Records Management Policy

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Introduction

Records are an asset and an essential source of organisational and historical information. They are vital to the current and future operations of Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

The effective management of corporate records is necessary to support core functions, to comply with legal and regulatory obligations and to ensure our documentary heritage as well as contributing to the effective overall management of the organisation.

This document provides the policy framework through which the effective management of records can be achieved and audited.

1. **Scope of the Policy**

The Records Management Policy

    1.1. is a high level statement of intent, supported by a records management plan and a framework of guidelines, procedures, position statements and instructions

    1.2. is managed by the Head of Library and owned by the Director of Corporate Services

    1.3. will be reviewed annually to take into account any regulatory or operational changes that effect the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

    1.4. applies to records in all formats which are created, received or maintained by staff of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh in the course of carrying out their corporate functions. Records and documentation created in the course of research, whether internally or externally funded, are also subject to record-keeping requirements.

2. **Records Management Definitions**

    2.1. a record is a tangible piece of evidence that an event has occurred or transaction has taken place within an organisation

    2.2. a record can be in any format from paper files, emails and electronic documents, to digital images and photographs

    2.3. Records Management is the control of an organisation's records during their lifetime, from creation to storage and retention until eventual transfer or destruction

2.4. vital records are those without which an organisation would be unable to function or to prove that a key activity has taken place

3. Purpose

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh needs a Records Management Policy to:

3.1. instil good practice in records management across the organisation

3.2. comply with the regulatory environment, in particular Public Records (Scotland) Act (2011), Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (2002), Data Protection Act (1998) and Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations (2004)

3.3. increase operational efficiency

3.4. help reduce operational risk

3.5. assist in the control of storage costs

3.6. fully exploit our information and knowledge resources

3.7. support the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Corporate Plan

4. Ownership and Responsibilities

4.1. all records created in the activities of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh are owned by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

4.2. the Head of each department is responsible for the implementation of this policy within their department

4.3. Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh employees are required to follow guidelines and procedures for records management created as part of this policy

4.4. processes and procedures in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh must support the policy

4.5. the policy will be reviewed every year by the Head of Library, or if legislative changes necessitate an update

5. The Policy

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh will manage its records by:

Records Management

5.1 Producing and adhering to an approved records management plan

5.2 Maintaining accurate and verifiable records that are adequate to meet our legal responsibilities

5.3 Ensuring records can be easily accessed and retrieved

5.4 Devolving practical management to department level and ensuring support and information is available to enable staff to carry out record management tasks

5.5 Undertaking an annual review of the records management plan to ensure it reflects legislative and operational changes

Guidance

5.6 Creating and disseminating best practice guidance for all employees of Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

Access and security

5.7 Retaining records in the most appropriate format

5.8 Ensuring that records processes and transactions are only undertaken by those authorised to perform them and that an audit trail exists

Retention

5.9 Creating, implementing and reviewing retention schedules which set out categories of records and how long we keep those records (based on the statutory and regulatory environment, and business and accountability requirements

5.10 Retaining only the records we need to retain, destroying routinely records that have passed their retention period

5.11 Ensuring the future usability of electronic records through the development of migration or conversion strategies designed to update hardware, software and storage media

Disposal or archiving

5.12 Disposing of records (with authorisation) in a secure manner where required and documenting disposal as per Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act Code of Practice on Records Management and in compliance with Public Records (Scotland) Act (2011)

5.13 Transferring records of significant archival value to Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh's Archive

Vital records

5.14 Identifying and protecting vital records to ensure business continuity in the event of a disaster