

SMC Publication Scheme

1. Introduction

The Publication Scheme

Section 23 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 requires Scottish public authorities to adopt and maintain a publication scheme which must specify

- Classes of information which the authority publishes or intends to publish
- The manner in which the information will be published
- Whether the published information is free of charge or available on payment of a charge.

The Scottish Museums Council (SMC) is not covered by the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, but has made a policy decision to act, so far as possible, within the spirit of the Act.

However, the Scottish Information Commissioner has no remit over SMC in relation to Freedom of Information and cannot approve or enforce this publication scheme.

The “Duty to Assist”

Section 15 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 states that Scottish public authorities must, so far as it is reasonable, provide advice and assistance to a person who proposes to make, or has made, a request for information.

The Scottish Museums Council (SMC) will try to help members of the public to make a request, and to help those who have made a request to identify and locate the information they are looking for. If the information is available from a public authority other than SMC, we will try to inform the enquirer where it may be obtained.

2. About the Scottish Museums Council

The Scottish Museums Council (SMC) is the membership organisation and representative body for Scotland's non-national museums. Our aim is to improve museum and gallery provision in Scotland for both local people and visitors. We have over 200 members who in turn manage over 360 museums. The members include all 32 Scottish local authorities, universities, regimental and independent museums, ranging in size from small voluntary trusts to large metropolitan services, attracting in excess of 2.5 million visitors each year. SMC combines strategic leadership for the sector with provision of professional information, advisory and support services to members.

We are not currently listed in Schedule 1, Part 7 of the Act and are not a non-departmental public body. However, we perform many public functions and the Scottish Executive is our primary funder. Accordingly, SMC is committed to Freedom of Information and to ensuring transparency and accountability in the way that we work.

3. Formulation of the Scottish Museums Council Publication Scheme

In order to prepare the publication scheme, letters were sent to organisations on SMC's database of contacts consisting of members, partner organisations, local authority chief executives, conveners of culture committees and individuals. These letters informed the recipients that the scheme was being produced and requested feedback and comments regarding information they thought should be made available. There was also a call for comments put on SMC's website in order to obtain feedback from a wider audience. We alerted members to the formulation of policy through the regular SMC newsletter and the website. In addition we promoted the Information Commissioner's seminars and guidance to members.

4. Responsibility for the Publication Scheme

The overall responsibility for this publication scheme lies with the Director of the Scottish Museums Council.

Joanne Orr, Director
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Day to day responsibility for the publication scheme lies with the Information Manager.

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The Stack
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Telephone: 0131 550 4120
Fax: 0131 550 4139
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5. Exemptions and information not covered by the publication scheme

The classes of information listed in the scheme do not include information which is personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998 or information, the disclosure of which is prohibited by law.

Information held by SMC but not contained in this publication scheme may still be requested. Requests should be made to the Information Enquiry Service address referred to in section 8.

If we withhold requested information we will indicate why the information has been withheld. If you wish to complain about information which has been withheld from you, please see the section of this scheme about complaints.

6. Archiving Policy

We are currently reviewing our records archiving and disposal policy.

7. Copyright

Information produced by the SMC is subject to copyright.

8. Accessing Information Under this Publication Scheme

Information included in our publication scheme will usually be available on our website (www.scottishmuseums.org.uk). The scheme indicates the form that the information is available in, for example, on the website.

For those without access to the website, or those wishing to make a request for information in another format, SMC can be contacted in the following ways:

Information Enquiry Service	0131 550 4130
Information Enquiry E-mail	inform@scottishmuseums.org.uk
Fax	0131 550 4139
Postal Address	Scottish Museums Council The Stack Papermill Wynd Mcdonald Road Edinburgh EH7 4QL

9. Charging Policy

Information on our website will be available free of charge (there is no charge by us, although the user would need to meet any charges by their internet service provider, personal printing costs, etc).

For those without access to the website a paper copy of information can be requested. This will be provided free of charge unless otherwise indicated.

If charges are to be made, you will be told at the time of your request. These charges would be payable in advance.

10. Complaints

If you are not satisfied with our response, you have the right to ask SMC to carry out an internal review within 40 days of receiving our response. This can be done by writing to the Director of SMC stating the reasons why you are dissatisfied. The response will be reviewed by two members of the SMC Senior Management Team who have not been involved in dealing with the information request. You will then be informed about the outcome of the review within 20 working days of your complaint being received.

11. Feedback

SMC welcomes feedback on the publication scheme, including the accessibility of the information held in it. Any comments will be considered carefully by the Support Services Manager during future revisions of the scheme. You can contact the Support Services Manager using the following details:

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The Stack
Papermill Wynd
Mcdonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4QL

Telephone: 0131 550 4120

Fax: 0131 550 4139

E-mail: dimitrag@scottishmuseums.org.uk

12. Classes of Information

Class of Information	Description	Availability	Cost
Responses to consultation papers	SMC's responses to consultations issued by other organisations	Website	Free
Research reports	Research projects commissioned by SMC	Website or paper copy	Free
Board Members	Names and roles	Website	Free
Board Minutes	Minutes of SMC Board meetings	Paper copy	Free
Corporate plan	Three year corporate plan	Website	Free
Staff list	List of current staff with job titles, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses	Website	Free
Organisation chart	SMC organisation chart	Website	Free
Vacancies	Current job opportunities at SMC	Website or paper copy	Free
Press releases	Lists and copies of SMC press releases	Website	Free
Factsheets, advice sheets and guidance notes	On conservation and collections care, fundraising and museum development	Website or paper copy	Free
Grant schemes	Description, award criteria and application process	Website or paper copy	Free
Grant awards	List and brief description of grants awarded	Website	Free
List of publications	List of publications available online or by post	Website	Free
Publications	Individual publications	Website or paper copy	Free
Training programme	List of courses and booking form	Website or paper copy	Free

Participation structures	How people are able to participate in SMC's decision/policy making process	Website	Free
SMC policies	SMC's service policies (advice policy etc)	Website or paper copy	Free
Complaints procedure	How to complain	Website	Free
Strategy documents	National strategies produced by SMC in consultation with members and appropriate partners.	Website or paper copy	Free
Monthly newsletter	SMSee newsletter	Website or paper copy	Free