



· INSTITUTE · OF · HISTORIC ·  
BUILDING · CONSERVATION

*Making Heritage Work*

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Dear Madam

### **ARCHIVES FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) is the professional body of the United Kingdom representing conservation specialists and historic environment practitioners in the public and private sectors. The Institute exists to establish the highest standards of conservation practice, to support the effective protection and enhancement of the historic environment, and to promote heritage-led regeneration and access to the historic environment for all.

Thank you for inviting us to participate in this consultation.

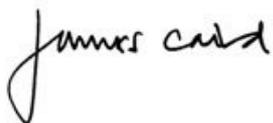
Generally the Institute is happy with the vision contained in the draft strategy. However, we have three concerns that we should like you to consider.

1. We think there is a tension between the objectives for fewer, bigger and better archive resources and the objective for active community participation. Much of the national archive resource is already concentrated in County Towns and other centres and use of locally related archive material is already significantly detached from many communities. We would not wish to see this detachment exacerbated.
2. Archive resources do not consist solely of the records themselves. They need the interpretative skills of trained archivists with a knowledge of relevant national and local history for the untrained public to make informed use of them. This aspect of the service needs to be delivered as close to local level as possible. The relationship of archives to relevant resources of printed material is also important.

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3. The move to web-based access will take time. It is vitally important that this proceeds in step with the national up-grading of broadband facilities. We would not wish to see access to archives restricted in practice by inadequate broadband speeds for many communities with the original material lying in far remote repositories.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Caird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'J'.

James Caird  
Consultant Consultations Co-ordinator