

Everyday records or living archives? Creating a new standard for record-keeping in residential care homes in Scotland and Germany

Karl Magee (University of Stirling)

Hugh Hagan (National Records of Scotland)

Back to the Future: archiving residential children's homes in Scotland and Germany

- 3 year research project: University of Stirling & University of Osnabrück
- partners include National Records of Scotland & Landesarchiv Berlin
- a focus on the everyday group aspects of residential care
- analysis of historical records of residential care homes to reveal aspects of group living
- design of digital 'living archives' preserving contemporary group experiences

ICA-SUV annual conference: Archives, Ethics and Society

Everyday records or living archives? Creating a new standard for record-keeping in residential care homes in Scotland and Germany

29 July 2021

Hugh Hagan
National Records of Scotland

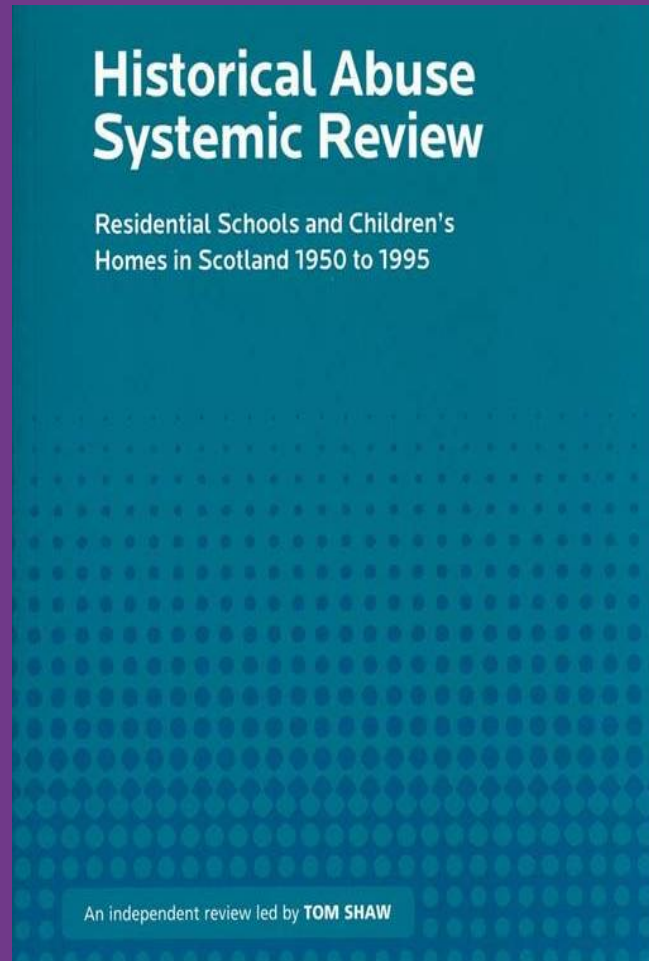
Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011



**Create a culture that
acknowledges and values
public records**

[Public Records Scotland Bill | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

Historical Abuse Systemic Review (2007)

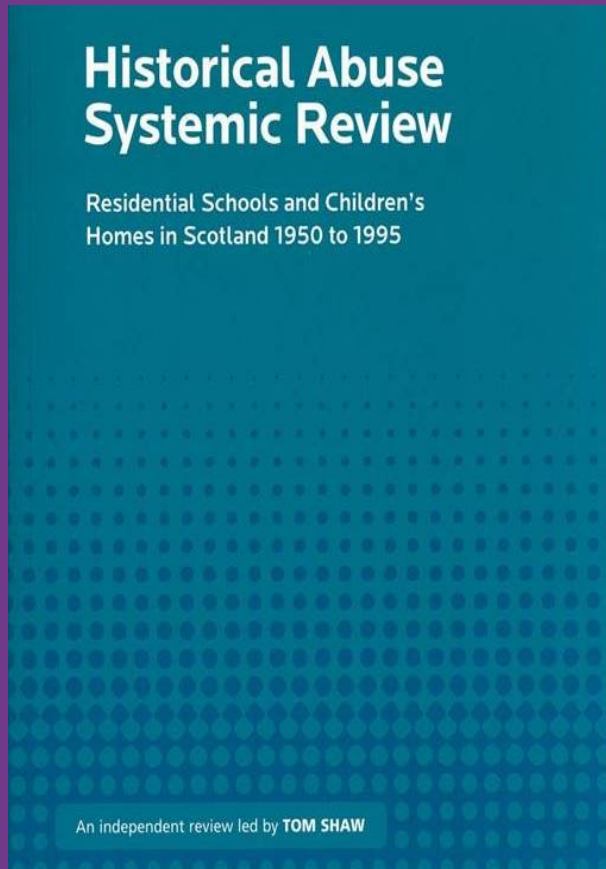


Lacking basic information about one's life can create real difficulties in areas that others take for granted

Shaw Report, 2007

[Historical Abuse Systemic Review: Residential Schools and Children's Homes in Scotland 1950 to 1995 \(webarchive.org.uk\)](http://webarchive.org.uk)

Historical Abuse Systemic Review (2007)



- ‘It was extremely difficult, if not impossible, for [authorities] to locate, identify and make accessible records specific to children’s residential services’
- ‘People in key positions, such as senior managers, seemed to lack understanding about the significance of records, what records existed and where’
- ***‘Government should address the need for permanent preservation of significant records held by private, non-statutory agencies that provide publicly funded services to children’***

The Scottish public sector still gets things wrong.



National
Records of
Scotland



@NatRecordsScot

Preserving the past |

Recording the present |

Informing the future

Public records created or held by third parties

Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011: Meaning of ‘Public Records’

Section 3:

(1) In this Act, “public records”, in relation to an authority, means—

(a) records created by or on behalf of the authority in carrying out its functions.

(b) records created by or on behalf of a contractor in carrying out the authority’s functions.

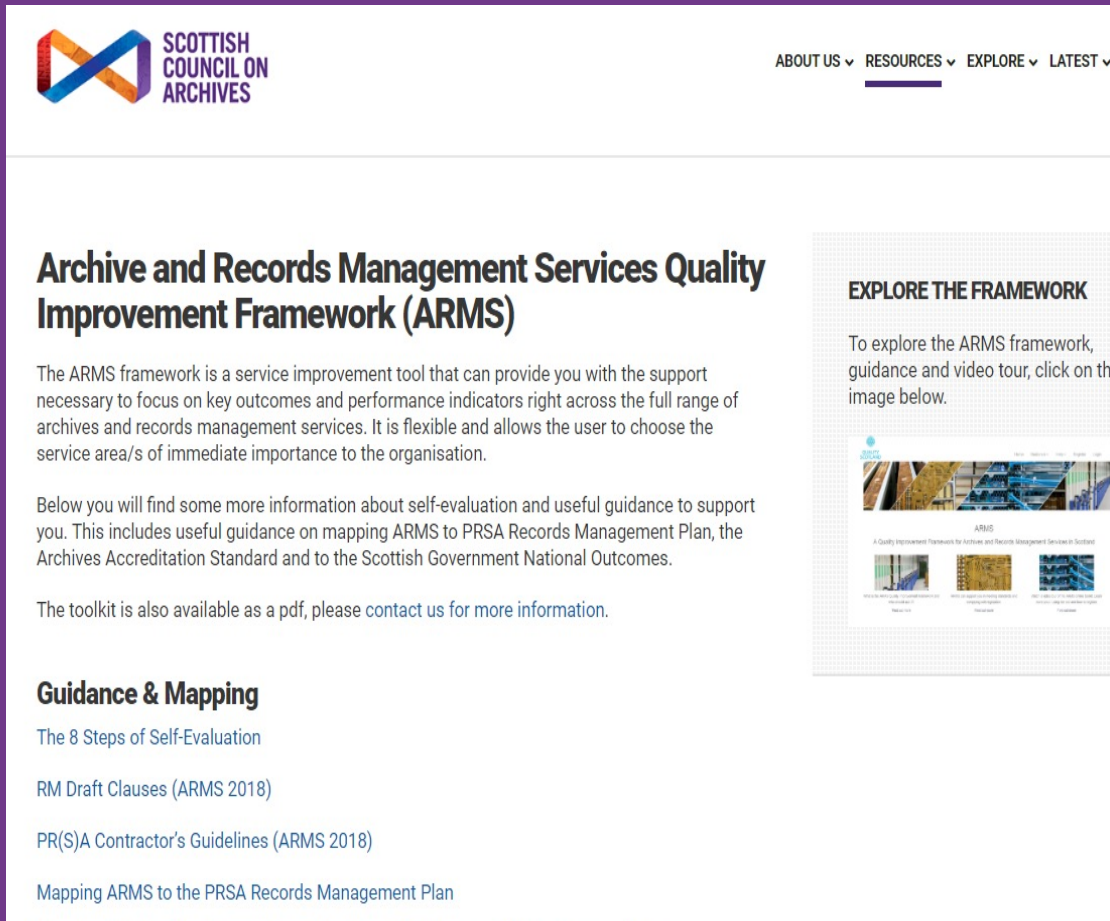
Public records created or held by third parties

The Keeper's authority as regulator of the Act does not extend to private, commercial, charitable or public bodies not named under the Schedule to the Act even if they are delivering the functions of named public authorities.

Guidance to the form and content of the Model Records Management Plan for developing records management arrangements under Section 1 of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

[NRS - Guidance to the Form and Content of the Model Records Management Plan \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://nrs.scot.nhs.uk/nrs/guidance-to-the-form-and-content-of-the-model-records-management-plan)

Third party compliance under the Act



The screenshot shows the website for the Scottish Council on Archives. The header includes the logo and navigation links: ABOUT US, RESOURCES, EXPLORE, and LATEST. The main heading is "Archive and Records Management Services Quality Improvement Framework (ARMS)". The text describes the ARMS framework as a service improvement tool. Below this, there is a section for "Guidance & Mapping" with links to "The 8 Steps of Self-Evaluation", "RM Draft Clauses (ARMS 2018)", "PR(S)A Contractor's Guidelines (ARMS 2018)", and "Mapping ARMS to the PRSA Records Management Plan". On the right side of the page, there is a section titled "EXPLORE THE FRAMEWORK" with a video tour link and a thumbnail image of the ARMS framework.

- Records Management Draft Clauses

- PRSA Contractors Guidance

[Archive and Records Management Services Quality Improvement Framework \(ARMS\) - Scottish Council on Archives \(scottisharchives.org.uk\)](https://scottisharchives.org.uk)

Third party adoption of the Keeper's guidance

It should be noted (and celebrated) that many organisations not subject to the [Act] nevertheless use the [the Keeper's guidance] as a tool for 'navigating' their way through the requirements for good records management. Some have even expressed a wish they were subject to the Act in order to bolster their records management business case.

Joe Chapman, Information and Records Management Society.
Keeper's Annual Report to Scottish Ministers, 2019
[Report by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland - 2019](#)
 [\(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](http://nrscotland.gov.uk)

Why records management matters!

“When my family file was found it included Christmas cards and letters from my mum and dad and photos of me and my brothers. I was denied them for nearly 40 years. I was told the difficulty in finding records was because ‘social work categorised files oddly’ ...”

Chris Daly, Petitioner to the Scottish Parliament and survivor of in-care abuse

[Public Records \(Scotland\) Act 2011 - Report by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, 2014](#)
nrscotland.gov.uk

Research with impact
'Archive curious'

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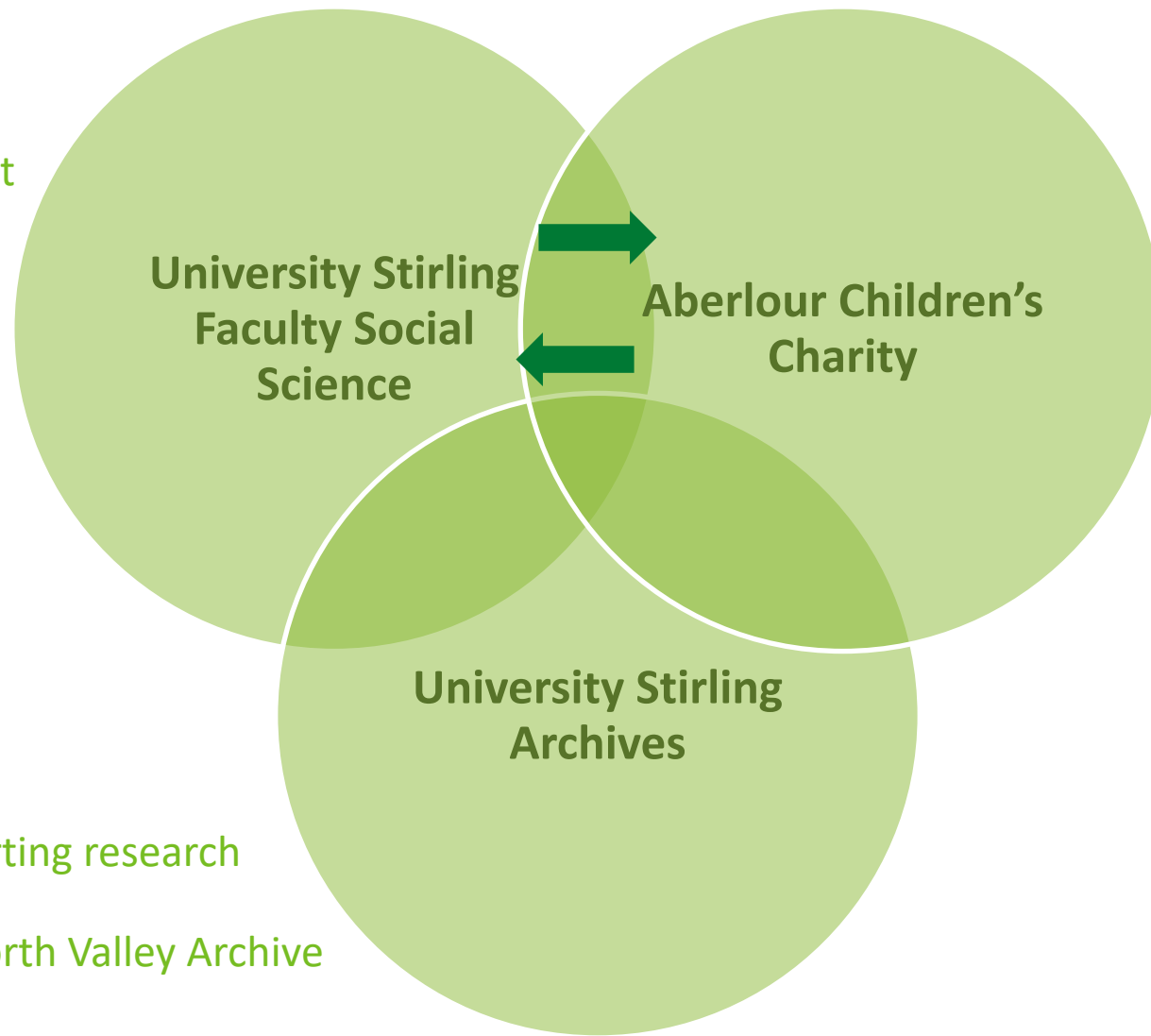
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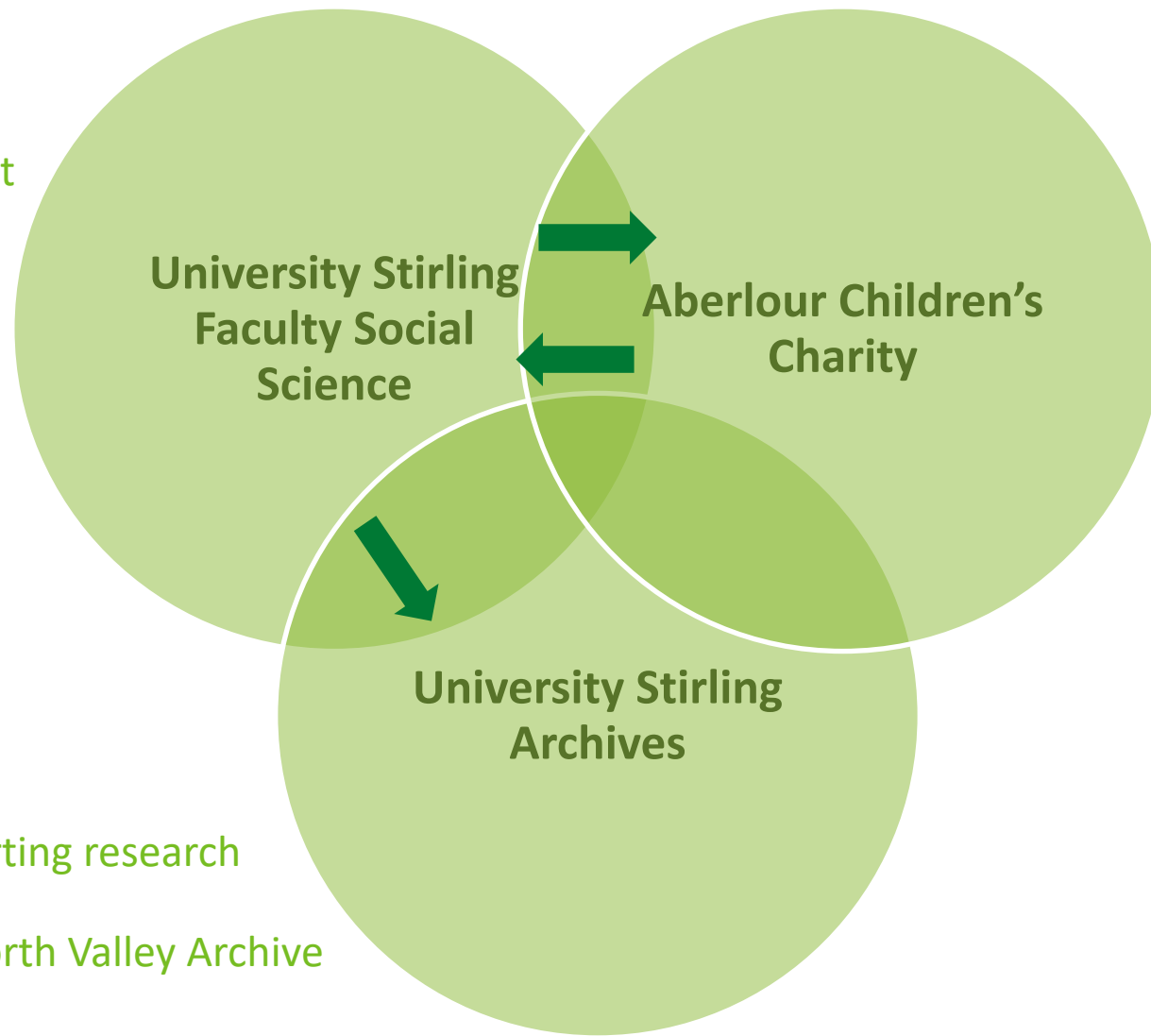
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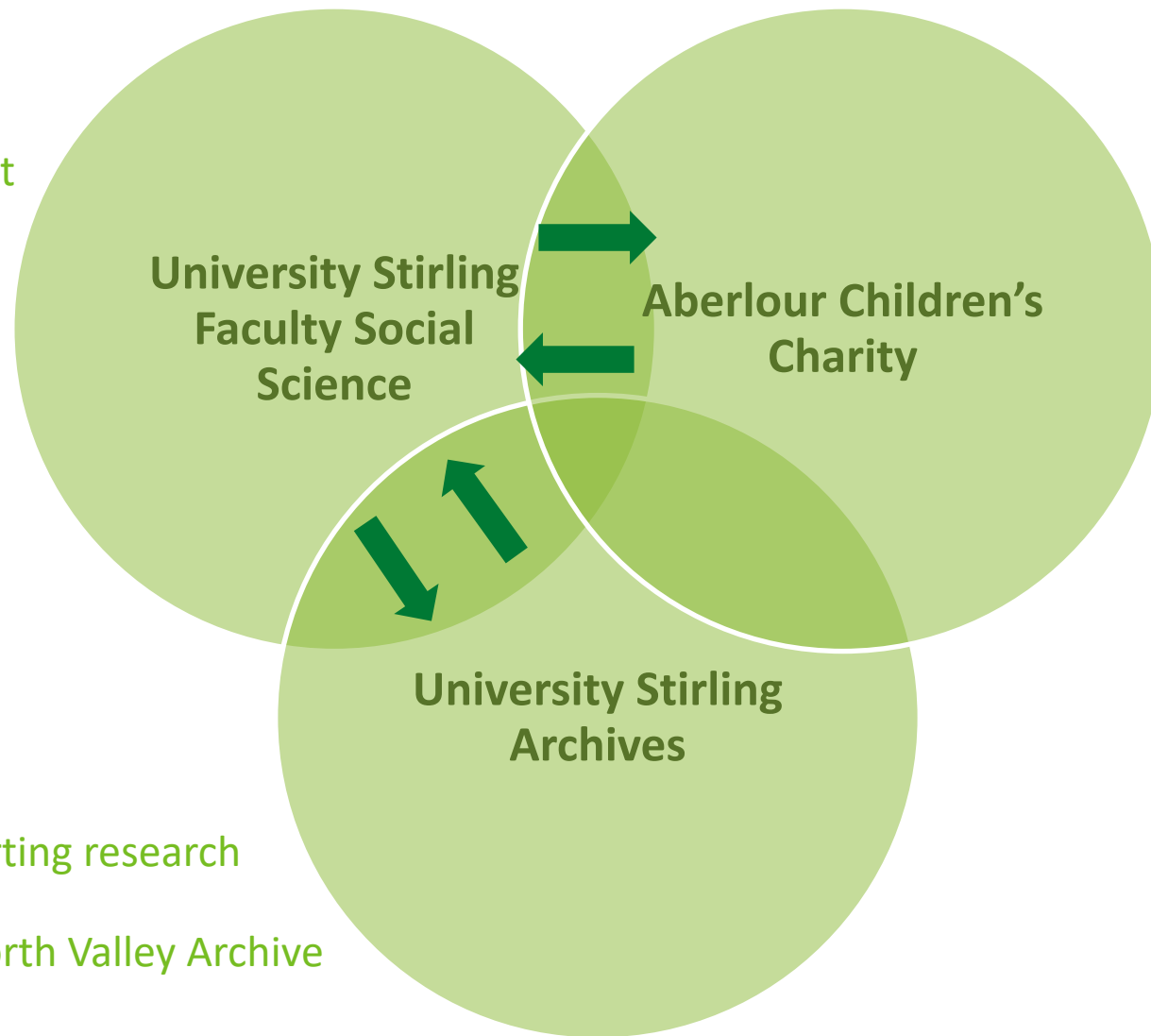
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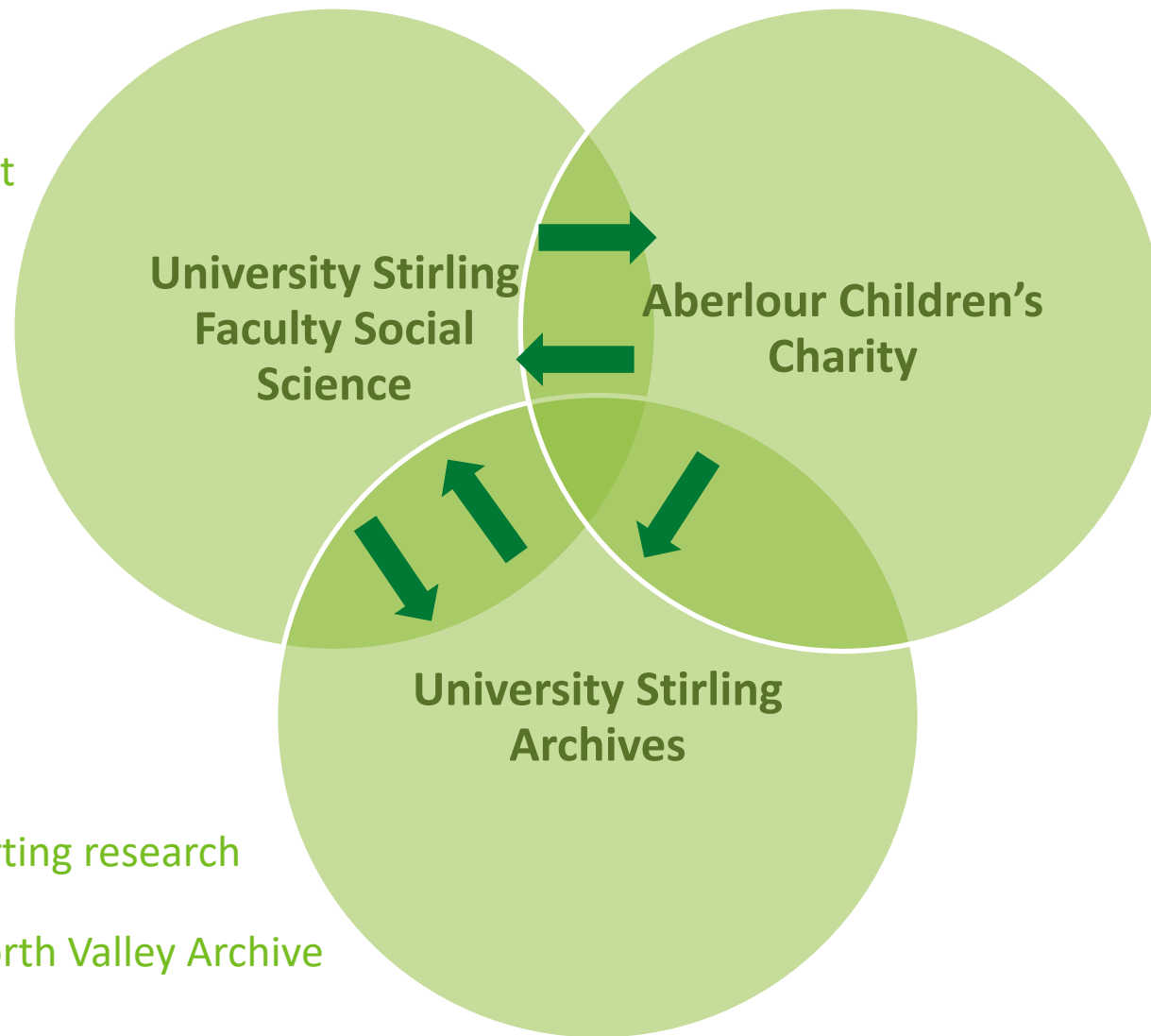
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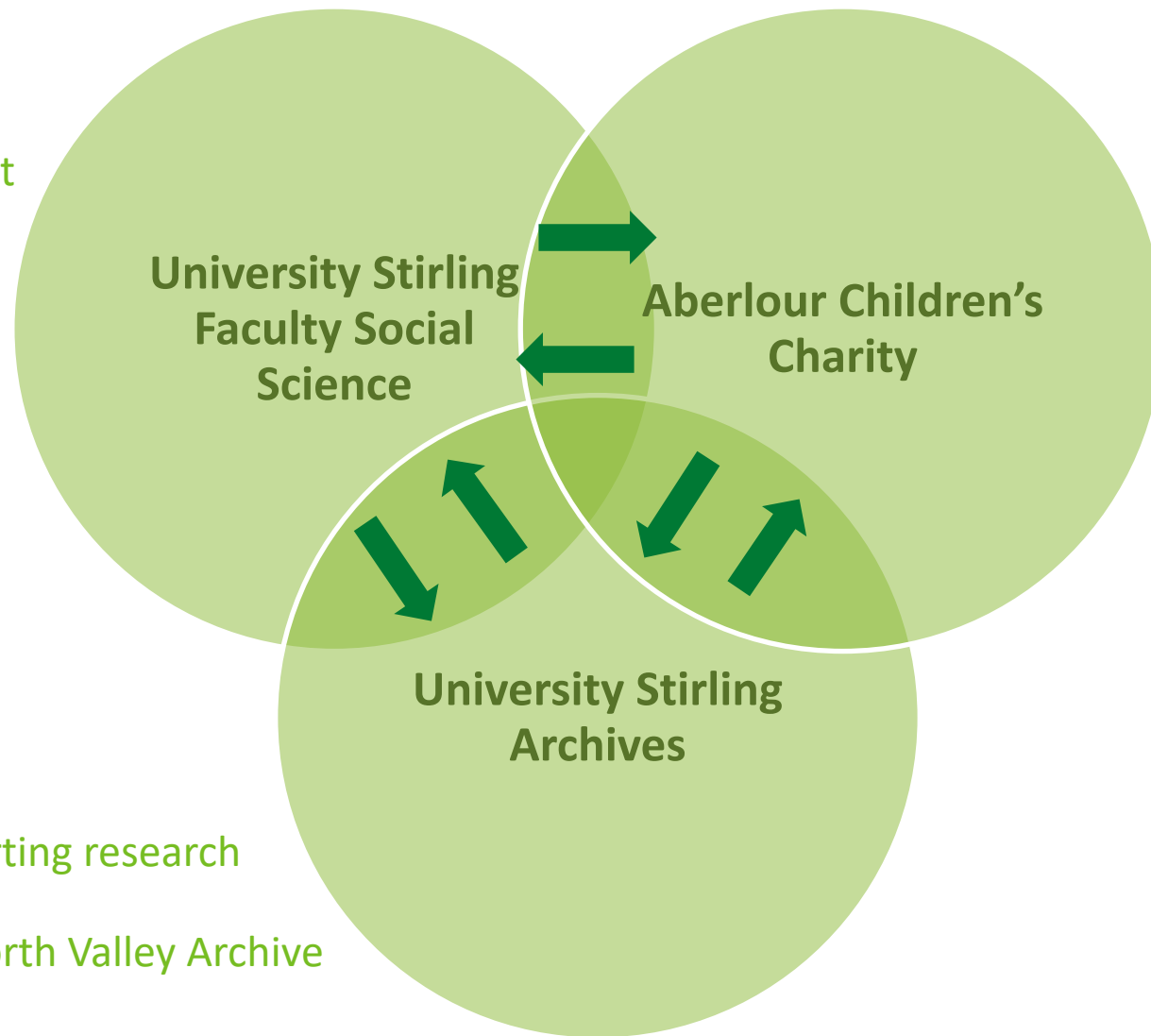
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UK-German collaborative research projects announced



26 November 2020

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG) announce 18 collaborative research projects.

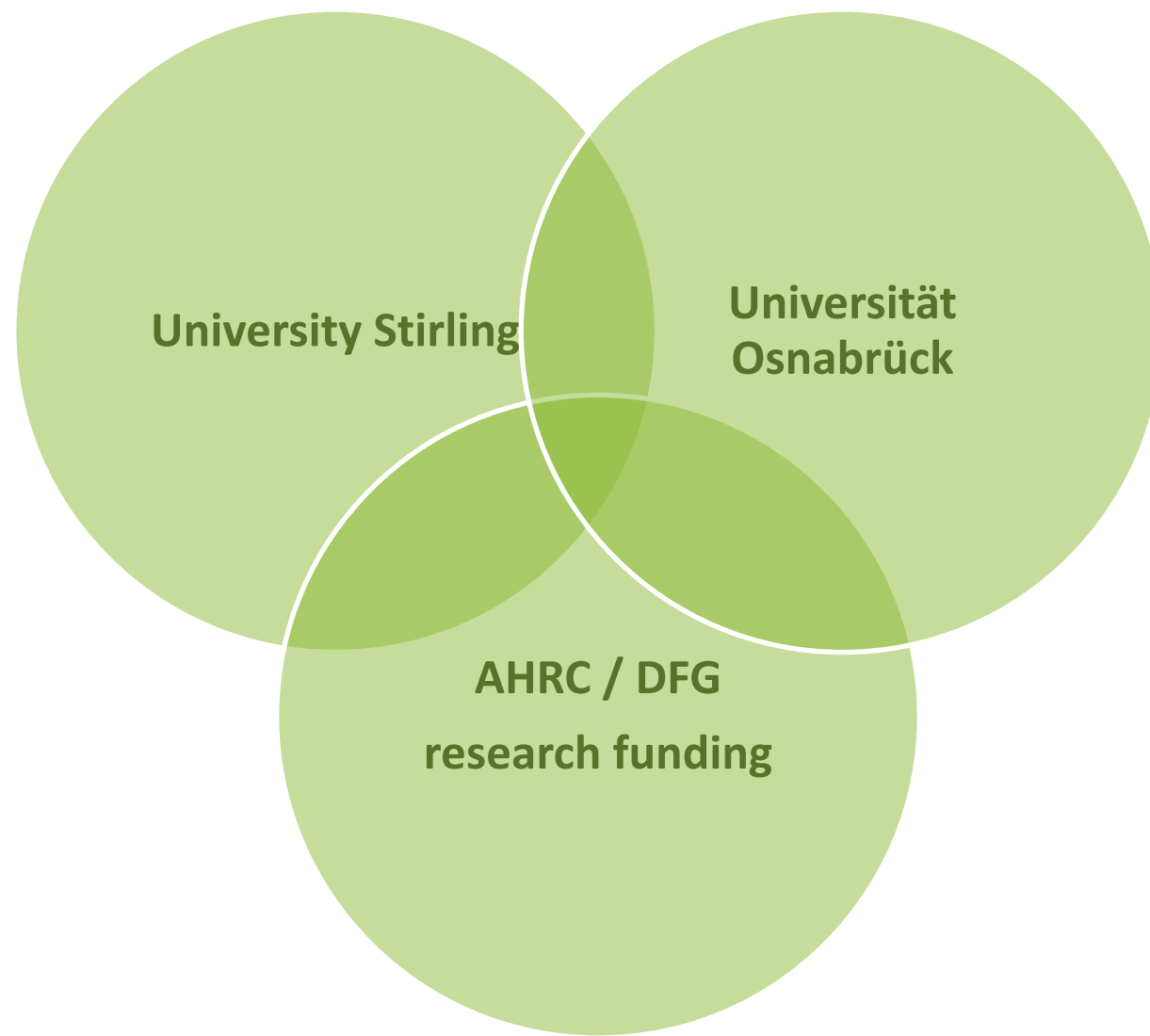
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⇒ [UK-German collaborative research projects in the humanities](#)

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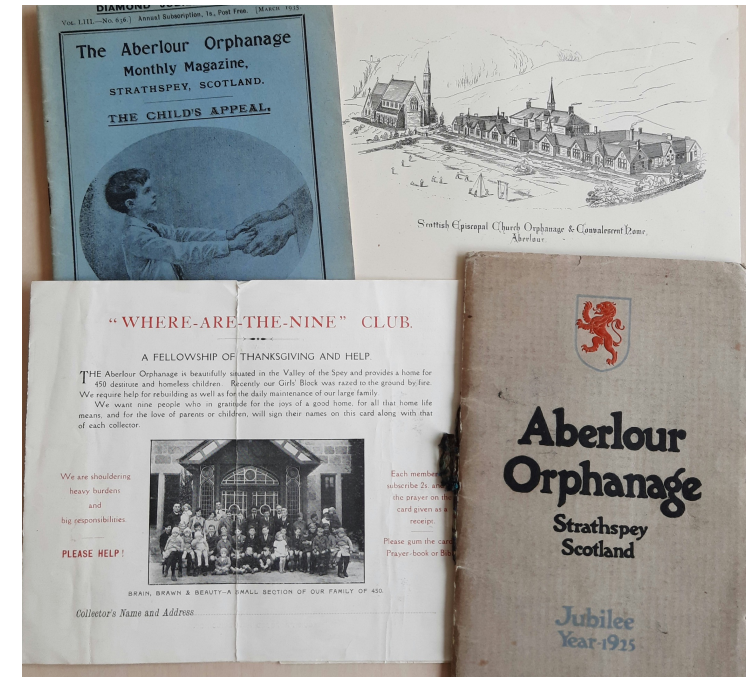
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Phase 1:

“The first phase of the project will carry out a historical analysis of archives from 1920-1980 identifying traces of everyday group life found in the records and what this tells us about existing cultures of archiving in residential childcare.”

Aberlour:



1875

1920

1980

2021

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Back to the Future at Universität Osnabrück

- Investigation of the historical archiving practice in the context of residential care using the example of the Residential homes of the v. Bodelschwingh Institutions in Freistatt
- Empirical basis and place of investigation: Bethel main archive in Bielefeld
- Findings of different types of documents:
 - Individual case files (1950-1980)
 - Published "work reports" of the v. Bodelschwingsche Anstalten Bethel (1948-1981)
 - Meeting minutes by the caretakers
 - Meeting minutes by pupils from the school in Freistatt
 - Freely accessible historical photographs in a photo box in the Bethel archive
 - Published magazine for young people about Bethel (1972-1980)
- Legal framework for the use of historical archival materials according to the archives law (ArchivG NRW)
 - Legal use of the archive material is allowed after a protection period of hundred years after birth, if the person is still alive.
 - For research purposes a special permit can be requested to lift the restrictions

Research Questions:

- 1. Understanding:** How was the everyday, collective experience of group care recorded and preserved in pre-individualised settings?
- 2. Development:** What do contemporary young people, staff and ex-residents choose to record about their life together?
- 3. Creation:** How does the collective experience of group care get captured and retained within a context of risk, regulation and state involvement?
- 4. Tracking:** Who uses the archives and why?
- 5. Sustaining:** Who takes ownership of the collective past in the form of the archives?



Challenges:

- Ethical, legal and moral
- Access and responsibility
- Cataloguing and personal information
- International collaboration
- Absences in the archive
- Creating a 'living archive'

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