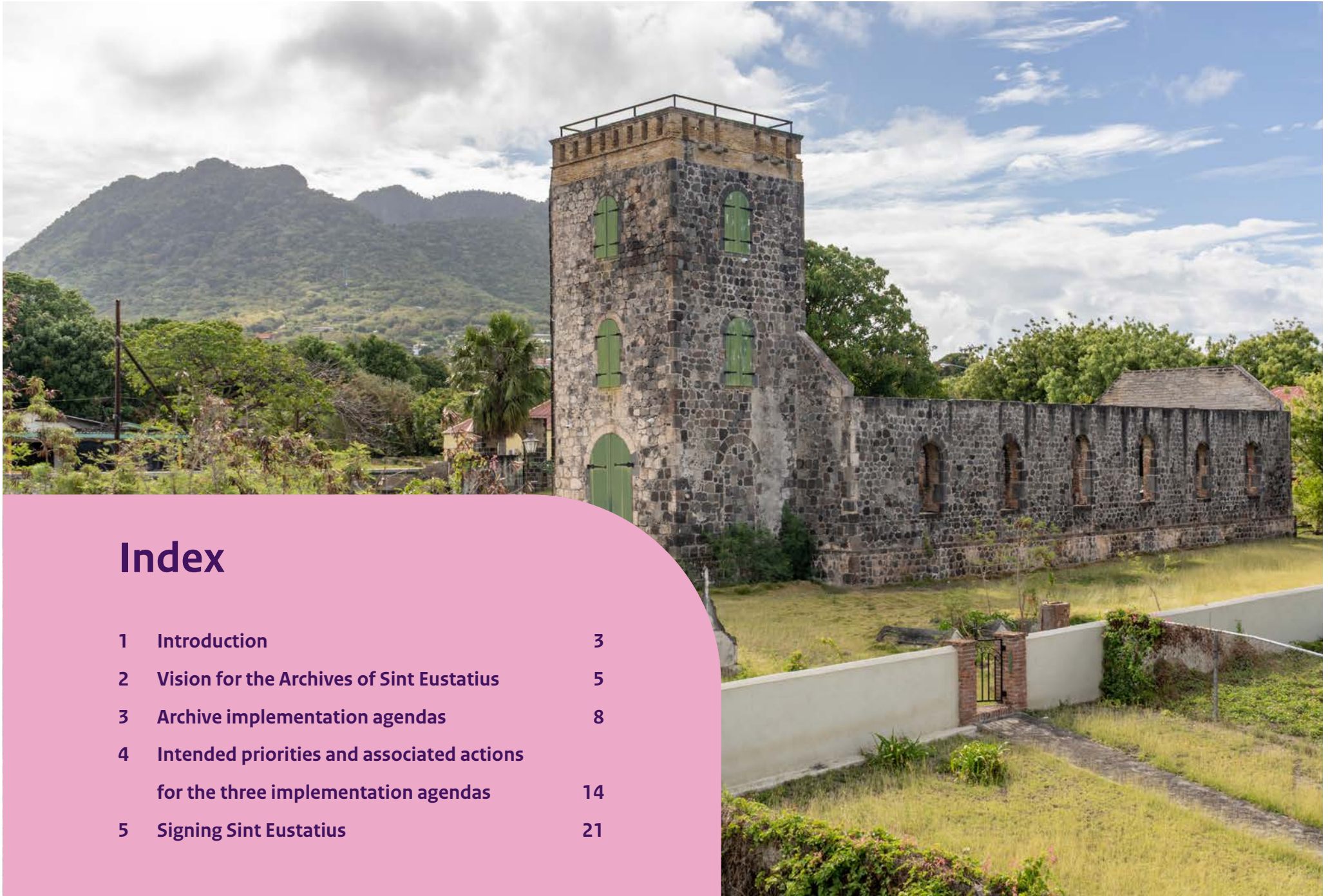




Sint Eustatius Archives Agenda

Priorities 2026-2030





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Introduction

In 2022, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science ('the Ministry') and the Public Bodies of the Caribbean Netherlands ratified the Culture Covenant 2022-2025, in which it was agreed that the parties would be jointly responsible for the cultural infrastructure.¹ At the request of the Caribbean Netherlands, in December 2025 the duration of this Culture Covenant was extended to 2028. Two articles in the Cultural Covenant are dedicated to archives, archival repositories, digitization and making heritage available online.

Elaborating on the Culture Covenant, in June 2024 a multi-year cultural agenda was established, in which the agreements between the Ministry and the Public Entity of St Eustatius ('the Public Entity') are set out in more detail. It aims to lay the foundation for various cultural topics by strengthening cooperation between the parties involved, stimulating knowledge sharing and making national policy instruments widely available, including to applicants in the Caribbean Netherlands. Drawing up an archive agenda for the Public Entity is one of the agreements included in the St Eustatius Cultural Agenda.

1.1 Legal framework

For the Caribbean Netherlands, which consists of the Public Bodies of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act² has been in effect since the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles on 10 October 2010. This act is a technical transposition of the National Ordinance Regulating the Archive System in the Netherlands Antilles (Official Bulletin 2008, no. 7), which was in force until that time and was largely based on the Public Records Act 1995. During the transposition, the existing national ordinance was changed as little as possible.

¹ [Cultural Covenant 2022-2025](#)

² By Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act is meant Archiefwet BES.

1.2 Challenge and shared task

The Archive Agenda is a specific elaboration of the St Eustatius Culture Agenda on the theme of archives and contains a list of the Public Entity's priorities that will be worked on during the term of the Archive Agenda. These priorities have been identified and discussed in meetings and archive working sessions with the Public Entity stakeholders who have archives and documentary information services in their portfolios.³

Many of the priorities relate to the creation of island legislation and regulations and to adequately equipping staff. The National Archives of the Netherlands ('National Archives') and the Ministry can offer support in this regard in the form of knowledge, advice and mediation. A number of priorities concern structural funding or sustainable investments in buildings and the professionalization of staff.

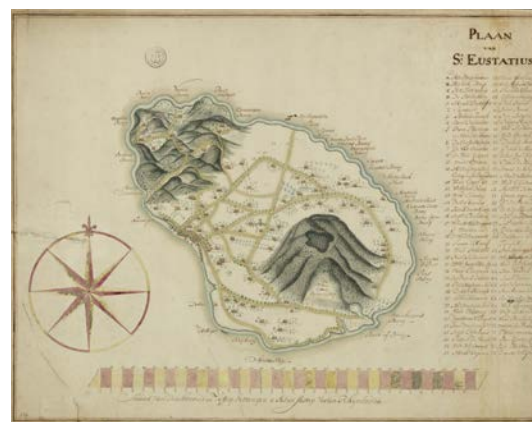


The financing of these priorities requires further consideration within the Public Entity's regular financial frameworks. This will not be easy, due partly to the Public Entity's limitations for borrowing from the capital market. It may be useful to address these priorities through, for example, administrative agreements or regional deals, so that funding can be requested for them.

³ From 17 to 26 November 2025, the Ministry and the National Archives, together with the archives and documentary information services portfolio holders on Saba, St Eustatius and Bonaire, held valuable discussions and intensive working sessions to map out the desired priorities for each Public Entity.

1.3 Collaboration and synergy between public bodies

The workshop sessions on Bonaire in November 2025 prompted stakeholders from the public bodies that have archives and documentary information services in their portfolios to explore potential collaboration with Saba and Bonaire regarding priorities. This approach is logical given the scale of the public bodies, the fact that the same legislation and regulations apply, and the funding system. The public bodies can look for opportunities to work together, for example by drafting joint arrangements or making agreements regarding archive management, which will allow for better deployment of staff and resources. An examination of mutual needs and administrative support among the various archive portfolio holders would be beneficial.



Collaboration with other cultural disciplines – such as museums, archaeology and community engagement – could be of great value by, for example, sharing depots, public information desks, research spaces and security. Pooling resources at a single location could lead to synergy and a more efficient use of spaces, budgets, knowledge and staff. In this agenda we will first address a general vision for the archives of St Eustatius, and then discuss three closely connected implementation agendas for three interconnected archives. Lastly, an overview of intended priorities and actions is enclosed.



2

Vision for the Archives of Sint Eustatius

2.1 Preserving, understanding and passing on our collective memory

St Eustatius is an island with a rich history, a strong community and a unique place within the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Our history lives in our historic buildings, our families, our traditions and our stories. Equally important, however, is the history preserved in documents, photographs, maps, manuscripts, digital records and archives. Together, these form our collective memory.

Archives are far more than collections of old documents. They tell us who we are, where we come from and how our island has developed over time.

They enable our government to operate transparently and responsibly, supporting our residents in accessing information about their families, property and rights, and providing researchers, students and future generations with the resources needed to better understand the story of St Eustatius.

However, in our current situation our archival collections are dispersed across multiple locations and are not always easily accessible; they are vulnerable to deterioration due to age, climate and inadequate storage conditions. When archival material is lost, parts of our history, identity and collective memory are lost with them.

For this reason, we embrace a shared vision for the archives of St Eustatius. It is a vision founded on preservation, accessibility, professionalism and collaboration, looking beyond today's needs and focusing on the legacy we wish to leave for future generations. Our ambition is clear: to ensure that the archival heritage of St Eustatius is sustainably preserved, professionally managed and made accessible to residents, researchers, students, families and other stakeholders, both locally and internationally.

Within this vision, we distinguish three interconnected implementation agendas.

2.1.1 Government archives

The government archives form the institutional memory of the Public Entity. They document how decisions are made, how public resources are used and how our government fulfils its responsibilities. A professionally managed government archive contributes to transparency, legal certainty, accountability and public trust.

Our objective is to ensure that government information is properly managed from the moment it is created, digitally accessible where appropriate, and preserved for the long term. This is not simply an administrative obligation but an essential public responsibility. Residents should be able to trust that government information remains accessible over time and that the history of the Public Entity's actions is carefully preserved for future generations. The government archives therefore form the foundation of reliable governance and an invaluable historical resource.

2.1.2 Cultural heritage and community archives

The history of St Eustatius is not told solely through government records. Equally important are the stories preserved by residents, families, churches, schools, community organizations, museums and other cultural institutions.

These collections reveal the human dimension of our history, documenting daily life, migration, faith, education, business, music, sport, traditions and the legacy of slavery. Together they give meaning to our shared identity as Statians and the diaspora. We believe these stories deserve a safe and sustainable place within St Eustatius's heritage infrastructure, with a focus on community and with public support available for preservation, management and accessibility. We therefore aim to actively collect, preserve, digitize and make accessible the cultural heritage and community archives of St Eustatius. In the long term, we envision establishing an independent foundation responsible for managing and developing the island's cultural and community archives. Operating professionally and independently while remaining closely connected to the community, this foundation would not only preserve archives but also promote education, research, exhibitions, oral history initiatives and public engagement.

In this way, the cultural archives become more than a repository of the past; they become a place where the history of St Eustatius comes alive.

2.1.3 Private archives

An important part of the history of St Eustatius remains in private ownership. Families preserve photographs, letters and personal documents. Businesses maintain historical records. Schools, churches, foundations and civil society organizations all hold archives that reflect the island's development. Together, these collections form an essential complement to the official historical record.

Our vision is that private owners should remain in control of their own collections and determine how they wish to manage them. At the same time, we aim to provide opportunities for historically significant collections to be voluntarily donated or entrusted to the island, where they can be professionally preserved and safeguarded for future generations. Through this collaborative approach, government, communities and residents together create a richer, more complete understanding of the history of St Eustatius.

2.2 From vision to implementation

This vision provides the foundation for three closely connected implementation agendas.

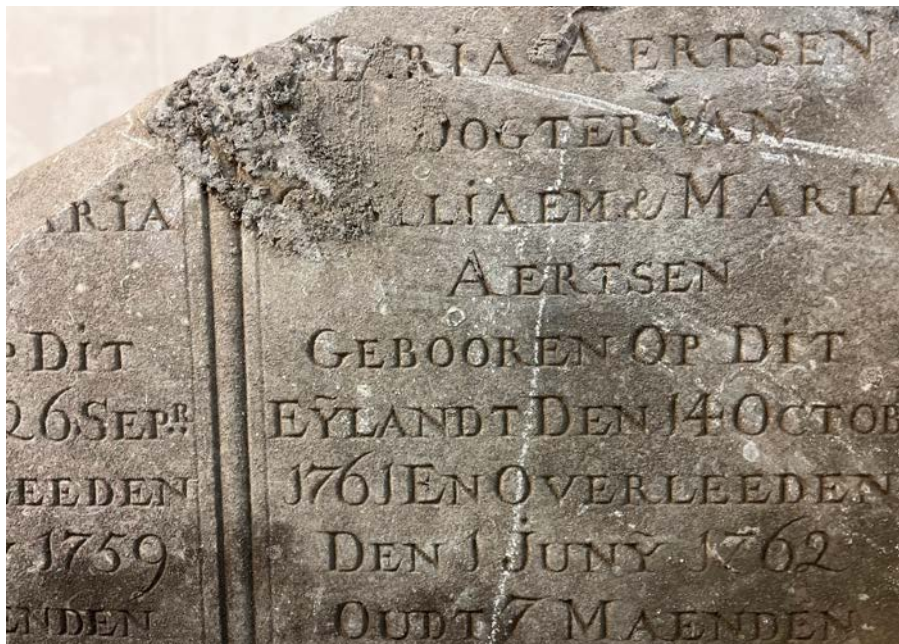
- The first focuses on the government archives, addressing legislation, information management, digitization, long-term preservation and the development of a professional records department.
- The second focuses on the cultural and community archives. Its emphasis will be on collection development, cultural heritage preservation, public engagement, education, digitization, research and the future establishment of an independent archival foundation.
- The third implementation agenda focuses on private archives. Its emphasis will be on preservation, digitization, support for private archive owners and opportunities for the voluntary transfer of archives of significant historical value for their long-term preservation.

Although all three of these implementation agendas have different priorities, they work towards the same overarching goal: one integrated archival infrastructure for St Eustatius in which government records, community memory and cultural heritage are preserved for the long term and made accessible to everyone.

2.3 Our long-term vision

We envision a future in which every Statian can easily access their history. A future where students can research the island's past, families can rediscover their roots, researchers can consult historical sources and residents can better understand how their government and community have evolved.

We do not see archives simply as repositories of the past. We see them as building blocks for the future. By investing in our archives today, we invest in knowledge, identity, transparency and community. In doing so, we ensure that the stories of St Eustatius are not lost but continue to educate, inspire and connect both present and future generations.



3

Archive implementation agendas

3.1 Government Archive Agenda

The government administrative archive is a cornerstone of good governance. It records the decisions we make, the way we operate and how we account for our actions to residents and partners. A resilient organization starts from within, and a well-managed archive is an essential building block in that foundation. Records management is essential for good governance, accountability and transparency.

From the perspective of Internal Services and Facilities, we do not view the archive as a storage space, but as a strategic instrument that enables transparency, accessibility and continuity. We bring together people, resources and processes so that government can function in a reliable, predictable and professional manner. A well-organized archive is a natural and indispensable part of that ambition.

3.1.1 Current situation

The reality of our records management today is both hybrid and vulnerable. While a part of the records has been digitized, this has not always been done completely or consistently. File creation and recordkeeping often depend on individual working methods, resulting in varying practices across the organization.

At the same time, there is a significant backlog of paper records. Many files are stored across multiple locations, not all of which meet the requirements of the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act. There is currently no fully compliant archival repository, and standards relating to security, climate control and accessibility cannot always be guaranteed. As a result, documents can be difficult to locate, and key processes such as decision-making, permitting and correspondence are not always supported by a consistent archival framework.

Capacity presents another challenge. There are insufficient resources available to systematically address appraisal, disposal, digitization and long-term accessibility. The current archive employee possesses valuable experience, but carries an overly broad range of responsibilities with limited support.

In the coming years, the organization will operate from temporary accommodations, creating additional pressure on the proper management of both dynamic and semi-static records. At the same time, the organization is undergoing a significant digital transformation. The introduction of core registries, online forms, DigiD, modern network management and ultimately case-based working will further increase the demands placed on records and archive management.

As a result, the archive is not merely a management challenge; it is a critical prerequisite for effective digital public services.

3.1.2 Future vision

We are working towards a future in which the archive is reliable, transparent and easily accessible to everyone who needs it. Employees should be able to find information quickly and without unnecessary obstacles.

Residents should be able to rely on a government that preserves information carefully and provides access to it within the framework of the law. The archive should support decision-making, demonstrate the relationship between processes, and make the institutional history of the organization visible and understandable. It must become an integral part of digital service delivery and contribute to the legitimacy and accountability of public administration.

This vision consists of three key elements.

- a. First, we will create a digitally sustainable and accessible archive using a case management system in which records are created and managed correctly from the outset. Case-based working will form the foundation of this approach. Every process will generate one complete and coherent digital file that is current, accurate and supported by proper metadata
- b. Second, we will maintain a carefully managed paper archive in which only those records that must remain in physical form in accordance with legislation, retention schedules or authenticity requirements, are preserved. These records will be stored in a secure, climate-controlled and accessible repository that meets archival standards.

- c. Third, we will establish an accessible archival organization where employees understand how to manage information properly and know where to seek support when needed. The archive will become a partner in business operations rather than the final step in an administrative process.

3.1.3 Conditions for success

Several conditions are essential to achieving this vision.

The first condition concerns people. Sustainable expertise is required to implement archival legislation, apply retention schedules and guide the organization toward archiving by design. We will therefore establish a small but professional archival unit consisting of a senior archive officer responsible for daily coordination, an archival administrative officer responsible for processing, organizing, and supporting digital records management, and a shared archivist serving both St Eustatius and Saba.

This archivist will oversee quality standards, advise on permanent preservation and support transfer processes. This will help us bring together professional expertise and ensure continuity and long-term sustainability. Within this development, the current messenger position will be given the opportunity to evolve into the role of archival administrative officer, ensuring a future-proof position within the organization.

The second condition is suitable and future-oriented accommodation, an archive repository in accordance with the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act. The temporary facility currently being developed will include a secure and accessible records storage area capable of serving the organization in the coming years. Once the planned joint government building is realized, archival facilities will be incorporated from the outset.

A modern archive requires appropriate climate control, secure access, dedicated processing space and facilities that support sustainable digital infrastructure. The archival function should not be viewed merely as a facilities responsibility, but as a strategic component of the wider information management chain.

The third condition is the continued digital development of the organization. Case-based working will become the foundation of future records management. This requires

a clear product and service catalogue that defines the products and services delivered by the Public Entity of St Eustatius.

The system must also be connected to the selection list for Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba⁴ so that every case is automatically assigned the correct retention period. The configuration of iBabs and any future case management system must support long-term accessibility requirements. This includes standardized metadata, centralized storage, authorization management, lifecycle management and the timely destruction of records where required.

Archiving should not depend on individual decisions or corrective actions after the fact. Instead, it must be embedded within the way we work and the systems we use. The fourth condition is compliance with the disposal list for Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba. This schedule provides the framework for appraisal and selection. It determines which information must be preserved permanently and which may be destroyed, forming the foundation upon which the archive is organized.

All business processes must be aligned with this framework so that appraisal and retention become an integral part of daily operations. This requires training, awareness and clear working agreements across all departments.

3.1.4 Conclusion

With this vision, we are setting a realistic and professional course for the government administrative archives of the Public Entity of St Eustatius.

By doing so, we are not only improving information management, we are strengthening internal services, supporting digital transformation and enhancing the reliability of government. The archive will no longer be regarded as the final step in a process, but as an essential component of a government that operates transparently, accessibly and with a clear focus on the future.

4 The selection list BES is used here for the BES retention schedule

3.2 Cultural heritage archive implementation agenda

The cultural heritage archives of St Eustatius preserve the stories, memories and identity of our island. They document the lives of our people, the development of our communities and the tangible and intangible heritage that defines who we are. Unlike government archives, cultural heritage archives connect people with their history, strengthen cultural identity, support education and research, and ensure that our heritage remains accessible for future generations.

From the perspective of the Department of Culture, archives are not simply repositories of historical information. They are living collections that support education, inspire community engagement, encourage research and create opportunities for cultural tourism and international collaboration.

As St Eustatius continues to recover, document and reinterpret its history through initiatives such as the Canon of St Eustatius, oral history projects, archaeological research, underwater cultural heritage, museum collections, historical photographs, educational resources and community collections, the need for a sustainable cultural heritage infrastructure becomes increasingly important.

3.2.1 Current situation

The cultural heritage collections of St Eustatius are currently dispersed across multiple organizations, departments and private collections. Historical photographs, oral histories, archaeological records, museum collections, Canon research, underwater cultural heritage documentation and community archives are managed separately, often using different standards and systems.

Many collections remain undigitized, while others lack standardized metadata or sustainable long-term storage. Valuable community knowledge is still held by elders and families and has not yet been systematically documented. Limited staffing, financial resources and technical infrastructure make it difficult to manage these collections in an integrated and sustainable manner.

At the same time, the Department of Culture is expanding its work through the Canon of St Eustatius, heritage education, community engagement, cultural heritage publications and digital storytelling. These developments create new opportunities to connect collections, improve accessibility and strengthen the island's cultural infrastructure.



3.2.2 Future vision

We are working towards a future in which the cultural heritage of St Eustatius is professionally preserved, digitally connected and easily accessible for everyone. Residents should be able to discover their own history. Students should have access to reliable educational resources. Researchers should be able to explore interconnected collections. Visitors should experience the rich history of the island through both physical and digital heritage. This vision consists of three key elements.

a. Integrated digital heritage

A connected digital heritage ecosystem linking the Canon of St Eustatius, museum collections, archaeological collections, oral histories, historical photographs, monument records, underwater cultural heritage, community archives and educational resources.

b. Sustainable heritage collections

Professionally managed physical and digital collections that are preserved according to international heritage standards and supported by sustainable storage, conservation and documentation practices.

c. Accessible cultural heritage

Collections that support education, research, public engagement, exhibitions, storytelling, tourism and community participation through both physical and digital access.

3.2.3 Conditions for success

Several conditions are essential to achieving this vision. The first condition concerns people and development of sustainable expertise in the following areas: collection management, metadata standards, digital preservation, conservation, oral history, heritage interpretation and public engagement. This can be done by strengthening partnerships with local, Caribbean and Dutch heritage institutions while expanding internship opportunities and professional training.

The second condition is development of the Heritage Centre as the central hub for archives, museum collections, archaeology, oral histories, the Canon, community

collections and educational resources. The Heritage Centre should provide storage space, research facilities, exhibition space, digitization facilities and community access. The third condition is development of a single integrated digital heritage environment using shared metadata, Linked Open Data, collection management systems, digital preservation standards and interoperable heritage platforms. Rather than creating separate databases for each project, collections should become digitally connected while remaining under the stewardship of their respective organizations.

A fourth condition concerns partnerships and community participation where there is continued strengthening of collaboration with external stakeholders, local and abroad. Community knowledge should remain central to collection development and interpretation.

3.2.4 Conclusion

With this agenda, the Department of Culture sets out a long-term vision for safeguarding the cultural heritage of St Eustatius. By strengthening collection management, developing integrated digital heritage infrastructure, expanding educational resources and improving public accessibility, cultural heritage becomes more than something preserved it becomes something experienced, shared and continuously enriched by the community.

Through collaboration, innovation and sustainable management, the cultural heritage archives of St Eustatius will preserve not only the island's past but also provide a foundation for education, identity, research and community engagement for generations to come.

3.3 Private archive implementation agenda

Private archives are an essential part of the collective memory of St Eustatius. A significant part of the island's history is preserved outside government institutions. Families save photographs, letters, diaries, family trees and personal documents. Businesses maintain historical records that reflect the island's economic development. Churches, schools, foundations, clubs and community organizations preserve collections that document social, cultural, educational and religious life.

Together, these archives provide perspectives that are often absent from official government records. They capture everyday life, family histories, traditions, business, migration, faith, celebrations and community development, enriching the collective story of St Eustatius.

The Public Entity is fully aware that private archives are not government property. Ownership remains with the individuals or organizations that created them. Our role is therefore not to acquire these collections, but to support their preservation, encourage voluntary collaboration and provide opportunities for historically significant archives to be professionally safeguarded if owners so wish.

3.3.1 Current situation

Many historically valuable private archives remain dispersed across the island and beyond. Some collections are carefully preserved, while others are vulnerable to deterioration due to climate, age, natural disasters or a lack of suitable storage conditions. In many cases, owners are unaware of the historical significance of the materials they possess or lack the resources and expertise needed to preserve them. At present, there is no structured framework to advise private archive owners, document significant collections or facilitate voluntary donations, deposits or digitization. As a result, valuable parts of St Eustatius' history risk being permanently lost.

3.3.2 Future vision

We are working towards a future in which private archive owners are supported in preserving their collections while maintaining ownership and control over their history. Historically significant private archives should be identified, documented, digitized where appropriate and connected to the wider heritage landscape of St Eustatius. Through voluntary collaboration, these collections can contribute to education, research, exhibitions, the Canon of St Eustatius and future generations without compromising the rights of their owners. This vision consists of three key elements.

a. Preservation support

Provide practical advice, guidance and resources to private archive owners on preservation, storage, conservation and digitization.

b. Voluntary collaboration

Develop clear procedures for voluntary deposits, donations, loans, digitization agreements and long-term preservation while respecting ownership rights.

c. Connecting private heritage

Where appropriate and with the owner's permission, connect private archives to the wider cultural heritage infrastructure through the Canon of St Eustatius, museum collections, oral history projects, exhibitions, educational programmes and digital heritage platforms.

3.3.3 Conditions for success

Several conditions are essential to achieving this vision. The first condition concerns guidance and support. Develop practical guidelines, toolkits and advisory services to assist owners in caring for historically significant archives.

The second condition is partnerships. Strengthening collaboration with families, churches, schools, businesses, foundations, community organizations, museums, archives and cultural heritage partners.

The third condition is preservation and digitization. Provide opportunities for digitization, documentation and voluntary transfer or long-term deposit of archives of exceptional historical value where appropriate.

The fourth condition is public awareness. Increase awareness of the value of private archives through community outreach, exhibitions, educational programmes, oral history initiatives and public campaigns encouraging the preservation of family and community history.

3.3.4 Conclusion

Private archives are an indispensable part of the history of St Eustatius. By supporting private archive owners, encouraging voluntary collaboration and strengthening preservation efforts, the Public Entity seeks to ensure that these unique collections remain protected and continue to contribute to the island's collective memory. Government, communities, organizations and residents share responsibility for safeguarding the stories of St Eustatius for future generations.



A historical painting of a coastal town, likely St. Eustatius, featuring a prominent church with a bell tower, a dirt road, and a large building. The scene is set against a backdrop of a cloudy sky and a body of water with a few small boats.

4

Intended priorities and associated actions for the three implementation agendas

The visions outlined in previous sections are further elaborated with intended priorities and actions in the overview below. This includes an indication of the expected outcomes for the priorities, the associated tools, the parties or departments that are naturally involved and the timeframe within which the priority can be achieved. Each year, the parties involved will evaluate the progress of their actions and adjust them where necessary.

To streamline the entire process of implementing the archival agenda and to coordinate efforts along the way, semi-annual learning evaluations will take place between the Ministry, the Public Entity and the archival community on St Eustatius for the duration of the archival agenda. This period spans from the signing of the agenda to 2030. This allows for the time and flexibility needed to effectively address and develop the priorities, given the capacity for implementation. Aligning the duration of the archival agenda with that of the Cultural Covenant for the Caribbean Netherlands would undermine the feasibility of the ambitions to establish a foundation for the archival infrastructure.⁵

⁵ In December 2025 the duration of the Culture Covenant 2022-2025 was extended to 31 December 2028.





Priority	Outcome	Description	Instrument/ means	Timeframe	Parties involved
1. Legal framework	Approval of selection list for Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba	A prescribed schedule for the retention and destruction of the Public Entity's records prior to their transfer to the archives.	- Approved selection list - Approval by Executive Council	The list was sent to the National Archives in Netherlands on 17 December 2025.	- St Eustatius Executive Council - Commissioner responsible for archives - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science/National Archives - Internal Services and Facilities
	Approval of replacement order	The order allows the Public Entity of St Eustatius to ensure that paper-based records are replaced with digital originals, which are in turn processed, managed and stored digitally. A replacement handbook, an overarching archive management manual, will need to be developed to support the implementation of all three archive agendas. While providing one coherent framework for archive management, the manual will distinguish between the specific approaches, standards, procedures and responsibilities required for government archives, cultural and community archives and private archives.	- Guidance on the Replacement of Records (Handreiking Vervanging Archiefbescheiden), National Archive knowledge product - Approval by Executive Council in island resolution	Document is ready and will be submitted to the Executive Council in August for approval, and then to the Island Council	- St Eustatius Executive Council - Commissioner responsible for archives - Internal Services and Facilities
	Regulation on digital signatures	This regulation sets out the conditions under which digital signatures can be used and are recognized within the organization. In addition, it imposes requirements regarding identification of the signatory and security of the signing process. It also sets the rules on how documents bearing digital signatures are managed, stored and preserved so as to safeguard their authenticity and integrity.		Document still needs to be developed, and will be ready on 1 November 2026	Internal Services and Facilities
	Designation of an island archive repository	This constitutes a legal act pursuant to section 28 of the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act. This designation establishes the location and purpose (records department) of the repository.	- Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act - Approval by Executive Council in island resolution	A new location is currently being set up	- Commissioner responsible for archives - St Eustatius Executive Council - Internal Services and Facilities
	Appointment of an island archivist	Under section 28a of the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act, the Executive Council may appoint an island archivist to manage the archive repository. The island archivist is also responsible for overseeing records that have not yet been transferred.	- Approval by Executive Council (in island resolution) - Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act - Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Decree	A position for an archivist has been requested in the 2027 staffing plan	- St Eustatius Executive Council - Island secretary - Internal Services and Facilities - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
	Establishment of a records department for the Public Entity of St Eustatius	Establishing and organizing the long-term management of transferred records. The records department will manage the records in the repository.	Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act	Complete	- Commissioner responsible for archives - St Eustatius Executive Council - Island secretary - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science



Priority	Outcome	Description	Instrument/ means	Timeframe	Parties involved
	Implementation of the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act	Further elaboration of section 27 (duty of care of the Executive Council) and other provisions. This involves, for example, drafting a St Eustatius Island Ordinance on Archives, internal (policy) implementation guidelines for information management, mail and records management, oversight of records that have not yet been transferred, etc.	- Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act - Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Decree - Digital records management policy for the Caribbean Netherlands	2027	- St Eustatius Island Council - Commissioner responsible for archives - St Eustatius Executive Council - Island secretary - St Eustatius Legal Department - Internal Services and Facilities
	Exploration of opportunities for cooperation with Bonaire and Saba	The islands' local governments are exploring ways to collaborate on archive management.	- Exploration of mutual needs or requirements - Commitment of commissioners - Annual reports	2027	- Commissioners responsible for archives - Legal departments of the Public Bodies of St Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire - Island secretaries of the Public Bodies of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science - Working group from the Public Entity of St Eustatius
2. a. Primary work processes information management	Implementation of disposal list for Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba	Implementing the disposal decisions in various Statian departments, whether or not information systems are in use.	- Approved disposal list - Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Decree	2027	- Internal Services and Facilities - St Eustatius departments and units - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
	Implementation of the replacement order	Implementing the replacement order in the daily administrative operations of the Public Entity of St Eustatius.	- Replacement order - Work process	2027	Internal Services and Facilities
	Implementation of the digital management scheme for the Caribbean Netherlands	Implementing the provisions of the digital management scheme, including establishing and managing a digital repository (e-depot).	Digital records management policy for Caribbean Netherlands	2027	Internal Services and Facilities



Priority	Outcome	Description	Instrument/ means	Timeframe	Parties involved
	Implementation of archiving by design	Implementing appropriate measures that ensure long-term accessibility of (digital) government information, such as elaborating the processes for: • Registration: activities required to register government information in an information system as soon as it is received, created or modified; • Disposal: activities necessary to have government information disposed of in a controlled manner, so that this information can no longer be identified, found or reconstructed; • Preservation: activities necessary to preserve government information in such a way that no unacceptable loss of information occurs throughout its entire lifespan, and in such a way that authenticity is safeguarded and readability is guaranteed; • Migration: activities necessary to move government information to another application, platform or information carrier; • Availability: activities necessary to provide government information to users.	• DUTO Framework for making government information accessible for the long term	2027	• Internal Services and Facilities
2. b. Primary work processes – archive management	Supervision of the Public Entity's information and archive management (before transfer to the archive)	Work processes: • Conduct comprehensive inspection • Conduct follow-up inspection		2027	• Island archivist • Internal Services and Facilities
	Advice on the processing of government archives	Work processes: • Advising on the processing of government archives and private archives. E.g. drafting policies on private records and collections; drafting policies for registration of digital information • Advising on granting authorization for replacement	• Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act • Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Decree	2027	• Island archivist
	Advice for record keeper regarding archive management	Work process: • Advising on laws and regulations regarding archive management		2027	• Island archivist



Priority	Outcome	Description	Instrument/ means	Timeframe	Parties involved
	Archive management	Work processes: - Placing documents in repository - Removal of documents from repository - Assigning or modifying archive metadata - Conserving archives - Restoring individual archival items or series - Digitizing individual archival items (scanning on demand) - Digitizing series (on a project basis) - Researching and describing the context of archives (making archives more accessible) - Dealing with archive emergencies (disaster preparedness and recovery planning)	- Guidance Preservation and Management Physical Archives - Format for Disaster Preparedness and Recovery plans	2028	Island archivist
	Access to archives	Work processes: - Processing requests for access to public archives - Processing requests for restricted or non-public archives - Processing information requests - Processing reproduction requests		2030	Island archivist
	Presentation	Work processes: - Developing educational products - Developing events/raising public awareness about archives - Arranging exhibitions/raising public awareness about archives	St Eustatius Culture Policy	2030	- Island archivist - Department of Culture
3. Professional development and expertise	Establishment of educational goals for information and archive management	Developing a training plan (schedule) for the ongoing professional development of records and archive management staff. This plan identifies available training courses. It focuses on developing (basic) knowledge and skills in information and archive management, such as cataloguing, organizing and processing physical records, as well as managing and preserving records.	- HR training plan - Training programmes, such as Archival Studies A, B and C. - SOD 1 & 2 courses have been started	2026/2027	- St Eustatius Executive Council - Internal Services and Facilities
	Training programme on how to use the disposal list	Training staff to interpret/understand and apply the retention schedule in their daily work and in information and records management systems.	- Workshops - Training capacity - Training budget	2027 and ongoing	- Internal Services and Facilities - Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
	Training programme on the arrangement and description of archives	Increasing knowledge among staff about arranging and describing archives based on (international) standards, current policies and guidelines. Training staff to handle cultural heritage archival material in line with international standards	- Workshops - Training capacity - Training budget - Workshop and training with UNESCO and CHER	2027 and ongoing 2027 and beyond	- Internal Services and Facilities - Cultural Heritage Agency/the Ministry & Department of Culture



Priority	Outcome	Description	Instrument/ means	Timeframe	Parties involved
	Securing sufficient staff capacity for archive management	Incorporating plans for expanding archive management capacity into the Public Entity's HR plans and establishing provisions for career guidance in connection with retraining and life-long learning. Recruiting and selecting staff based on professional expertise in the field of archives management.	HR staffing plan	2027 and ongoing	- Internal Services and Facilities - St Eustatius Executive Council
	Oversight role of the island archivist defined	Drafting guidelines for carrying out inspection duties and oversight pursuant to the Public Records (Caribbean Netherlands) Act.	Inspection role within the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG)	2028	Island secretary/St Eustatius Executive Council (for ratification)
4. Digital information and archival infrastructure	Enhancement of the information system of the Public Entity of St Eustatius	The Public Entity's administrative activities are supported by a robust, permanent information system. The system consists of people, processes and organizational structures, as well as technical infrastructure and the information contained within and regarding that infrastructure, all of which meet the Public Entity's information needs. Strengthening the information system requires sufficient physical capacity, expertise and financial resources.	- Digital management policy for the Caribbean Netherlands - VNG 'Grip op Informatie' (Grip on information) programme		- Internal Services and Facilities - St Eustatius Executive Council
	Implementation of digital storage solutions	Developing and managing local or remote storage solutions, such as caching servers, cloud storage or other options.			- St Eustatius Executive Council - Internal Services and Facilities
	Purchase of a digital records management system	Developing requirements and conditions for the procurement of a technical system for the long-term storage and management of digital archival records during the operational phase (record management application). This system also provides a solution and integrates with the administrative decision-making tool iBabs.	- Scope of work - Terms and conditions of the tender		- Island archivist - St Eustatius Executive Council - Internal Services and Facilities
	Purchase of an e-depot	Developing requirements and conditions for the procurement of a technical system for the sustainable storage and management of digital archival documents eligible for long-term preservation.	- Scope of work - Terms and conditions of the tender		- Island archivist - St Eustatius Executive Council
	Purchase of a collection management system	Developing requirements and conditions for the procurement of a technical system for the registration and intellectual management of archives in a repository.	- Scope of work - Terms and conditions of the tender		- Records departments in the Caribbean Region - Island archivist
	Development of a digital archive portal	Enhancing digital access to digitized and born-digital archival records (website) and St Eustatius' cultural heritage, and establishing connections with other records departments in the region. Records will be made available digitally through archival access points and scans of archival documents linked to archival descriptions.	- Scope of work - Terms and conditions of the tender		- Records departments in the Caribbean Region - Island archivist



Priority	Outcome	Description	Instrument/ means	Timeframe	Parties involved
5. Archive repository	Establishment of a custodial repository for archives	Designing and constructing archive storage facilities for the long-term preservation of records in accordance with applicable legal requirements and regulations, taking the tropical climate into account. This includes the installation of climate control systems, air purification systems, server rooms, building security and safety for personnel and holdings, and accessible entry for people with disabilities.			• Dutch Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations/Central Government Real Estate Agency, other departments • National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands (RCN-OCW/CG)
	Establishment of a custodial repository for archives	In setting up the archive storage facility, the following, among other things, should be taken into consideration: • space for customer service (information desk, resource centre) • space for researchers (reading room) • space for archival processing with accompanying reference tables • server space for a digital network • purchase of mobile shelving units • purchase of large-format filing cabinets (for storing stacks of maps, drawings and blueprints) • purchase of scanners for large-scale digitization of archives and ondemand scanning • purchase of office and warehouse furniture and office equipment • purchase of acid-free packaging and storage materials for archives • proper safety regulations for staff • security measures for access to the archives	• VNG Joint Municipal Implementation (Gezamenlijke Gemeentelijke Uitvoering (GGU)) programme		• Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations/ Central Government Real Estate Agency and other departments • National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands (RCN-OCW/CG) • Ministry of Education, Culture and Science • St Eustatius Executive Council • Internal Services and Facilities

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Signing Sint Eustatius



Rechelline Leerdam

*In my absence: Reuben Merkmán
Commissioner of Social Affairs
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