



Our strategy

2021 - 2025



Introduction

This document outlines the **Strategy for the Archives and Records Association** (UK and Ireland) from September 2021 to September 2025. It has been developed by the Board of Trustees from evaluation of recent surveys and listening to our members. Consultation on a draft version took place in April/May 2021, and member feedback has been incorporated.

The Strategy represents those working in archives, records management, information governance and conservation throughout the sector and makes clear our commitment to equality and inclusion. Five areas of work are outlined, and these will be central to the development of the annual business plans for the period.

ARA VISION

ARA will be the leading professional and sectoral body for archives, conservation, records management and information governance ('the record-keeping sector') in the UK and Ireland. We will meet the ever-changing needs of the sector, our members, record keepers and stakeholders and have international influence.

INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

Our organisation is changing. Our sector is changing. Our commitment to meaningful inclusion and equality is a thread that runs throughout our entire organisation, our activities and this strategy. What we do and how we do it, will serve as a reflection on the sector. We will:

- Ensure equality and inclusion are at the forefront of everything we do
- Encourage everyone to commit to an inclusive and equal profession and sector, and hold ARA to account for that delivery.



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1. TRANSFORMING UNDERSTANDING

ARA will increase public understanding in the work and importance of record-keeping and record-keepers. We will work with partners and collaborate to champion the role and value of record-keeping for the social and economic benefit of society, individual communities and businesses. We will:

- **Speak** – we will advocate for our members, the workforce and sector
- **Represent** – we will represent the workforce and sector by being the leading voice within and outside the sector
- **Celebrate** – we will celebrate archives, records, conservation and record-keepers and the benefits that they bring to our communities
- **Engage** – we will engage, collaborate and share knowledge with our stakeholders to promote record-keepers, the workforce and sector.

2. INSPIRING EDUCATION, SKILLS AND DEVELOPMENT

ARA will provide inclusive education, skills, training and development opportunities for all members and stakeholders, working in partnership with other education providers as necessary to achieve this. We will support individuals through their lifetime of involvement, interest in, and commitment to the sector.

- **Discover** - we will support our current and future workforce in researching and promoting existing and new routes into the profession at all levels, so that they become valued members of the profession
- **Learn** - we will support and develop learning and career opportunities through a variety of routes, suitable to the needs of the individual
- **Develop** - we will support and provide opportunities to our membership for professional development throughout their career.



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3. MEETING THE DIGITAL CHALLENGE

ARA will address the wider digital challenge that the record-keeping and user communities face, and put digital at the heart of our workforce development.

- **Empower** – we will encourage our members to be part of the solution through partnership with other bodies
- **Drive** – we will promote greater understanding of the digital needs of archives and records to all
- **Enable** – we will equip our workforce to utilise existing and new technologies and help to influence the development and correct use of technology where possible
- **Create** – we will provide spaces for discussion and innovation, engage with developers and vendors, and raise awareness of the need and value for digital in the record keeping sphere.

4. PROVIDING VALUED MEMBER SERVICES

ARA member services will provide inclusive, innovative and valued benefits for our members.

- **Understand** – we will consult with our membership to understand and respond to their requirements
- **Innovate** – we will provide an exciting offer through responsive solutions and platforms
- **Support** – we are member led and will deliver for their needs
- **Grow** – we will broaden membership to ensure it is representative of the sector, and welcome new members to join and be part of what we do.



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5. ENSURING A FIT FOR PURPOSE ORGANISATION

ARA will be a 'fit for purpose' organisation, responding to the world we work in and ensuring change is delivered and visible. We will meet challenges directly, with inclusive, open, up-to-date and transparent governance.

- **Efficient** - we will regularly monitor and review our organisational efficiency. We will ensure value for money, so members have confidence in knowing their subscriptions are spent on agreed priorities as set out in our strategy
- **Effective** – we will be accountable to our members and the regulatory environments we operate within; by doing this we will ensure our long-term future

- **Sustainable** – we will work to reduce our impact on the environment
- **Responsive** – we welcome change and opportunity, encourage member communication and interaction.



The Strategy will be implemented through Annual Business Plans approved by the Board of Trustees and regularly monitored. It will be reviewed in 2025 or sooner if circumstances dictate.



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