strategy to improve computer access to archives for education and learning.

- (3) The absence of formal PRONI links with educational bodies.

### What Needs to be Done

4.3 This is what should be done to address these weaknesses.

#### ***PRONI as the principal archival institution should:***

Lead in the development of an archives education and learning policy.

Appoint a full-time Archive Education Officer with the main emphasis on schools who would help:

- develop multi-media Internet teaching packages for schools linked to the new Northern Ireland curriculum for schools that could be accessed from PRONI's Learning Zone on its website and on C2K (Classroom 2000);
- explore with the Department of Education the setting up of a seconded teacher scheme that would enable teachers to spend a year in PRONI to prepare material for schools;
- identify joint projects with education officers in museums and with libraries; and
- set up an Education Centre in PRONI.

#### ***Funding will be needed to:***

- set up an Education Centre and appoint a full-time Archive Education Officer with administrative and research staff; and
- create and maintain an educational website.

#### ***Funding Change***

The Department of Education (DE) might be asked to contribute to the initial costs of the project and to support the seconding of selected history teachers to PRONI as part of their training. External funding should be sought to support the projects, e.g., from the educational unit of BBC Online.

Support could also be provided under DCAL's draft Learning Strategy policy that seeks to encourage new ideas in the classroom. This could be a key priority for implementation in time to meet the demands of the new Northern Ireland

Curriculum scheduled from 2004 onwards.

PRONI's proposed new building should include an education centre equipped to meet the educational needs of different groups and for educational programmes, lectures programmes and other public events.

### Reaching More People

4.4 PRONI could create a greater awareness of the importance of archives to the community, particularly in socially deprived urban and rural areas, by measures, including:

(1) ***The appointment of a Community Outreach Officer*** to show how documents could be used for a better understanding of Northern Ireland's history. The officer would:

- run short programmes and talks to increase interest in and understanding of archives
- draw PRONI, libraries and museums together to create 'one-stop shops' for information at local community level. This would open up the archives to communities, enable them to find out how their localities developed and bring them together around a shared inheritance
- work with museums, libraries and the community and private sectors in developing joint programmes and projects.

Funding for projects to reach socially deprived sections of the community could be financed under the government's New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) scheme.

(2) ***Using the Internet***

PRONI should develop a new website of documents, drawings and pictures on popular topics and themes such as the Ulster Plantation, the Great Famine, Women in Northern Ireland or famous individuals from Northern Ireland and to mark important community events. The initial cost of the site could be included under New TSN and individual projects could be supported through external funding.

PRONI should be linked to other websites that could use archive material, such as CultureNI (led by the Linen Hall Library in Belfast and the Nerve Centre in Derry) and the Centre for Migration Studies at the Ulster American Folk Park.

### (3) ***Working with the Media***

Another way to increase awareness of the value of archives would be PRONI working with local television and radio production companies on the type of history programmes that have been developed in Great Britain.

### (4) ***Attracting Academic Researchers***

Studentships at PRONI would enable graduate students to work on archives, to give public lectures and to produce Internet materials for widening public access. These would strengthen links between universities, teacher training institutions and higher and further education colleges.

The National Archives in London and in Dublin and the Manuscript Room in Trinity College Dublin all have archives with matching material in PRONI and so, if projects could be identified based on such material, they might attract cross-border or east-west funding.

### (5) ***Promoting Cultural Tourism***

Measures by PRONI to attract researchers could help to increase academic and cultural visitors. Cultural Tourism could be boosted by PRONI developing partnerships with higher educational and other institutions in Northern Ireland, and with universities; and by working with genealogical organisations. The Belfast Visitors' Centre, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Cultural Desk at the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington D.C. should actively encourage academics to bid to host academic conferences in Northern Ireland.

## Section 5

### Making Archives Easier to Use

- 5.1 More people are now using archives than ever before and for an ever-widening range of personal, practical, legal, commercial and educational purposes.

Furthermore, increased leisure time and more media interest in history have helped to highlight archives, and family and local history in particular. The vast majority of archive users in Northern Ireland are pursuing family history, while local history is the next most popular reason for consulting archives.

The Internet, furthermore, is also changing the way in which users access information and increasing the demand for services. The challenge is how best to satisfy the needs of current users while attracting new audiences so that everyone wishing to use these can afford to do so conveniently.

### The Challenges

- 5.2 The greatest barrier to access is a lack of accurate, precise and up-to-date information about what archives exist and where they are held. Steps have been taken to address this problem. Equally, having access to catalogues and the actual content of archives on the Internet will revolutionise access to archives. PRONI has started converting its catalogues to make them accessible by computer through its eCATNI project. This will in turn contribute to the vision of the Archives Task Force for a new Internet Archives Gateway that will provide one point of access to the catalogues, community archives and the content of archives throughout the United Kingdom. It will also support the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's Knowledge Web whereby the collections of museums, libraries and archives throughout the United Kingdom are computer linked.

Another barrier to access is a lack of standards in cataloguing and in digitisation projects.

Increasing access for the wider community will also require a review of PRONI's opening hours.

Poor or inadequate facilities for viewing archives, particularly by the disabled, deter users. Internet access to PRONI's search services will require more space on-site for computer terminals. Without additional and appropriate accommodation for its public services, PRONI will not be able to take full advantage of ICT to deliver a better service to customers.

Many researchers, including family historians, often require specialised assistance which administrative staff are not qualified or trained to provide. Customer service would be greatly enhanced if access to staff with specialised knowledge were available.

Genealogy has become a major growth area within Northern Ireland and abroad, particularly in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It has become the second most popular topic on the Internet. Moreover, genealogy/family history is often a first step into archives, encouraging people, especially those who would not normally use archives, to move on to local history and other studies. Improved access to the most popular archives for family history studies both for the local population and for overseas customers is essential and will at the same time encourage more people to use archives. This could be further increased by making PRONI's archives available on microfilm to local libraries.

### **What Should be Done**

- 5.3 A new building for PRONI should be a priority and should be in an easily accessible location with adequate public transport links and car parking. Access for those with a disability is essential.

A Family Records Centre, holding microfilm and digital copies of the most popular archives, should be set up in partnership with the General Register Office within the PRONI site for genealogy researchers.

More flexible opening hours should be introduced by PRONI

- additional evening or Saturday opening - after consultation with users and potential users.

Backlog of uncatalogued archives should be made a priority.

Completion of the project to make PRONI's catalogues available on the Internet.

A microfilming and digitisation programme should be planned following consultation with customers.

Customers should be able to access services on the Internet, for example, to order documents and receive digital copies by e-mail.

Income could be increased from charges for archive services such as pictures and illustrations.

The older registers of births, marriages and deaths held by the General Register Office should be more readily available and digitised as soon as possible.

Cataloguing, microfilming and digitisation work should be done to the same agreed standards.

Once the catalogues of museums, libraries and archives in Northern Ireland are available on the Internet a facility to cross search across the catalogues should be explored and also to search across the digitised resources.

## Section 6

### Raising the Profile – Creating Greater Community Awareness

- 6.1 Greater awareness and use of archives in Northern Ireland would generate these benefits:
- it would help bring people from divided communities together and provide educational resources in an unbiased fashion; and
  - would increase revenue from tourists wishing to trace their family history or engage in academic research.

### The Challenges

- 6.2 Potential users are put off because PRONI and archives are seen as elitist and dull. PRONI's location and inadequate transport links can lead some people to think that they are not welcome. PRONI needs support from everyone and must address these attitudes through the media and the Internet.

To raise awareness, there should be:

- a marketing strategy; and
- activities to inform the public.

### What Should be Done

- 6.3 A Communications Officer should be appointed to publicise PRONI's archives and work with the press and media, as well as the general public and government departments.

Marketing campaigns should be mounted to attract specific groups, including non-users, Irish academics, local history groups and individuals approaching retirement age, and especially women who are under represented in the user profile of PRONI.

An events programme of workshops, lectures and exhibitions should be considered using venues within and outside of PRONI.

Internet access must be encouraged by making catalogues and selected archives available.

PRONI should have a new building in or near Belfast on a site within reach of the public. It must provide education and conference facilities to attract new users.

Opportunities to generate income to cover the costs of public relations and other activities should be maximised. Grant aid and external funding by way of sponsorship should be priorities, though not at the expense of access or efficiency.

## Section 7

### Protecting the Past for Future Use

- 7.1 Since archives are fragile, unique and cannot be replaced easily they must be protected and preserved to agreed professional standards. To ensure that archives are not lost to future generations, investment in better accommodation, in copying archives and in pooling of resources is essential.

### The Challenges

- 7.2 Preserving archives is an enormous task. Indeed, in Northern Ireland the facilities generally for preservation available to museums, libraries and archives are fragmented. Improved preservation and protection for archives and for other cultural and information assets can best be achieved through closer partnerships such as a Northern Ireland Preservation Partnership. This would save money, pool skills, and mean more efficient storage and raise awareness of preservation issues. It would be particularly valuable in dealing with emergencies arising from fire or flood.

More storage space and better conditions for storing records that meet the agreed standards are needed to protect the archives held in PRONI. Moving to new and improved premises is essential if the preservation of this unique part of our cultural heritage is to survive for future generations.

Managing records that are created in electronic form as well as digital copies of archives is a huge challenge if they are to survive for future generations. Steps must be taken now to address the technical problems and to find the appropriate solutions.

### What Needs to be Done

- 7.3 It is recommended that:

A Working Group should be established to consider how a 'Northern Ireland Preservation Partnership' incorporating archives could be established, funded, governed and structured.

A new building for PRONI should be provided to enable it to meet the preservation standard for the storage of archives, namely BS 5454:2000 and therefore discharge its preservation function under the Public Records Act (NI) 1923. This requires government support and is essential if Northern Ireland is not to lag behind other parts of Great Britain which have already invested in their archives.

PRONI should produce a digital preservation strategy that takes account of the framework of the Northern Ireland Civil Service's Electronic Document and Records Management Project.

## Section 8

### Managing the Records

- 8.1. Parliament requires PRONI to secure archives by helping public authorities (central and local government, the courts and non-departmental public bodies) create and maintain records in ways that will enable the community to access them.

Accurate and reliable information enables the community to review and challenge decisions by government and business. This helps to ensure that the rights of individuals and the wider community are protected.

It is also necessary to ensure that those records which are necessary for research and study are preserved.

For government, PRONI's role reduces costs and increases efficiency in the storage and retrieval of records and is in line with the Modernising Government White Paper (1999) and Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation which make records management an integral part of delivering effective government.

PRONI carries out this role by developing record-keeping standards and practices, providing advice and guidance on all aspects of information and records management, including Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) and works closely with Departmental Information Managers and their staff in implementing the standards and practices and on training.

### Where Action is Needed

- 8.2 Changes are needed in the following areas:

**(1) Legislation**

PRONI has experienced the following difficulties:

- o Records are being transferred to PRONI too early and others from government later than they should have been. This leads to cataloguing difficulties.

- o Under current legislation PRONI can accept private archives which then have to be catalogued and preserved, but has no role in advising these organisations on how best to manage their archives. There is an opportunity for PRONI to offer records management advice and guidance (including records held on computer) possibly for a fee.

### ***What Should be Done***

The Public Records Act (NI) 1923 and other relevant laws should be re-examined and should include records produced and held on computer.

The management of public authority records should be audited and this should be built into new Northern Ireland archive legislation.

PRONI's role with public authorities in managing records should be strengthened and linked to the Office of the Information Commissioner.

PRONI should be able to advise the private sector and charge where appropriate.

## **(2) Standards**

The Northern Ireland Records Management Standard (NIRMS), compiled by PRONI for government departments, local authorities and non-departmental public bodies provides overall guidance to records managers.

PRONI has the experience and skills to help Departments and other bodies manage their records better in order to meet the requirements under the new Freedom of Information Act.

### ***What Should be Done***

The Northern Ireland Records Management Standard should be greatly expanded in line with the International Standard on Records Management and The National Archives guidelines. It must be regularly updated to meet the needs of all public authorities and become a model for use by the private sector. PRONI should also provide written advice and guidance on the management and selection of private records and should have authority to charge where this is appropriate.

### (3) **Co-ordination and Partnerships**

Greater co-ordination and closer partnerships are essential to ensure effective records management becomes part of the culture of public authorities.

The Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) Systems Infrastructure Project and the Departmental Record Officers' Forum - now the Information Managers Forum (IMF) are steps towards this. But the IMF is too big and unwieldy.

A lack of communication and co-ordination between departments and their non-departmental public bodies and executive agencies on records management is another problem. IMF also needs to encourage public authorities outside the Greater Belfast area to become more actively involved.

#### ***What Should be Done***

The IMF should be divided into sub-groups - one for Departmental Information Managers and Departmental Record Officers, one for Non-Departmental Public Bodies Records/ Information Managers, and a third for Local Authority Records/ Information Managers. Representatives from the three sub-groups would then form the IMF.

### (4) **Training**

Training in records management must be relevant for staff and meet local needs. Several different levels are needed as follows:

- o special training ( possibly involving a university-accredited qualification) for Information/Records Managers;
- o training for Information/Records Managers' support staff; and, general awareness training for all staff in public authorities, including new recruits.

#### ***What Should be Done***

A Training Needs Assessment of Information/Records Managers should be undertaken. IMF should use this information to draw up and cost a training programme.

PRONI should have a key role to play in a localised training

programme alongside more formal training by a professional organisation or university. The funding for the training should not fall solely on PRONI. Departments and other public authorities must share the costs.

### **(5) Role of Public Authorities**

More robust records management structures are needed in local authorities, the courts and non-departmental public bodies including provision for short-term accommodation for current and non-current records to prevent haphazard destruction of records and the consequent loss of historically important material.

#### ***What Should be Done***

All public authorities should adhere to the Northern Ireland Records Management Standard (NIRMS), and the Code of Practice on the Management of Records under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Dedicated staff resources within central and local government and within non-departmental public bodies and the courts need to be allocated to records management functions in line with Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

### **(6) Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM)**

Digital records are increasing but their management and evaluation are rarely, if ever, governed by detailed guidelines and procedures. Unless action is taken urgently a significant amount of electronic records will not survive; some may already have been lost.

#### ***What Should be Done***

Best practice guidance on the handling of electronic records *prior* to the introduction of a Northern Ireland Civil Service EDRM system should be compiled.

A shared website within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister should be created to keep all public authorities and not just Departments informed about the work on the Electronic Document and Records Management project

## Appendix 1

# Marketing Strategy

for

**The Public Record Office of  
Northern Ireland**

and

**Equality Impact Assessment**



## Contents

Introduction	36
Marketing Objectives	37
Key Messages	38
Marketing Strategy to meet objectives	39
Marketing Activity	44
Performance measurement and evaluation	44
Marketing Management and implementation	44

### 1. Introduction

#### ***Mission Statement:***

***‘The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland exists to identify, preserve and make available Northern Ireland’s archival heritage as a unique information resource for present and future generations’.***

This Marketing Strategy document has been prepared in response to the recognition by PRONI that the organisation’s performance, in terms of making its archives more widely accessible, could be improved. With history and genealogy enjoying a higher media profile than ever before it is felt that PRONI should be benefiting more from this profile, attracting a higher level of interest in its work and archives and, very importantly, more public customers/readers.

Technological advances in the way PRONI’s archives and archival sources can be presented to the public are also recognised as providing major marketing opportunities for the organisation. Digitisation projects will, through the Internet, bring PRONI’s archives directly into the homes, libraries etc. of its target audiences. The ambitious e-CATNI programme, which will put PRONI’s immense catalogue of archive sources on-line, will revolutionise the way in which readers access material. There can be no doubt that the Internet and e-marketing can provide PRONI with the means of engaging with and servicing a vast marketplace. A careful balance, however, must be achieved between stimulating interest in PRONI’s archives and in driving increased numbers to the Balmoral Avenue Search Room.

In seeking to provide a focus to PRONI’s marketing activity, the organisation’s internal role within the Northern Ireland public sector must also be considered. In addition to archiving the records of departmental, court service, local authority and non-departmental public bodies, PRONI provides advice and training across the Northern Ireland Civil Service in the development and adoption of best practice Records Management and Electronic Document Records Management standards and practices. With the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) this has become a

much more central role, providing PRONI with the opportunity to raise its profile and engage with a wider range of public sector colleagues than ever before so that they are more aware of PRONI's archives and services.

Set against the background of the Archives Policy for Northern Ireland consultation document, this Marketing Strategy aims to provide PRONI with a marketing direction for the next three years, to define the marketing approach it should adopt and the areas of activity it must consider if it is to meet its marketing objectives. Overall, it seeks to address the key marketing challenges that the organisation faces in making its archives more accessible to all and to provide a logical and achievable course of action that will maximise PRONI's strengths and minimise its weaknesses.

## 2. Marketing Objectives

### Primary

- To raise awareness of the role, archives and public services offered by PRONI and, in doing so, make its archives accessible to the widest possible audience.

### Supporting

- To improve on-line access to PRONI's selected archives and to its catalogues
- To improve on-site access to PRONI's archives
- To increase website visitor levels
- To increase on-site reader levels and especially to increase the participation by young people, women and people from the ethnic minorities
- To maintain PRONI's profile and reputation amongst other United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland archive/public record organisations
- To contribute, with others, to the development of quality genealogy service which best meets customer needs.
- To establish relationships with complementary organisations outside Northern Ireland e.g. universities and academics.
- To establish partnerships with complementary organisations in order to maximise funding opportunities

and to gain increased marketing impact through joint-venture marketing activity.

- To support lifelong learning and to encourage the wider use of PRONI's information resources across the education and learning spectrum
- To develop new markets for PRONI's archives and services with a focus on Targeting Social Need and Diversity.
- To continue to provide the Northern Ireland public sector with authoritative advice and training in best practice Records Management and Electronic Records Management.
- To improve staff morale
- To demonstrate best practice and value for money in all activities.

### 3. Key Messages

The following are just some of the key messages that PRONI should seek to promote throughout its marketing activity:

- PRONI's archives are a priceless resource for people today and generations to come.
- PRONI's archives are relevant to the lives of everyone who lives in Northern Ireland.
- PRONI's archives can contribute to the greater understanding of our culture, history and heritage.
- PRONI is literally a treasure trove of information and while searching for that vital piece of information can be a very rewarding experience it is rarely a quick one because of the nature of archives.
- Genealogy research at PRONI is highly rewarding but given with vast range of archival sources can be time consuming.
- PRONI plays a key role in advising and training Northern Ireland public sector organisations on Records Management.
- PRONI is keen to receive private records of historical significance from individuals, families, companies, social and community organisations
- There are over 53km of records in PRONI's archives

#### 4. Marketing Strategy to meet objectives

PRONI's Marketing Objectives, as they relate to different segments of its target audiences should be prioritised.

It is recommended that the organisation's Marketing Strategy for this period should therefore focus on:

- (a) Building awareness and understanding amongst the population of Northern Ireland
- (b) Improving access to PRONI archives through the Internet
- (c) Better meeting customer needs and standards
- (d) Creating an PRONI-wide marketing focus
- (e) Developing strategic partnerships and alliances
- (f) Creating joint-venture marketing opportunities
- (g) Supporting education and lifelong learning
- (h) Exploring opportunities for income generation
- (i) Increasing participation by young people, women and the ethnic minorities who are under represented in the user profile.

The following recommendations address each of these key priorities:

##### **(a) *Building Awareness Amongst The Population of Northern Ireland***

- Develop and implement a Marketing Communications Plan which will first attract the attention of the wider population, stimulate the interest of people in genealogy and local history, make them want to explore what PRONI has to offer them and that encourages them to visit the website or visit PRONI to view the archives.
- Equip PRONI with the corporate identity and marketing tools needed to present a modern and relevant image to its target audience.
- Proactively seek maximum publicity coverage regarding PRONI's archives, services and activities in the broadcast, press and e-media in NI.
- Create an audiovisual marketing tool that tells the viewer all about PRONI and how to use its reader and on line services, in an entertaining but informative manner for

- use in marketing activity and outreach situations.
- Create a brochure that tells the reader all about PRONI and how to use its reader and on-line services for distribution to interested audiences on-site, at events and outreach situations.
- Seek new opportunities for positioning PRONI marketing material in complementary organisations e.g. libraries, museums, universities.
- Review the Outreach Centre concept and enhance marketing and promotional activity in support of them.
- Engage with key NI decision makers and influencers e.g. politicians, media, business leaders etc to educate them about PRONI, its archives and public services.

**(b) *Improving Access to PRONI Archives Through the Internet***

- Significantly upgrade PRONI's website [www.proni.gov.uk](http://www.proni.gov.uk) to make it more dynamic, promote it prominently on all corporate and marketing literature and material, ensure that it is constantly updated and use it as an opportunity to link into complementary local, regional, national and international websites including NI tourism websites.
- Actively participate in the development of the United Kingdom Archives Gateway which will be a digital gateway to archives that will improve access to archives and contribute to a joined-up window for the world on the heritage and information assets for which DCAL has responsibility.

**(c) *Better Meeting Customer Needs and Standards***

- Urgently explore the options open to PRONI with regard to relocation to more suitable new offices.
- Equip the Reception, Search Room and Reading Room with the display, literature and audiovisual tools necessary to make the experience less daunting for new visitors/readers and the search process easier to understand
- Ensure that PRONI staff who work in the public areas are fully trained in customer service.
- Participate in and support the development of a quality genealogy service.

- Regularly undertake qualitative research with previous/ current readers and website visitors regarding the types of archives they would like to see digitised as well as ways in which the products and services that PRONI offer could be enhanced.
- Consider extended evening opening hours and Saturday opening to facilitate potential visitors/readers who work and could not visit at any other time, through consultation with the Advisory Board and PRONI Users Forum.
- Raise the profile of the PRONI User Forum and ensure that comments raised by customers are acted upon
- Achieve CharterMark Accreditation to demonstrate and underpin the organisation's commitment to excellence in customer service.

### **(d) *Creating A PRONI-Wide Marketing Focus***

- Raise awareness across the organisation of the need for, and the benefits of, a marketing focus in PRONI, educate management and staff about what marketing is and how everyone has a responsibility for its delivery, and invite staff to contribute marketing ideas which should then be implemented in line with PRONI's objectives and strategy.
- Create a Management Marketing Team to oversee the implementation of the Plan.
- Create a very marketing focused publication that is distributed staff-wide on a quarterly basis and which highlights PRONI marketing activity, events, media coverage, the contribution of individuals to the Marketing Programme, etc.
- Establish a means whereby all management and staff feed in marketing information, database information etc into a central marketing resource. Review the existing membership of the PRONI Advisory Board to help support the Marketing Strategy.
- Explore the potential for seconding PRONI staff to organisations within the Northern Ireland public sector which appear to be more market-driven and customer focused.

### **(e) *Developing Strategic Partnerships and Alliances***

- Maintain profile and reputation with peer archive institutions and cultural/heritage groupings in the rest of the United Kingdom and internationally in order to share knowledge and experience e.g. UK Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.
- Establish closer relationships with the Library Service with a view to exploring (amongst other things) ways in which PRONI could benefit from the public internet facilities available in libraries throughout Northern Ireland through Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland.
- Establish closer relationships with the Museums and Galleries for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Museums Council in order to explore and develop opportunities for mutual benefit and knowledge sharing.
- Establish relationships with international universities – particularly in USA and Canada – to raise awareness of PRONI archives in relation to the teaching of Irish history, politics etc.

### **(f) *Creating Joint-Venture Marketing Opportunities***

- Pro-actively seek opportunities for joining up with complementary organisations in developing, producing and marketing high profile events, exhibitions, publications and programmes e.g. universities, libraries, local councils, local history and genealogy societies, etc.
- Research relevant historic key dates, topical issues etc which might provide an opportunity for the development of joint-venture marketing opportunities.
- Jointly seek funding from Government or other sources for such projects.
- Improve the effectiveness of outreach activities in areas of social needs by developing joint venture approaches to community groups in these areas e.g. with museums.

### **(g) *Supporting Education and Lifelong Learning***

- Actively participate in the development and implementation of the DCAL's Draft Learning Strategy.
- Consult with the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment on ways in which PRONI could support the teaching of history and

citizenship in schools.

- Create a teachers' resource pack that tells teachers all about PRONI and the relevance of its archives and on-site and off-site reader services to the teaching of History at GCSE and A and AS levels. In doing so, actively promote the PRONI website to teachers and pupils.
- Promote the PRONI website to teaching staff and students in Colleges and Universities (history, politics, social science subjects) with the aim of making them aware and encouraging them to make use of PRONI's research facilities. Also promote the PRONI website in all learndirect centres and libraries with public internet facilities.
- Support the promotion of lifelong learning, including Adult Learning Week

### **(h) *Exploring Opportunities for Income Generation***

- Seek ways to overcome the disincentive for PRONI to generate income from its activities, as currently any monies raised cannot be retained.
- Review PRONI's current charging structure for photocopying, for research, including commercial research, and for handling legal enquiries.
- Consider offering commercial researchers and commercial genealogy websites etc the opportunity to be listed/advertised on the PRONI website for an annual fee.
- Consider means of charging customers for access to digitised archives on the PRONI website

### **(i) *Increasing Participation by young people, women and the ethnic minorities***

One of the outcomes of supporting education and learning as outlined in para 'h' above should be an increase in usage of archives by young people. There should be more talks and events programmes that are specifically aimed at women's groups and ethnic minority groups to encourage greater participation. This should be in place by 2005/6 and should be part of PRONI's Business Plan.

### **5. Marketing Activity**

To meet PRONI's Marketing Objectives and to support the Marketing Strategy outlined, a Marketing and Communications Plan must be developed, costed, implemented and evaluated. From this Plan an Activity Calendar should be agreed. It is recommended that the Marketing Activity Plan should include:

- (a) Revision of PRONI's Corporate Identity and Branding
- (b) Public relations and Media Relations
- (c) E-Marketing and website development
- (d) Promotional literature
- (e) Display and audiovisual
- (f) Meetings, events and exhibitions
- (g) Database management

### **6. Performance Measurement and Evaluation**

Evaluating Marketing Performance should be carried out using agreed criteria:

- Performance Against Plan - monthly and annual review of each key activity against Marketing Plan and against budget.
- Access Specific Targets – eg annual total of visitors to website and annual total of visitors/readers and new visitors/readers on-site

### **7. Marketing Management and implementation**

In the development of this Marketing Strategy document it has become clear that additional manpower is necessary if PRONI is to meet its Marketing Objectives. The options open to the organisation are -

- (a) Recruitment of Marketing/Communications Officer
- (b) Appointment of a Marketing Communications Consultancy through Procurement Service on a 2/3 year contract

In line with the Archives Policy for Northern Ireland Consultation Document it is proposed that option (a) above should be pursued. To effectively manage PRONI's Marketing Activity it is recommended that an Internal Marketing Management Team be set up, derived from the organisation's senior and middle management to support the Marketing/Communications Officer.

## Appendix 2

Department of Culture Arts, and Leisure

# Equality Impact Assessment

Archives Policy for Northern  
Ireland

and

Marketing Strategy for PRONI



## Contents

Introduction	48
Background	48
Implementation and aim of the policy	49
Consideration of the available data and research	50
Assessment of impacts	50
Mitigation or alternative policies	55
Monitoring and review	55
Formal consultation	55
Publication of results of the equality impact assessment	56

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (“the Act”) the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
  - between men and women generally;
  - between persons with a disability and persons without; and
  - between persons with dependents and persons without.
- 1.2 In addition, without prejudice to its obligations above, the Department shall, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 1.3 The Department’s Equality Scheme commits it to assessing how each of its current policies impacts on the promotion of equality of opportunity within the terms of section 75 of the Act.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 Under the Public Records Act (NI) 1923 the Public Record Office was established to identify and preserve public records created by public authorities in Northern Ireland and to accept private archives. Therefore since its inception in 1924 PRONI has provided an integrated archival service for the whole of Northern Ireland which continues to the present day. The Public Records Act (NI) remains the only piece of primary legislation affecting archives.
- 2.2 Collections of archives are held by some libraries and museums but they are small in comparison to the 35Km of archives held in PRONI.
- 2.3 A thorough review of the archive domain in Northern Ireland was necessary to address the growing opportunities and challenges facing archives. These include: changes to the

way that archives are managed; the impact of Freedom on Information; the growing volume of electronic records being created; government's focus on quality customer services; a stronger commitment within the archives domain to opening up archives to everyone; and the increasing numbers of people who are interested in exploring their own identities and histories.

- 2.4 The Report from the Archives Task Force (ATF), appointed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, has now issued and can be viewed on the website of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council - 'Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future' - sets the scene for both the Archives Policy for Northern Ireland and PRONI's Marketing Strategy documents. Both documents reflect the major themes in the ATF Report - of raising awareness of archives, of attracting new audiences for archives, of making it easier for everyone to access archives more easily, and of enabling archives to play a greater role in education and learning.

### **3. Aim and Implementation of the policy**

#### **Archives Policy for Northern Ireland**

- 3.1 The overall aim is to improve access to archives in Northern Ireland for everyone, to develop new audiences for archives and to encourage more people to benefit from the vast treasury of archives.
- 3.2 The Archives Policy for Northern Ireland will provide a clear statement of the future strategic direction and development for archives in Northern Ireland.
- 3.3 The Policy document will be the foundation for going forward with new archive and records management legislation for Northern Ireland that will complement the work that is being done at present for archives in England and Wales and for Scotland.
- 3.4 It will be the advocacy document highlighting the contribution of archives to the social, cultural and economic life of Northern Ireland and how the recommendations support DCAL's concept of Cultural Capital.

- 3.5 It will also stress the real benefits for users and non-users through innovative working and creative partnerships.
- 3.6 Following consultation and the Equality Impact Assessment a final Action Plan with timescales and resource implications will be produced.

### **Marketing Strategy for the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland**

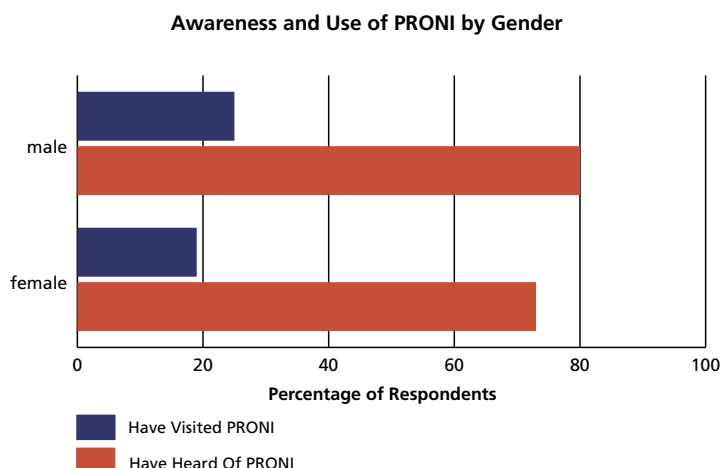
- 3.7 The Marketing Strategy is a more detailed outline of one of the aims of the Archives Policy for Northern Ireland, namely the need to develop new audiences for archives and to raise awareness of archives and demonstrate their relevance to people's lives.
- 3.8 The Marketing Strategy aims to provide PRONI with a market direction for the next 3 years and to define the marketing approach and the areas of activity to be addressed. See Appendix 2.

## **4 Consideration of the available data and research**

- 4.1 Information was available in relation to awareness and use of PRONI from a telephone survey of the general public conducted by Research Evaluation Services (RES) in March 2004. Relevant information was also extracted from the Survey of Visitors to British Archives 2002 carried out for the Public Services Quality Group of the National Council on Archives.
- 4.2 There were 2000 respondents in the RES survey. 109 questionnaires were completed by respondents from the Survey of Visitors to British Archives - these respondents were all users of PRONI.

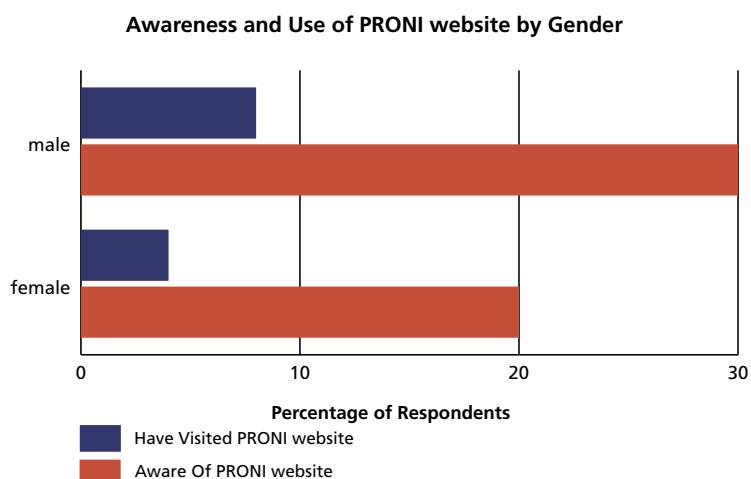
## **5. Assessment of Impacts**

- 5.1 The following paragraphs provide an assessment of the impacts:

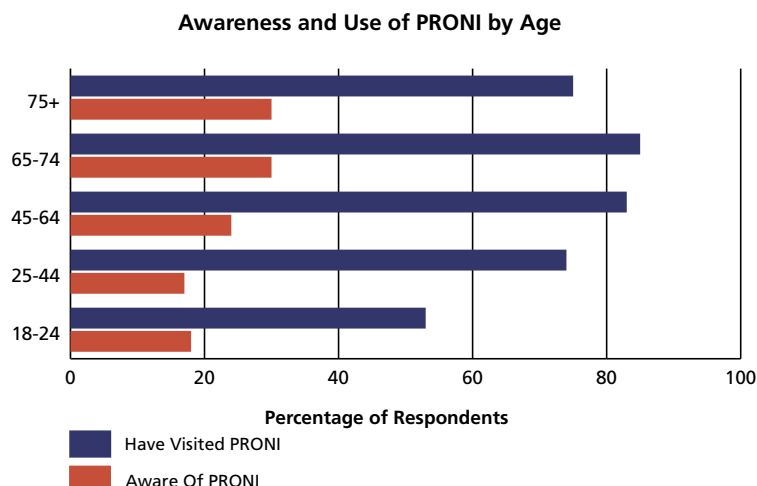


## Gender

- 5.2 Males were more likely to have heard of the PRONI than females (80% and 73%), and were more likely to have visited a PRONI site (25%) than females (19%).
- 5.3 The Survey of Visitors to British Archives reported that 75% of visitors to PRONI were male and 25% were female.
- 5.4 12% of males accessed archives using the Internet in comparison to 5% of females. Males were also more likely to access archives on the Internet more often than females.

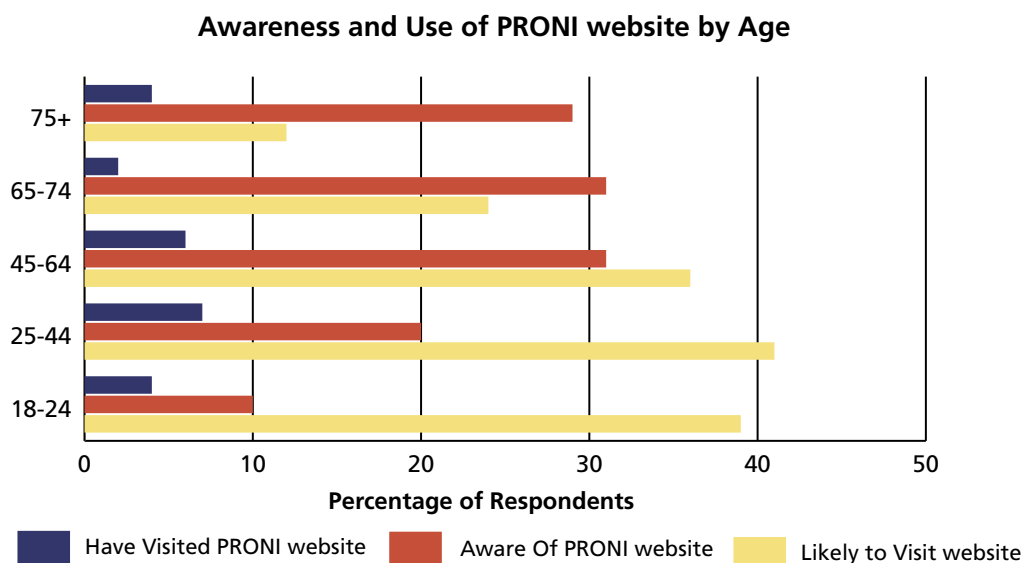


- 5.5 30% of males were aware that the PRONI has a website while 8% had visited it. A lower proportion of females were aware of the website or had visited it (20% and 4% respectively). Fewer females said they were likely to use the PRONI website in the future, than males (33% and 39% respectively).



### Age

- 5.6 Data from the 2004 survey of general public showed that the likelihood of having heard of PRONI increased with age, with respondents aged between 18 and 24 much less likely (just over a half) to have heard of PRONI than respondents over 24 (three quarters or more).
- 5.7 As age increased so did the likelihood of having visited PRONI with just under 20% of respondents aged under 44 having visited PRONI in comparison to 30% of those aged 65 or more.
- 5.8 The Survey of Visitors to British Archives found that a quarter of PRONI customers surveyed were aged between 55 and 64, with just under 20% in each of the categories between 25 and 54 being PRONI users. 12% were between 65 and 74 and 6% were aged between 16 and 24.
- 5.9 Respondents aged 65 or over were more likely to suggest that lack of interest or health/ disability problems meant that they were unlikely to use PRONI in the future. More younger respondents than older respondents said that they were unlikely to use PRONI because they had no need, with respondents aged between 25 and 64 the most likely to give this reason. The younger the respondent the more likely they were to say that having no time was the factor making them unlikely to use PRONI in the future.



5.10 There was a negative relationship between age and accessing archives on the Internet. 10% of respondents aged between 18 and 24 had used the Internet to access archives in comparison to none of the respondents aged 75+.

5.11 Around 30% of respondents aged 45 or over were aware that PRONI had a website, in comparison to 20% of those aged between 25 and 44 and just 10% of respondents aged between 18 and 24.

5.12 Respondents aged between 25 and 64 were the most likely to have visited the website.

5.13 The likelihood of accessing the PRONI website in the future was higher for younger people than older respondents.

5.14 A larger proportion of older respondents said that they were unlikely to access the PRONI website in future due to having no tradition of use or lack of Internet access. The youngest and oldest respondents were most likely to give 'no interest in what PRONI offers' as a reason for being unlikely to access the PRONI website. Fewer older respondents gave 'no need' as a reason for being unlikely to visit the PRONI website in the future.

### Religious belief

5.15 79% of Protestants had heard of PRONI in comparison to 71% of Catholics. 86% of respondents who stated 'no religion' were aware of PRONI.

- 5.16 There was no difference between Protestants and Catholics in terms of visiting PRONI. 25% of respondents who indicated 'no religion' had visited PRONI in comparison with 19% of those who had refused to indicate their religion.
- 5.17 23% of the respondents who had no religion had used the Internet to access archives in comparison to under 10% of Protestants and Catholics.
- 5.18 34% of Protestants suggested they were likely to use the PRONI website in the future in comparison to 39% of Catholics. 30% of the respondents who classed themselves as 'other' said they were likely to access the PRONI website.

### Political opinion

- 5.19 There was no information available in relation to awareness and use of PRONI in regards of political opinion.

### Race or ethnic origin

- 5.20 The Survey of Visitors to British Archives revealed that 100% of respondents from PRONI classified themselves as white.

### Dependants

- 5.21 18% of respondents with dependants (children and/ or an elderly or sick person living with them) visited PRONI in comparison to 24% of those with no dependents.

### Marital status

- 5.22 Married respondents were more likely to have heard of PRONI in comparison to single respondents (80% and 67% respectively). Around 80% of widowed or divorced respondents were aware of PRONI.
- 5.23 There was no evidence of a difference in use of PRONI based on marital status.
- 5.24 A lower proportion of widowed respondents said they were likely to use the PRONI website (18%) than single or married respondents (41% and 36% respectively).

### Disability

- 5.25 29% of disabled respondents suggested they were likely to use PRONI, in comparison to 20% of non-disabled respondents, although fewer disabled respondents knew where PRONI is based than non-disabled (43% and 49%).
- 5.26 6% of disabled respondents gave health/ disability problems as a reason for being unlikely to use PRONI services in the future, in comparison to under 1% of non-disabled respondents. More non-disabled respondents suggested that they would be unlikely to use PRONI because they had no need than disabled respondents.

### Sexual orientation

- 5.27 There was no information available in relation to awareness and use of PRONI in regards of sexual orientation.

### Conclusion

- 5.28 The available data indicates that there is a need to address the under utilisation of archives by young people, by women and by ethnic minorities.

## 6. Mitigation or alternative policies

- 6.1 The differential impacts identified in para 5 above are addressed in the Archives Policy Consultation Document under 'Raising the Profile – Creating Greater Community Awareness' on page 25, para 6.3, and also under 'Reaching out to Engage the Community' on page 20, para 4.4, point (1), and on page 43, para (i), of the Marketing Strategy under 'Increasing participation'. We will aim to increase participation by young people, women and the ethnic minorities year on year through the marketing plan and by having in place targeted programmes such as talks to women's groups.

## 7. Monitoring and review

- 7.1 Monitoring any change in use in respect of age, gender and race will be done through the Survey of Visitors to British Archives which is usually carried out every 2 years, by

gathering qualitative data and taking part in any telephone surveys conducted by Research Evaluation Service.

### **8. Formal consultation**

8.1 This Equality Impact Assessment is subject to a formal consultation process. To enable us to complete an equality impact assessment, DCAL is seeking views on the equality impact of the Archives Policy for Northern Ireland and the Marketing Strategy. The Department will consider all the comments received during the consultation process. The following questions may assist you to take part in the consultation, but please feel free to submit your views in any format:

- Are there any other data or information that might be drawn upon to assess the equality impact of the policy?
- Do you feel that the assessment of impacts made above is fair and accurate? If not, please elaborate.
- In light of the assessment of impacts, do you agree with the proposed mitigating measures to increase uptake by young people, women and ethnic minorities? If not, what measures or ideas would you propose that would better promote equality of opportunity?
- Do you have any other comments on the equality impact of the policy?

### **9. Publication of results of the equality impact assessment**

9.1 On completion of the consultation exercise, the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be produced in final form, taking into account the outcome of this public consultation. Any resulting amendments to the policy will then be made and the results of the EQIA will be published on the Department's website ([www.dcalni.gov.uk](http://www.dcalni.gov.uk))

## Appendix 3

Department Of Culture, Arts and  
Leisure

# New Archive Legislation

## New Archive Legislation

A review of current legislation affecting archives should consider the following:

- The definition of a record and the definition of public records;
- establish PRONI's powers to receive records in relation to reserved functions and to the Church of Ireland records as defined under various 19<sup>th</sup> century Acts;
- review the role of PRONI including the power to receive non-public records (ie private archives) relating to Northern Ireland and elsewhere;
- authority and responsibility to 'preserve' the archives;
- determine PRONI's authority to lend and purchase archives;
- identify where there are gaps in the existing legislative provision;
- consider the roles of the Keeper and Deputy Keeper of the Records;
- examine whether there should be a statutory Advisory Council for PRONI and its possible functions;
- examine how PRONI and the General Register Office can liaise most appropriately;
- review the roles of PRONI and public authorities in records management and the arrangements for the transfer of records;
- make effective arrangements for the disposition of public records, including electronic records;
- explore whether there should be legislative provision for a public service and for the educational use of archives;
- consider the legislative provision for the retention of revenue earned by PRONI and its authority to charge for services.

***Are there any other areas that you consider should be examined?***