



# Accreditation

## Collections development policy Template



**2014**

**Name of museum:** Wakefield Museums

**Name of governing body:** Wakefield Council

**Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:** 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015

**Policy review procedure:**

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

**Date at which this policy is due for review:** October 2020

**Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.**

**1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:**

**1.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:**

Wakefield Council's Museums Service (the Service) collects, safeguards and makes accessible approximately 110,000 artefacts that document and record the human, social and cultural history of Wakefield and district from the distant past to the present day. We want to enable both residents and visitors to the district to explore these collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. We are committed to developing our collections in consultation with our communities and to the exploration of new methods of access and participation, particularly to our stored collections.

Overall our mission is to deliver a modern, high quality and valued service that contributes to Wakefield Council's four Strategic Themes:

- Caring for our people
- Caring for our places
- Ambitious for our young people
- Modern public services

This policy applies to collections held by our three Accredited museums in Wakefield, Pontefract, Castleford and at the museums store.

**1.2. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.**

**1.3. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.**

**1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.**

- 1.5. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.**
- 1.6. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift or bequest, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.**
- 1.7. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons**

## **2. History of the collections**

Wakefield Corporation opened Wakefield Museum and Art Gallery at Holmfield House in Clarence Park in 1923. The collections included social history objects, ethnographic material, archaeological finds from the local area and ancient Egypt, a small natural history collection and local prints and paintings. The museum relied on donations for the collections to grow, in the early years this included a significant collection of decorative art, pottery and furniture from local industrialist Frank Green.

Following the establishment of a separate Wakefield Art Gallery in 1934, Wakefield Museum continued to collect social, archaeological, ethnographic and natural history objects until the museum moved premises to a former Georgian music saloon and Mechanics Institute in Wakefield city centre in 1956. The museum followed national trends in museum collecting by creating period room settings using locally sourced building fixtures and fittings. From the 1960s the museum borrowed the Charles Waterton collection of natural history from Stonyhurst College on a long term basis.

With the advent of local government reorganisation of 1974 the collection became the responsibility of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and was amalgamated with other museum and library collections within the Wakefield district, particularly those originating in Pontefract and Castleford.

A small voluntary run museum was established at Pontefract Castle in the nineteenth century. The objects collected during this period were transferred to the newly formed Wakefield Council's museum service at local government re-organisation in 1974 and eventually redisplayed in the Art Nouveau Carnegie library building which was converted into a museum in 1978.

Castleford Library began collecting museum objects in the 1930s and again this material transferred at local government re-organisation in 1974. Objects with a Castleford provenance are readily identifiable within the museum's collection. For a number of years Castleford related objects were displayed within a room in the library, in 2013 a new purposed built museum opened within the newly extended and refurbished Castleford Forum Library and Museum.

During the 1970s the Service stopped collecting Natural History and focussed mainly on the social history and archaeology of the Wakefield district.

From the late 1970s until 2012 Wakefield Council managed Clarke Hall as an educational museum collection. It is no longer part of the Council's museums portfolio and as a consequence the Service no longer collects items specifically for use at that site. All the objects that were used to dress the Hall have been accessed in accordance with the scope of the Service's collecting policy. About 40% of these objects have been identified for future use within the Service, with the remaining items being transferred or disposed of in accordance with the procedure outlined in section 16 of this document.

The Service's fine art collection, which was originally housed in a Victorian town house on Wentworth Terrace, was transferred to The Hepworth Wakefield on completion of the new gallery project in 2009. This collection is now governed by that organisation's Collections Development Policy, but along with any relevant supporting material remains in the ownership of Wakefield Council.

In 2012 Wakefield's museum moved from its previous location at the Mechanics Institute on Wood Street to its current site at Wakefield One, the council's newest civic building.

### **3. An overview of current collections**

The Service collects in five general areas. Three of these are permanent collections, comprising of the Archaeology and Numismatic Collection, the Wakefield and Castleford Social History Collection and the Pontefract Social History Collection. The fourth is the handling collection, which can be used and handled in sessions for educational purposes. The Service also collects material for its public reference collection, at Pontefract Museum. The collections also contain The Print Loan Collection, which previously, but no longer runs as a lending resource for display in public spaces. These collections are described in greater detail below starting with the permanent collections.

#### **3.1 - Archaeology & Numismatic**

The Service collects archaeological material that records and interprets the early history of the Wakefield district from prehistoric times to the present day. Together, this material is evidence of the way of life and the development of people living in the district. Archaeological excavation and other forms of fieldwork are the only sound evidence for the distant past and they provide information that often cannot be provided by documentary or other sources.

The archaeology collection consists of upwards of 50,000 separate artefacts:

- Site archives from large-scale excavations at sites including Roman Castleford, Sandal Castle, Pontefract Castle, Pontefract Priory and Ferrybridge Henge. These include excavated objects and associated site records, plans, drawings, photographs etc. Some of this material is of regional and national importance (i.e. the Ferry Fryston chariot burial and elements of the Roman Castleford archive), and will continue to be used for scientific and historical research work in the future.
- Site archives from all the major excavations carried out in the district in the last 50 years.
- Smaller groups and individual objects from local sites produced by excavations, field-walking, building recording and casual finds.
- Individual objects dating from before 1650.
- Approximately 280 items collected in the 1950s and 1960s during the demolition of local buildings ranging in date from the 1300s to the 1800s.
- 1,750 British coins, banknotes, medals and monetary tokens.

- Around 100 items of Egyptology.

### **3.2 The Pontefract Collection**

Pontefract is one of England's most historic market towns and home to such national events as the death of Richard II and the first secret ballot. The Service collects objects that record and explain the history of the town, castle and surrounding area since 1650. Together, this material is evidence of the way of life and achievements of people living in and near Pontefract.

The Pontefract collection consists of upwards of 30,000 separate artefacts:

- 1,500 pressed glass products and tools from Bagley's glassworks
- 11,900 photographs, including 6000 photographs and negatives from Maud's photographers
- 14,250 items of ephemera, including 6000 items from the 'Holmes' family printers.
- 3000 community, domestic, personal and working life objects
- 122 pieces of costume
- 2,000 items relating to the liquorice and local confectionary industry

### **3.3 Social History (including the Castleford Decorative Art Collections)**

The Service collects social history material that enhances an extensive collection showing the changing lives of people in the Wakefield district since 1650. Formal collecting first began in the early 1920s. Together, this material is evidence of the way of life and achievements of people who lived or live in the Wakefield district.

The social history collection aims to reflect the diverse nature of the Wakefield district and its people. Over two thirds of the district comprises of rural areas surrounding the main centres of population. These range from the city of Wakefield in the west, which is the largest urban centre, through to the five towns of Castleford, Knottingley, Featherstone, Normanton and Pontefract (which is covered in 3.2) in the north, and Hemsworth and South Elmsall in the south east. Each area has distinctive histories and traditions.

The social history collection consists of over 48,000 separate objects:

- Collection containing 308 pieces of ceramic from Castleford and Ferrybridge
- A wide range of community, domestic, personal and working life objects
- 11,000 pieces of ephemera
- 12,780 photographs
- A costume collection of about 5,000 items
- Approximately 250 items of ethnography.
- 1256 pieces of decorative art (transferred from the previous Wakefield Art Gallery collection)
- the collection of natural history specimens collected by Charles Waterton (1782-1865) of Walton Hall, on loan from Stonyhurst College, the current loan agreement to be reviewed in 2017

### **3.4 The Museum Education Handling Collection**

The Handling collection is a resource for public use and does not contain items from the museum's permanent collections. It contains objects specially selected to be touched, used or

investigated by visitors of all ages. Objects obtained for the Handling collection are not collected in perpetuity and may suffer loss or damage because of public use.

The handling collection contains over 4000 objects (including nearly 450 items from the Clarke Hall Collections):

- a broad range of reproduction objects
- original works of art and archaeology, natural history and social history objects

### **3.5 Print Loan Collection**

The Print Loan Collection is a lending resource for display in public spaces and to support cultural and educational events across the district. Prints obtained for this collection have not been acquired in perpetuity and may suffer loss or damage because of their intended use.

It consists of around 400 20th century and contemporary original artists' prints (e.g. etchings, lithographs, and screen prints).

### **3.6 Public Reference collections (at Pontefract Museum only)**

This public resource is based at Pontefract Museum. It includes books, newspaper cuttings, pamphlets, and general ephemera relating to the history of the town of Pontefract and the surrounding area. It also contains books and catalogues available for public use which relate to local history and general history and archaeological subjects.

This material is for reference and use at the site only and not for external loan. It is not collected in perpetuity and may suffer loss or damage because of public use. The majority of the collection has been built up via gifts and donations from local people and is a popular and well used community resource.

Up until 2011 there was a similar resources held at the former Wakefield Museum on Wood Street. It is intended that this material will be assimilated into the Local Studies library collection which is now located adjacent to the museum displays in Wakefield One.

## **4. Themes and priorities for future collecting**

### **4.1 Archaeology & Numismatics**

The Service acquires the archives of systematic archaeological investigation including excavation, field-walking, surveying monuments and recording buildings. This includes objects and such associated records as plans, photographs and x-rays. The Service will only accept this material if it is accompanied by the associated documentary archive, together with the copyright for it, or the right to use it for interpretation and display. It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to ensure archives are prepared in accordance the specific requirements of our service before transfer. The Service will not accept everything for an excavation archive indiscriminately; unstratified material, large structural pieces and unstable material (unconserved organics, ironwork etc.), are all likely to be declined, and bulk material, such as ceramic building material, may be sampled before acquisition.

The Service will:

- Collect casual finds or finds from responsible metal detectors, but only acquire where the objects are in good condition or have some research potential.

- Collect British coins, banknotes, medals and tokens up to the present day, especially local and regional examples to enhance the existing numismatics collection.
- Encourage responsible excavations and related work in areas where the collections and/or local archaeological knowledge is poor e.g. prehistoric sites and post Roman sites.
- Encourage community involvement in fieldwork and the collection of archaeological material for the collections.

The Service will only acquire material from identified sites that lie within the district at the time of donation. Where sites lie across district boundaries, adjoining collecting museums will be consulted.

Exceptionally, unprovenanced material or material from sites outside the district may be collected for specific reasons, for example if it enhances the existing collection or has other associations with the Wakefield district.

The Service will not acquire archaeological objects when there is reasonable cause to believe that:

- The circumstances of their recovery involved the recent unscientific or intentional destruction or damage of ancient monuments or other known archaeological sites.
- there was failure to make known the finds to the owner or occupier of the land, or to the proper authorities in the case of possible finds covered by the Treasure Act

The Service will encourage responsible research on archaeological material in the collections, including destructive testing where the value of potential knowledge gained can be demonstrated.

## **4.2 Pontefract Collection**

In particular areas of strength, the service will avoid identical duplicates, but will consider filling chronological or material gaps. Particular areas of strength include topographical photographs as well as material relating to the liquorice industry and Bagley's glass.

The Service will acquire material relating to the history of Pontefract, and nearby settlements, since 1650. This includes contemporary material; an area of collecting that has been under represented to date. In particular the Service will actively acquire modern material and objects to support displays at the new visitor centre at Pontefract Castle which is planned to open in 2016.

Material acquired for the Pontefract collection will have a clear connection with Pontefract and its immediate area.

## **4.3 Social History**

In particular areas of strength the Service will avoid identical duplicates but will consider filling chronological or material gaps. Areas of strength include topographical photographs and toys and games since the 1960s.

In particular areas of weakness, the Service will prioritise filling gaps, which are important to the district and its people, e.g. material that reflects the religious and cultural diversity of the

district, caring for children, men's clothing 1650 to present and photographs of domestic and industrial interiors. The service will use a project led approach to filling gaps by actively seeking out objects, historic and contemporary when developing exhibitions. The service will also actively seek and collect products made in the district, both historically and more recently.

Priority will be given to objects which have a detailed story about a place, person/people or event in the district and are backed up by contextual information such as a photograph or written testimony.

The Service will acquire material since 1650 relating to the history of the city of Wakefield and all the towns and villages in the district, except Pontefract, which is covered in 3.2 above.

Particular emphasis will be given to actively acquiring material relating to Castleford to support the new museum.

The Service will actively acquire material from the South East of the district as this geographical area is currently under represented in the collection. This will better reflect the distinct and diverse communities that make up the geographical area that is the Wakefield district.

The Service has already collected widely in the following areas and it is unlikely that we will acquire further material unless it is exceptional and significantly improves the understanding and appreciation of the existing collection:

- World War One
- royalty 1880-1980
- women's costume 1860-1990
- rugby league programmes 1960-1990
- cookery books
- sewing machines and knitting/sewing patterns before 1980
- photographic portraits 1860-1960
- christening dresses 1860-1950
- plastic houseware 1940-1970

#### **4.4 The Museum Education Handling Collection**

Handling material is collected that will strengthen the service delivered by the Services' Learning team for both schools and lifelong learning.

These objects are specially selected to be touched, used or investigated by visitors of all ages and are not collected in perpetuity. They may suffer loss or damage because of public use.

The Service will acquire objects for the handling collection through gift, bequest and purchase. Exceptionally duplicate items, or those that do not meet the current collecting policy, may be transferred from the archaeology, Pontefract and social history collections, following the disposal procedures set out in this policy.

If, exceptionally, objects are transferred from the handling collection to the archaeology, Pontefract or social history collections, they will then be governed by the appropriate acquisition, disposal and collection management policies.

#### **4.5 Print Loan Collection**

There are currently no plans to further add to this collection. It has been agreed that items of particular interest and value may be transferred via mutual agreement from the print loan collection to the fine art collection held by the Hepworth Wakefield. Once formally accessioned these transferred items are governed by the acquisition, disposal and management policies of that institution.

#### **4.6 Public Resource collection (Pontefract)**

The Service will collect resource material that strengthens the depth and quality of this as a public resource.

- The Service will acquire new material for the resource collection through gift, bequest and on occasions via purchase.
- We do not accept loan material for this collection.
- All material once donated by individuals or groups is thereafter retained in the ownership of the Service.
- As this material is intended for public use it may suffer loss or damage and is not collected in perpetuity.

#### **4.7 Limitations on collecting**

The Service recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements. All items collected need to have a long term purpose and use.

If we refuse an item, we will return it to its owner or dispose of it on the owner's behalf and with their agreement.

The Service will not accept:

- Any item without provenance
- Any item which cannot be cared for to professional standards
- Any item that can be better housed by other professional public bodies
- Any item without a valid title of ownership
- Any item that has been acquired in or exported from, its country of origin in breach of that country's laws. This includes the UK or any other country where the object may have been legally owned
- Any item in need of extensive remedial conservation, unless extremely significant to the local area.
- Any items that pose a health and safety risk
- Copy photographs and reference books for the permanent collections. These may be accepted for the Reference Collection in Pontefract Museum
- Any photograph without associated copyright permission or at the very minimum, reproduction rights.
- Large items that would be very costly to move, display and store.
- Geological and biological specimens
- Natural History, unless related to Charles Waterton
- Duplicate material, unless it has better provenance and is in better condition than those currently held.

- Offers of donation with specific conditions attached, unless the item is of significant historic value.
- 'Rescue' material, which is at risk of destruction i.e. local building material (unless significant and displayable) or items which have no intrinsic museum value and are being offered for storage only.

See individual subject areas for more detail on passive and active collecting.

## **5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal**

**5.1** Wakefield Council Museums Service has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. We exercise a presumption against disposal but there are some circumstances where disposal and rationalisation are a key tool in managing the collections.

**5.2** The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

**5.3** The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

**5.4** Any disposals will be for curatorial reasons with the preferred methods of disposal being gift to another institution or organisation. We will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons. In the event of removal of items from the collections through sale any funds acquired through a sale will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. We accept that after all other avenues have been exhausted that for some objects the only method of disposal may be destruction.

**5.5** We will carry out disposals openly and transparently, confirming that Wakefield Council are legally free to dispose of an item and taking into account agreements made with donors and funding bodies.

The service plans to undertake a review of all of the collections held and undertake a project of rationalisation. When reviewing the collections we will take account of:

- Significance and condition
- Future collecting priorities
- Current and future storage and collections care needs
- Future display and research needs

Areas of the collections that have recently or are currently being reviewed and rationalised are:

- Textile heritage collections, as part of the West Yorkshire Textile Heritage project (a joint project between Calderdale, Kirklees, Bradford and Wakefield Museum Services), via the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund

- Furniture, large clocks and large musical instruments as part of an Museums Association 'Effective Collections Project' via the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund
- Material previously used in Clarke Hall.

More specifically the following areas of the collections are being considered for rationalisation and disposal:

- Bulk archaeological material with no research worth or display value i.e. historic soil samples, boxes of pottery sherds etc.
- Unconserved excavated material that has deteriorated i.e. ironwork, organic material.
- Unprovenanced archaeology or archaeological finds from other areas of the UK or abroad.
- Items that have no link with the local area, either through use or production or other significant link. These types of items are unlikely to be used by the service and would be better placed with another museum or organisation.
- 'Everyday' generic objects (found in most museums), where we have duplicates i.e. sewing equipment including machines.
- Unprovenanced building material and fixtures and fittings i.e. bricks, fireplaces etc. These are generally large and heavy, taking up large amounts of space in the store and are unlikely to be displayed.
- Books as reference material.
- Costume where we have multiples of similar items, i.e. aprons, christening gowns, parasols etc. Including the Mrs Bird collection of clothing, which is a large group of clothing donated after her death. Most of this collection is on temporary numbers and is in poor condition.
- Ethnography, which is not related to Charles Waterton.
- Items in the non-permanent handling collection which are no longer relevant.
- Historic loans, where donors cannot be traced.

## **6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items**

**6.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.**

## **7 Collecting policies of other museums**

**7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.**

**7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museums/organisations:**

- The Hepworth Wakefield
- Barnsley Museum Service
- Bradford Museums and Galleries
- Calderdale Museums Service
- Doncaster Museum Service (including the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry Regimental Museum)

- East Riding Museum Service
- Harrogate Museums and Galleries
- Kirklees Museums and Galleries Service
- Leeds Museum Service
- National Coal Mining Museum for England
- Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust
- York Museums Trust
- Rotherham Museum Service (including the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum)

The Service will also take into account the collecting priorities of other organisations or public bodies i.e. West Yorkshire Archive Service & the Local Studies section of Wakefield Council Libraries Service.

## 8 Archival holdings

As The Service holds archives, particularly photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002).

## 9 Acquisition

### 9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

Wakefield Council will not acquire items simply as assets. All items need to have a long term purpose and use and we will acquire items honestly and responsibly. We will recognise the interests of the people who made, used, owned and collected or gave items in the collections and respect human remains in our care.

As a service we take into account the following principles when collecting:

- Connection to the people of Wakefield
- Desirability for display
- Connection with existing collections
- Suitability for use in learning and visitor programmes
- Contribution to research and understanding
- The condition of the item. Items should be in good condition or only require minimal conservation.
- Any conditions attached with accepting the item
- Whether the object would be better placed with another accredited museum or organisation

We take into account the collecting policies of other museums and organisations, collecting in the same related areas or subject fields. See section 7.2 for a list of museums and organisations. We will exercise due diligence when accepting offers of donation or purchase by verifying ownership and will reject any item with dubious provenance.

**9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of**

that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

## **10 Human remains**

10.1 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

## **10 Biological and geological material**

10.2 The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

## **12 Archaeological material**

12.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

12.2 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

## **13 Exceptions**

13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

## **14 Spoliation**

- 14.1 The museum will use the statement of principles ‘Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period’, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.**

## **15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains**

- 15.1 The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the museum’s professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the ‘Guidance for the care of human remains in museums’ issued by DCMS in 2005) , objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.**

- 15.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the ‘Guidance for the care of human remains in museums’.**

## **16 Disposal**

For further information on the reasons and procedure for disposal, see ‘Deaccession and Disposal Procedure’.

**The policy for agreeing disposal is:**

- 16.1 The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.**

**16.2 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.**

**16.3 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.**

**16.4 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.**

*Motivation for disposal and method of disposal*

**16.5 Disposal will not be undertaken principally for financial reasons in order to generate short term revenue for the Council. Items will only be considered for sale for curatorial reasons.**

**16.6 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift or sale, or as a last resort - destruction.**

*The disposal decision-making process*

**16.7** The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum, as well as peer approval will also be sought.

*Responsibility for disposal decision-making*

**16.8** A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, and not the responsibility of members of staff acting alone.

*Disposal by gift or sale*

**16.9** Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

**16.10** If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

**16.11** The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

*Use of proceeds of sale*

**16.12** Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

**16.13 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.**

*Documenting disposal*

**16.14 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.**

*Disposal by exchange*

**16.15 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange**

*Disposal by destruction*

**16.16 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.**

**16.17 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.**

**16.18 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.**

**16.19 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.**

**16.20 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.**