Registers of Scotland
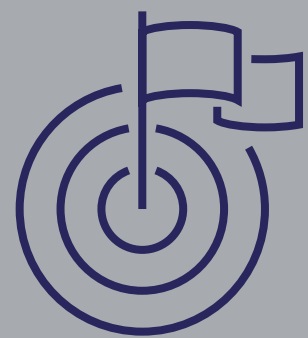ros.gov.uk

Corporate Business Plan 2020-2025

PURPOSE

To support the Scottish economy for the benefit of the people of Scotland.

VISION

To be a digital registration and information business trusted for our integrity.

PUBLIC TASK

This requires the Keeper to compile and maintain the **public registers** for which she is statutorily responsible and to make the information they contain publicly accessible through our customer and online services, including the ScotLIS portal.

VALUES

Impartial – we act without bias in our dealings with our customers, stakeholders and each other, keeping information secure and presenting it accurately.

Forward-thinking – we must always add value for the public of Scotland, finding better ways to deliver what they and the Scottish economy need, whilst developing skills and opportunities for our staff.

Customer focussed – we strive to understand what our customers need and why, so that we can design our processes and services for them.

Professional – we recognise that customers need us to be skilled, efficient, effective and to work with pace, passion and pride.

The Future for RoS

Foreword – Jennifer Henderson,
Keeper of the Registers of Scotland

Our move last year to a five year corporate planning model has worked well for Registers of Scotland (RoS) as it has allowed us to adapt to a rapidly changing landscape. It is a structure that supports our **business as usual activities** of registering and sharing information on all of Scotland's land and property transactions, and it enhances our ability to keep a long term view so that we continue to invest in digital and business improvements now to realise customer benefits later. This corporate business plan period reaches to 2025, beyond completing Scotland's Land Register, when a range of exciting possibilities will open up for RoS to add value to the Scottish economy. There will also be wider benefits for the people of Scotland as we deploy our knowledge, skills, information and expertise in new and different ways.

RoS was reclassified last year by the Office of National Statistics. This means that RoS' financial reserves transfer to the Scottish Government and our future income and expenditure funds will be agreed by the Scottish Parliament, as part of the Scottish Consolidated Budget. As Keeper, I retain my status as a non-ministerial office holder within the Scottish Administration and the independence that this conveys. While moving to the Scottish Government budget does mean that our planning horizon is more fixed on one year rather than five,

the understanding of what we need to achieve in order to reach that future state remains crucial to our planning.

Whatever we do beyond 2025, right at the heart of our work will be our focus on applying our registration expertise to the ongoing job of maintaining and updating Scotland's Land Register and the other 19 – or by then potentially 21+ registers we maintain. Scotland's Land Register is a vital national asset that already underpins the Scottish economy and, when complete, will be fundamental to making it as easy as possible to transact on land and property in Scotland. Maintaining the integrity of the Land Register, ensuring that public trust and confidence in its accuracy is unwavering, will remain a key responsibility for RoS and one that we are proud to continue to discharge.

Whatever RoS does in 2025 and beyond, it will not do it alone. Working in partnership - with current and potential new partners - will be key to making the best use of our assets. Working with our partners to explore the options for the future, and developing those opportunities that will add the greatest value, will be a key thread that runs throughout the next five years. This will ensure that we reach 2025 able to deliver new activities and services that will provide the best value for Scotland.

This corporate business plan was profiled, written and agreed prior to the launch of measures to counter act the COVID-19 public health emergency. Our planning cycle ensures that we will revisit this plan fully in six months when we will have a clearer idea of the impact after six months, or earlier if possible.

Our Performance

Acting on feedback from customers, colleagues and our Board, we have rationalised our key performance indicators (KPIs) so that it is easier to see how we are performing against these key performance areas. 'The following areas of work are supported by our ongoing KPIs:
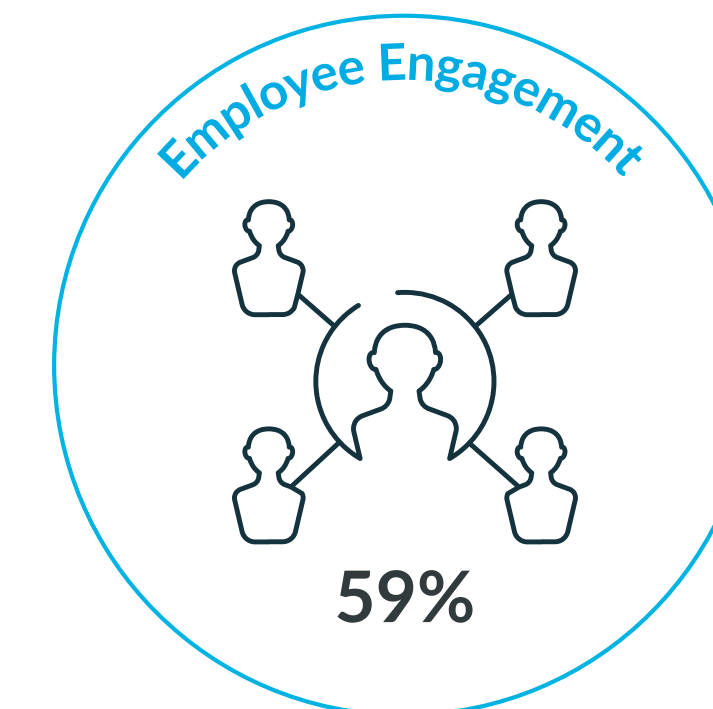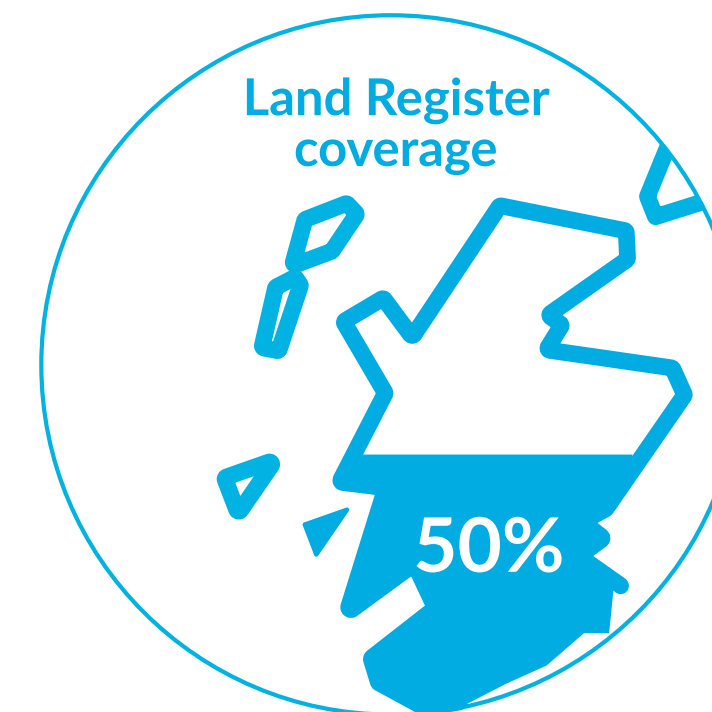
- **Clearing the arrear**
- **Completing the Land Register**
- **The quality of our work**
- **Customer satisfaction**
- **Employee engagement**

We continue to measure and monitor our performance against the full range of our delivery and development activities, but with particular attention paid to our KPIs. The delivery areas that were previously KPIs, are now classed as health measures. Each of our KPIs and our health measures have a senior manager appointed as the sponsor to ensure we retain a keen focus on how well we are doing and that we respond appropriately to any indicators that signal that action may need to be taken. This vital business intelligence, coupled with our customer insights, will be used to hone the work that we do and demonstrate real value for every pound we spend and invest.

We remain committed to transparency and there is a specific project looking at how we can do more. We will continue to publish quarterly updates on our KPI progress, as well as the monthly updates we publish on the performance of our service standards. Our Annual Report and Accounts, usually published in September, covers our performance in depth.

RoS is fully accountable to the Scottish Parliament, who also set our statutory fees on which we rely for our operating and improvement costs. We have also identified how we help deliver and support the Scottish Government's National Outcomes in the table on the next page.

Land Register coverage 50%

No arrear (exc Cat Bs)

Quality (applications) 93%

Customer satisfaction 80%

Employee Engagement 59%

National Outcome: **Health**
We are healthy and active

National Outcome: **Fair Work & Business**
We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone

National Outcome: **Human Rights**
We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination

National Outcome: **Communities**
We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe

National Outcome: **Economy**
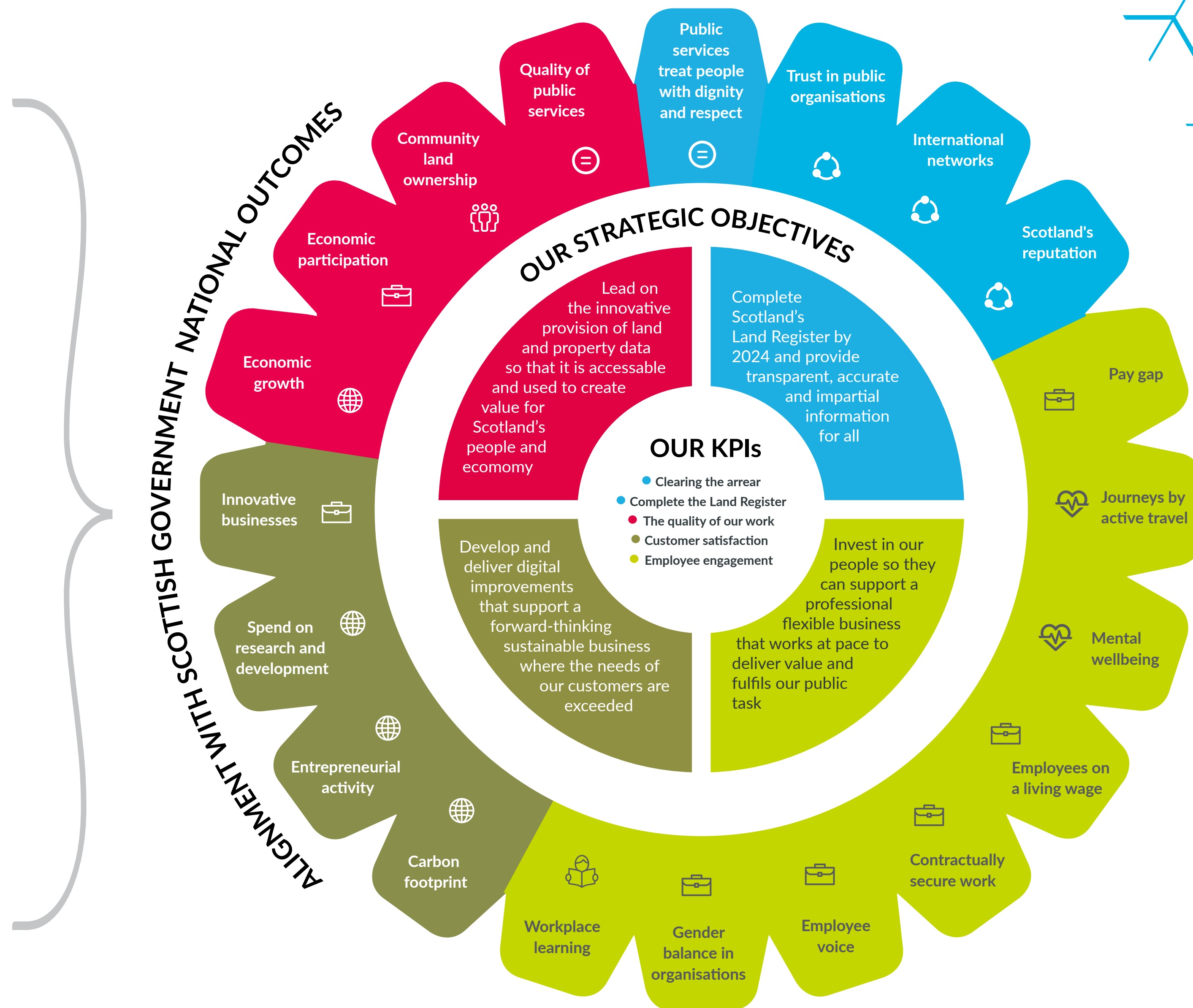We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy

National Outcome: **Education**
We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society

National Outcome: **International**
We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally

ALIGNMENT WITH SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT NATIONAL OUTCOMES

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Lead on the innovative provision of land and property data so that it is accessable and used to create value for Scotland's people and ecomomy

Complete Scotland's Land Register by 2024 and provide transparent, accurate and impartial information for all

Develop and deliver digital improvements that support a forward-thinking sustainable business where the needs of our customers are exceeded

Invest in our people so they can support a professional flexible business that works at pace to deliver value and fulfils our public task

OUR KPIs
- Clearing the arrear
- Complete the Land Register
- The quality of our work
- Customer satisfaction
- Employee engagement

Quality of public services
Public services treat people with dignity and respect
Trust in public organisations
International networks
Community land ownership
Scotland's reputation
Economic participation
Pay gap
Economic growth
Journeys by active travel
Innovative businesses
Mental wellbeing
Spend on research and development
Employees on a living wage
Entrepreneurial activity
Contractually secure work
Carbon footprint
Workplace learning
Gender balance in organisations
Employee voice

Our People

Our people are integral to the success of this organisation and inarguably our greatest asset. We highlighted in the last plan that we were committed to growing our own talent and investing in developing our staff. Over the last 12 months a significant promotions campaign has brought talent throughout RoS into new roles where they can thrive and deliver. We launched new learning pathways to upskill staff and a management programme to enhance the skills of our leadership teams. Our participation levels in the annual engagement survey increased beyond our expectations and we are embarking on our most comprehensive action planning yet to improve staff engagement even further. We are also maturing our strategic workforce planning model so that our skill set and resourcing projections are more accurate and deliverable. This will be particularly crucial as we respond effectively to less flexible budgetary cycles.

Our investment in our people has benefits beyond RoS. We have a unique set of expertise in registration, digital and data, and these skills combined with expert knowledge on how to deliver services, has real value to a growing range of stakeholders across Scotland. By 2025, we anticipate that we will have more capacity to share these three key areas of staff expertise with other organisations. This skills mix will also allow us to extend the offer of our existing products and services to new customers, to do new things for existing customers and, perhaps most exciting of all, to do things we have not yet imagined for customers that we have not yet identified.
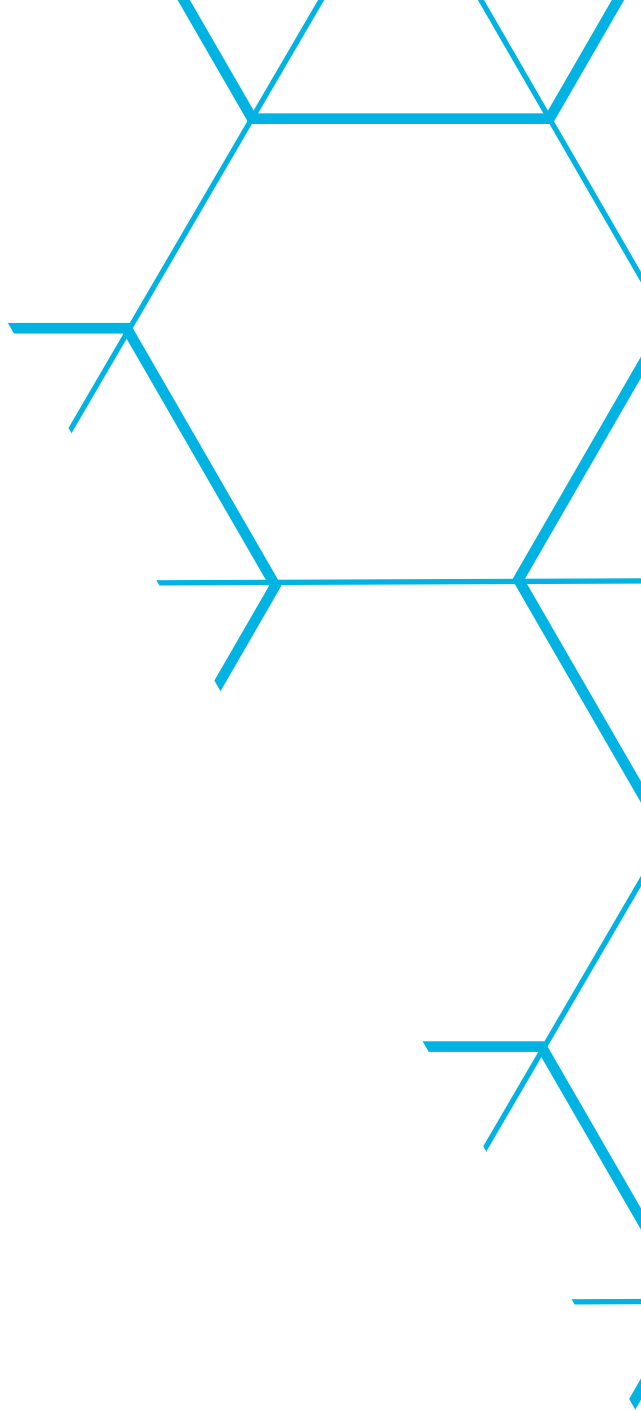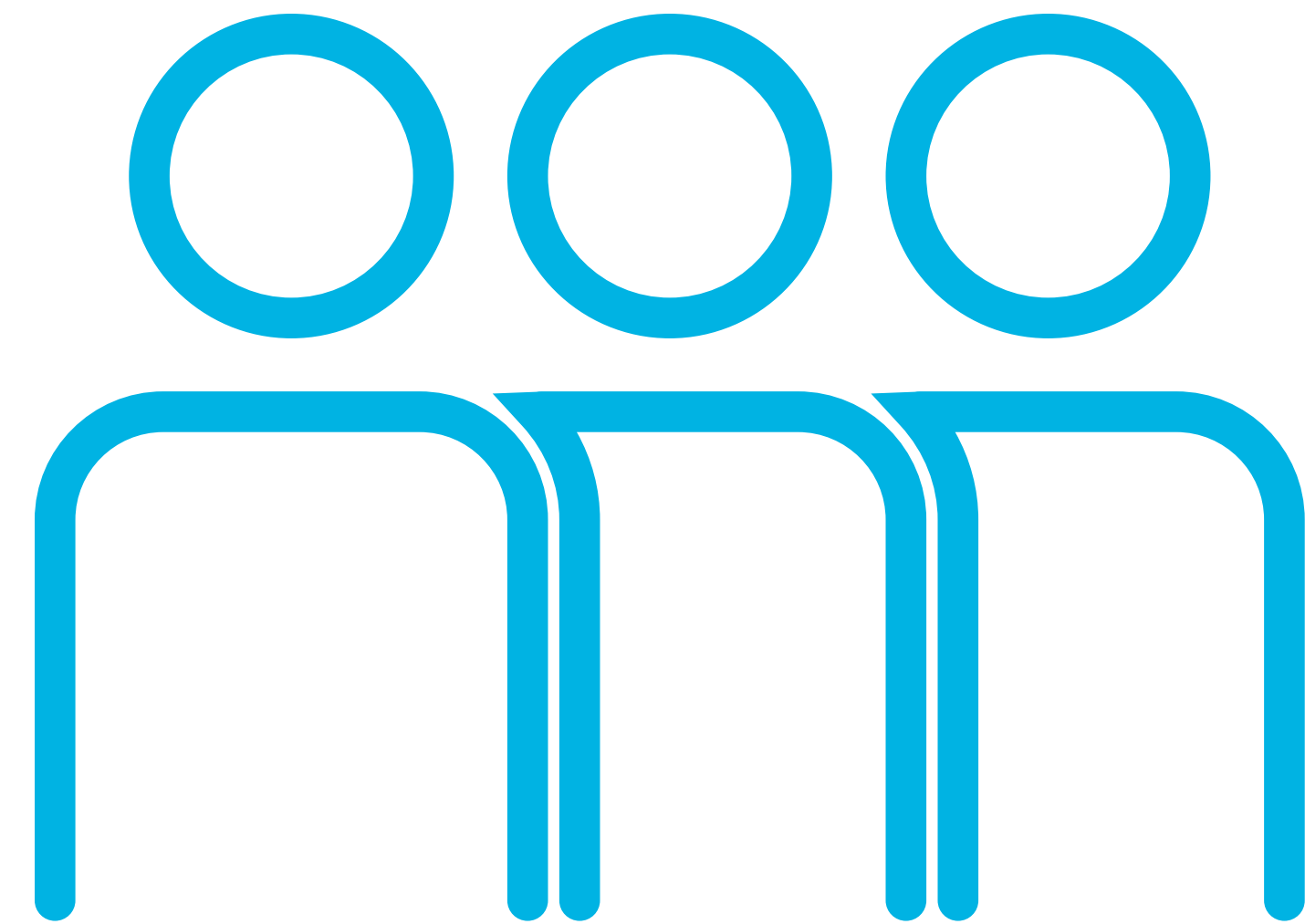
Our Eight Priorities

As with the first iteration of our corporate business plan, to ensure we focus on the right parts of what we do, our main activities for the next 18 months continue to be grouped into eight priorities under three themes – Do, Consolidate and Create. At the heart of these activities are our people and our customers – professionals and citizens, and the quality of the services and support we provide and deliver.

To support the delivery of these eight priorities we have evolved the delivery model for the improvements we want to make across our systems and services. This has seen us move away from a programme approach to digital improvements, to an ongoing business as usual approach, with six domains (or areas) identified. Each of these has a dedicated team and lead for delivery, who have ownership for the products and underlying systems in that domain. Central to their operating model is a focus on reducing and managing risk - as well as close working - so that the full benefits are realised from the successes and synergy these teams achieve.

Their main contributions are captured within our eight priorities set out opposite and outlined in the next few pages.

Do
- Business as usual
- Clear the arrear
- Land Register completion

Consolidate
- Digital
- Data
- Newest services

Create
- Geovation Scotland
- Future services

Do: Business as usual

Our core function remains the processing of over 760,000 applications annually. This is complemented by the provision of over 270,000 information requests in addition to the 2.4 million information searches conducted via our ScotLIS site. All of our registration and information teams are supported by a range of corporate and professional functions across RoS. Paramount to delivering efficiency and improving our effectiveness, are the multiple improvements we are making to simplify the processes that staff follow, as well as reducing the reliance on outdated digital systems. We are improving our digitisation of applications and the intake process, introducing real improvements that reduce time consuming tasks and increase accuracy.

This work has also seen the expansion of new service team structures that enable members to take ownership of an application or an information request, from start to finish. This team model is being expanded as it delivers real benefits to our customers and to staff by reducing processing times (by weeks in some cases) whilst supporting more customer focus and personal pride in the completion of the application or customer order.

Do: Clear the arrear

We continue to work hard to clear the backlog in case work built up during the transition from the 1979 Act to the 2012 Act. The work programme to clear this arrear has been developed with innovation, creativity and the customer at the heart of its solutions but it is taking longer than originally estimated.

There are two key goals for this work programme – to remove the arrear and prevent another one developing. In addition to our experienced team members tackling this complex casework, we have undertaken a comprehensive training programme and recruited and promoted where required. These teams have taken time to get in place and up to speed but they are now in good shape to deliver on the promise to clear the arrear. To reduce customer pain points we have introduced an expedite process so that in the small number of cases where it is really necessary, registration applications can be fast tracked. We have also approached the CEOs of the UK's top lenders to ensure that any inconvenience they or their customers might experience from this backlog is minimised. Although decreasing, the arrear remains unacceptable and the absolute priority for RoS.

To prevent the arrear building up again, we have completely rebuilt our standard process for the main type of registration case and we are utilising the improvements the service team model has delivered. These activities, coupled with digital improvements both current and planned, allow us to be confident there will not be a repeat of the backlog accumulation. This is proven by the evidence that we are now processing more applications than we receive on a daily basis.
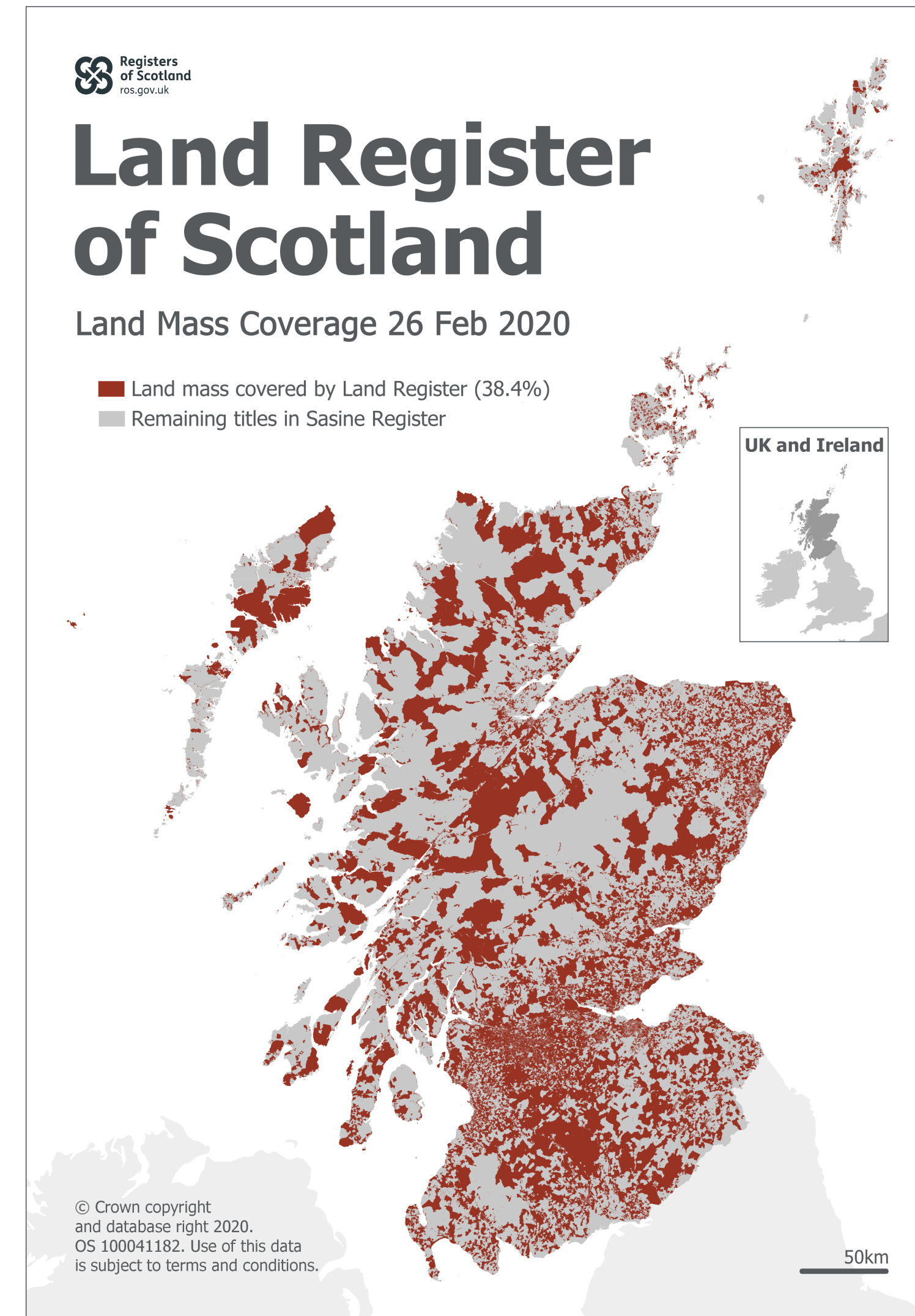
Do: Land Register Completion

Completing the Land Register map of who owns what across Scotland has real benefits: from greater access to more complete public data, increased transparency that benefits individuals, business, organisations (public, private and the third sector) as well as our communities.

In 2014, RoS was invited by Scottish Ministers to complete Scotland's Land Register by 2024. Accelerating the natural completion rate of the Land Register, including a 25 percent fee reduction for voluntary registrations, is a significant investment cost for RoS.

With changes to our level of funding under our new operating status following a reclassification of our status we will need to seek creative and innovative ways to be able to deliver Land Register completion in a meaningful way by 2024.

Two of the domains are looking at how we improve our data and mapping in a way that enables us to reuse information already captured through activities such as our plans assistance work and property search requests. We are also looking at other datasets held by partner government organisations that can help complete Scotland's land ownership jigsaw. In the next 18 months we expect to complete the transition from our legacy Digital Mapping System (now 25 years old) onto an up to date, flexible Cadastral Map System.

RoS remains committed to delivering this and seeing the remaining 64% of land mass moved from the historic Sasine Register to the modern Land Register.

Registers of Scotland ros.gov.uk

Land Register of Scotland

Land Mass Coverage 26 Feb 2020

■ Land mass covered by Land Register (38.4%)
□ Remaining titles in Sasine Register

UK and Ireland

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50km

Consolidate: Digital

With both internal and external demands on our digital expertise, it is not surprising that our digital, service design and product improvements run through all of the projects coming under the work of the domain teams. Our financial systems, customer products and services, mapping and Land Register and other registers, are all being worked on to deliver improved functionality, streamlined processes and heightened benefits. We have achieved the IT system resilience we prioritised in our last corporate plan with customers experiencing far fewer (if any) interruptions in our online service provision.

We remain focused through the work of the domain teams on the three pillars of managing our digital estate – update, retire and improve. We are liaising with customers who use some of our old systems to ensure that as we retire these and move to new ones there is the minimum of disruption and the maximising of benefits.

The work we will do between now and 2024 will cement Registers of Scotland's reputation as a public sector digital innovator; an expert creator of high quality, well designed, effective and efficient public digital services. When we have completed the task of digitising the interactions that our customers and citizens have with our registers, we will have capacity to apply our digital expertise to support other public bodies in the creation and development of their public-facing digital services.

Consolidate: Data

As custodian of a vitally important national data set we have a duty to ensure its benefits are maximised. We have a dedicated domain team working to improve our data quality and value so we can expand this information sharing potential whilst ensuring that data is held securely. Our expert team is also looking at where they can further support on land register completion, provide value to other public bodies and facilitate the ambitions of our Geovation start ups. One of the key deliverables of this project is the creation of a data warehouse. By structuring the data in a more managed way we can provide a single source of truth for users.

As the Land Register moves towards completion, our work to ensure that our data is in the best possible state will also build our data expertise. Understanding how to make best use of large data sets, to ensure quality, to make data available in a safe and accessible manner, are all skills that have much wider applicability in other spheres within the public sector, and as we progress we will have increased capacity to support other organisations with this expertise.

Consolidate: Newest Services

One of our newest services is Scotland's Land and Information Service (ScotLIS). This is a self-service online information hub giving access to our main property registers and is a vital tool

for people transacting on property. The ongoing development and expansion of the ScotLIS offering occurs on an almost a weekly basis and last year we were able to offer citizens title sheets for just £3.60 instead of £20-£30. This service improvement coupled with a map search function has seen public use of ScotLIS increase by over 50 per cent. Both of these improvements have major citizen benefits from a significant investment by RoS.

In addition to lower cost products we are looking at where we can offer increased customer value through reduced effort. This is demonstrated by our Digital Discharge Service (DDS) which takes mere minutes rather than days.

Create: Geovation Scotland

As custodian of a vitally important national data set we have a duty to ensure its benefit is maximised. Last year marked an exciting development for Registers of Scotland with the launch of Geovation Scotland in partnership with Ordnance Survey. This innovative partnership supports start-ups who identify how RoS data, combined with other geospatial and property data, can be used to solve problems and build businesses in Scotland. We already have one cohort in place with some already attracting funds from other investors. Their areas of focus include forestry and tourism. During 2020 we will bring on a second cohort and assess the potential for a third. Having a complete Land Register will mark a step change in the kind of problems that can be solved and, beyond 2025, we anticipate that one of our key roles will be working to ensure the Land Register data is used in the most imaginative

and creative ways possible, to generate the maximum possible value for the Scottish economy. Geovation and our own investment in research and development is putting us in a good position to deliver on this.

Create: Future services

Our commitment to being a digital innovator will continue throughout this plan as we continue to build on the investments already made. The Innovation Centre we created in 2015 continues to keep RoS future-focussed and the team inspire and gather ideas from across the business and customers to develop, trial and test improvements. Their mix of work covers day-to-day process improvements and more forward-thinking change – capturing ideas proactively from across RoS. To date over 50 significant business improvements have been trialled, tested and delivered through this team.

In addition to all of the above we have started to specifically look beyond 2024. Once the work of completing first registrations is done, as highlighted, we will have spare capacity within our expert set of colleagues with mapping, legal, registration and other related skills. This provides the opportunity for colleagues to apply these skills more broadly – potentially building other registers for Scotland but also supporting Scotland's role in the wider world – perhaps by providing Scottish expertise to activities such as supporting other countries in building and maintaining their Land Registers.

ScotLIS, our Digital Discharge Service and our improved online application form and website are all supporting more

streamlined channels for our customers to interact with us. Over the period of this plan we will continue to find ways to build on these improvements, whilst ensuring that future services and products are convenient for customers. We have introduced a single sign on for business customers and a new dashboard that allows them to manage their RoS casework.

We have also installed a new enquiry management system that has more than halved call waiting times and allows us to manage customer's enquiries whether they arrive by phone, email or web. We have gathered this improvement work under our customer facing domain.

Create: New Registers

We are already sharing our knowledge on the agile development of new and improved customer products. Not only on the development and management of current registers we operate for the Scottish Government, such as the Scottish Landlord Register, but also for potential future registers. The register most likely to launch first is the Register of Persons Holding a Controlled Interest in Land or ROCI. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, requires Scottish Ministers to make regulations for this new public register and the proposed regulations are currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament with a target date of 2021 for launch.

The Scottish Parliament is considering a number of pieces of legislation that ultimately may include provision of new registers. These include moveable transactions, community empowerment and sustainable development. These are not costed within our current corporate plan projections.

Beginning from an understanding of the users' needs, alongside our business needs and by undertaking research and involving customers in the design of new systems, we have a better understanding of what sorts of products and services our customers need. The move to agile build and delivery has seen multiple incremental and marked improvements over the last 12 months and we are confident that over the next 12 months and the full five years of this plan, this pace of change and improvement in conjunction with our customers will continue.

Financial and Staffing Projections 2020-2025

From 1 April the way RoS manages its finances is changing, in response to the reclassification of RoS by the Office of National Statistics. The Scottish Parliament has amended the financial arrangements to bring RoS into line with other parts of the Scottish Administration. The effect of this is that we are now formally part of the annual budget process and there is a risk that our longer term investment goals could be affected.

As part of RoS' remit we are required to invest in the improvement of the registers we hold to ensure that we fulfil our public task to the best of our abilities.

This corporate business plan communicates our priorities and what these main areas of investment will be and what staffing numbers we project will be required to deliver them effectively. Opposite is a table summarising our financial projections on these costs and the supporting income generated from carrying out our work. It is followed by a graph showing the projected staffing levels required to deliver this plan with attrition rates taken into account across the five year plan.

Projected Income and Expenditure 2020-25					
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Income	£87.7m	£85.2m	£81.2m	£78.2m	£78.5m
Salary costs	(£70.4m)	(£68.9m)	(£69.9m)	(£66.5m)	(£64.1m)
Non-salary costs	(£21.3m)	(£18.9m)	(£17.4m)	(£17.7m)	(£17.8m)
Net revenue expenditure	(£4.0m)	(£2.6m)	(£6.1m)	(£6.0m)	(£3.4m)
Capital Expenditure	(£4.0m)	(£4.0m)	(£3.5m)	(£3.5m)	(£3.5m)

Table: projected staffing levels and contract type
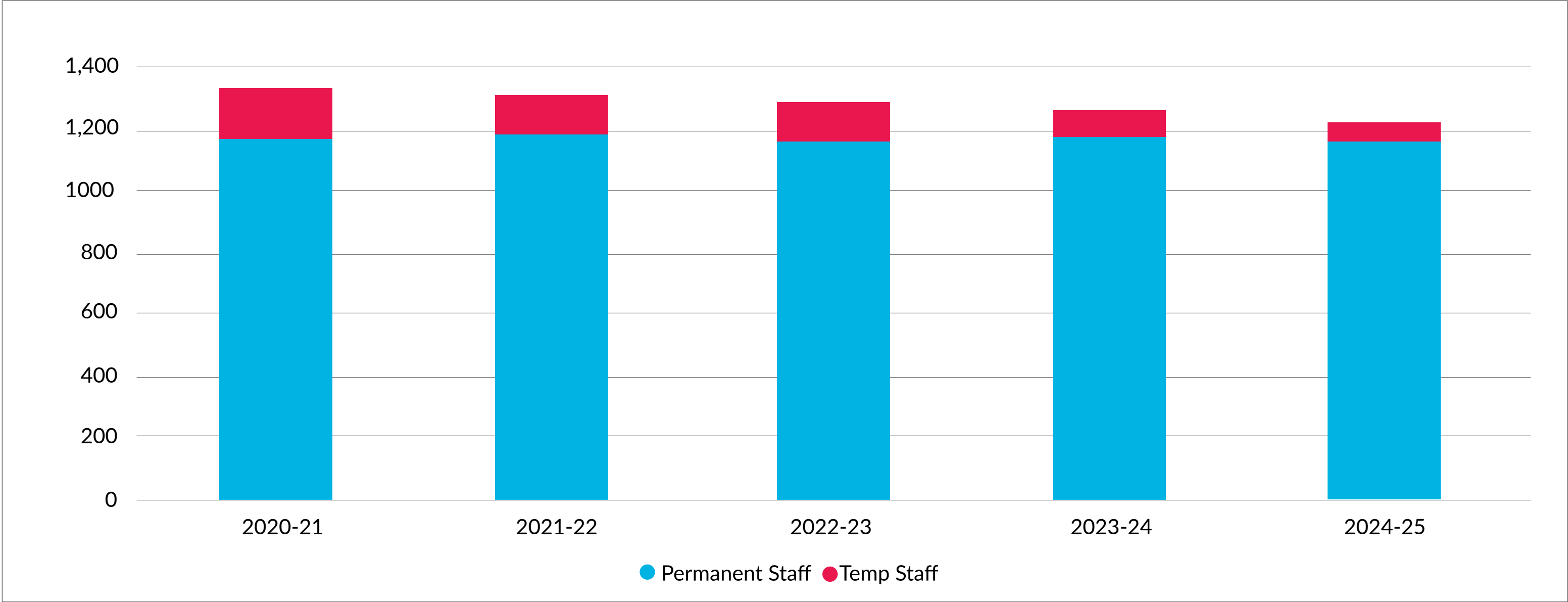
Our projected income and expenditure shows us drawing down from the Scottish Budget each year. The capital expenditure line covers investment in items like IT and office assets.

We will be considering measures to bring us into a cost neutral position. One of these will be whether our current fees need to increase as we have not changed our registration fees since 2011. This would be done through a fee review and consultation.

CREATE

DO

CONSOLIDATE

No arrear Sept 2020 (not Cat Bs)

Quality of cases above 93%,

Increase CSPS 63% participation rate & 59% engagement score

50% of Land Mass complete March 2021

CSAT score to improve to 80% or above Sept 2020

Geovation Scotland

Business as usual

Future services

Clear the arrear

New services

LRC

Data

Digital

FORWARD THINKING

IMPARTIAL

CUSTOMER FOCUSSED

PROFESSIONAL

Lead on the innovative provision of land and property data so that it is accessible and used to create value for Scotland's people and economy

Complete Scotland's Land Register by 2024 and provide transparent, accurate and impartial information for all

Develop and deliver digital improvements that support a forward-thinking sustainable business where the needs of our customers are exceeded

Invest in our people so they can support a professional flexible business that works at pace to deliver value and fulfils our public task

Vision
To be a digital registration and information business trusted for our integrity

Service standards
*Performance against our KPIs and service standards is also reported on our **website**.*

Registers of Scotland