

# Template Text for Contacting Businesses

*This template text was used in emails and letters to businesses. It was key to explain who we were and what organisations we represented and what we were offering (a free survey) but also set out what information we wanted from businesses.*

I am getting in touch as part of a project called Fieldwork: Mapping Scotland's Business Archives funded by The National Archives in partnership with the University of Glasgow and the Ballast Trust. Further details available [online](#).

Since the 1970s, over 600 Scottish businesses have been visited by successive Business Archives Surveying Officers to survey and record collections of historic business records. These collections consist of everything from minute books and financial ledgers to photographs, technical plans and advertising material – some date back to the 18th and 19th centuries while others are more recent. Some of these collections have been maintained by the businesses themselves, some have been deposited with public archives, and there are some whose whereabouts is unknown. The first phase of our project has reviewed this data to update and improve our knowledge of collections that have been listed.

We are now contacting historically significant businesses that have not been surveyed to address gaps in our understanding of Scotland's business history. We would like to offer the services of the Surveying Officer to organise a visit to identify and list any historic records you care for. A records survey would involve myself and possibly another colleague visiting to view any historical material you have available and producing a list of these items. Within the scope of this project we are planning to carry out a free half day's survey for businesses in the first instance. The survey would allow us to capture what records you have and provide advice on their long-term care and options for their use by your business and highlight any wider historical significance the collection may hold. However, a survey does not commit you to providing public access to those records.

You can see examples of previous surveys which are still in private hands where the owners have agreed to their survey being listed on the National Register of Archives for Scotland. This will give you an idea of the detail and scope of the work in some cases:

- [Crieff Hydro Ltd](#)
- [The Scotch Malt Whisky Society Ltd](#)

I would be grateful if you could let me know if your business holds an archive collection and if you would be interested in having a survey carried out or receiving any archive management guidance? As we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic, we are very aware that many businesses face a challenging economic climate – one of the main motivations for this project is to ensure that the rich history and heritage of Scottish business is preserved for future generations. If you would like any further information about the project please just let me know.

I look forward to hearing from you.