

First Scottish Cabinet papers released to the public today



When the first Scottish Cabinet met under the leadership of First Minister Donald Dewar in May 1999 they had a lot to sort out. Not all of it was immediately concerned with making new laws, but dealt with the more mundane such as finding out when and how often they would meet. They also had to decide where they would convene to begin the work of the newly elected Scottish Parliament.



From today Scottish Cabinet papers from 1999 are released to the public among the annual release of archived information at the National Records of Scotland, and they reveal details about the first meetings.

[The Edinburgh Reporter NEWS – Cabinet records from 1999 made public](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Cabinet Papers and minutes now available for public viewing show discussion around issues of the day ranging from Land Reform to Freedom of Information.



These files form part of the annual release of archived information by the Scottish Government. Since 2009 the Scottish Government has proactively opened over 13,000 files at 15 years rather than the traditional 30 years.

Freedom of Information legislation effective from 1 April 2014 has reduced the period of time most information can be withheld, meaning more Scottish public authority

information will be in the public domain earlier than it would otherwise have been.

Tim Ellis, Chief Executive of NRS and Keeper of the Records of Scotland, said: “These papers provide an interesting glimpse into the considerations of the then newly established Scottish Cabinet. They add significantly to the broad range of historical records about government activities in Scotland now available to researchers. And they complement the other unique information about Scotland’s people and history that NRS holds on behalf of the nation.”



Visiting the archives at the National Records of Scotland, Joe FitzPatrick, Minister for Parliamentary Business, said: “I’m sure the first papers of the Scottish Cabinet included in this latest file release will prove fascinating reading for politicians, historians and the wider public.

“Information made available at the National Records of Scotland as well as the wealth of information proactively made available on the Scottish Government’s website demonstrates this Government’s on-going commitment to openness and transparency.

“The Scottish Government is proud of its record in ensuring Scotland’s Freedom of Information legislation remains up-to-date and the most robust across the UK.”