



COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

2017 - 2022

**Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust
February 2017**

Name of museum: The Historic Dockyard Chatham

Name of governing body: Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 16 February 2017

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: February 2022

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:

As a registered charity, Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust has three core objectives:

- Preservation - To maintain excellence in the sympathetic preservation and use of The Historic Dockyard, its buildings, ships and collections.
- Learning - To engage the most diverse audiences in learning about the significance and role of the former Royal Dockyard at Chatham and its people in supporting the Royal Navy from sail to steam and nuclear power over a 400 year period;
- Experiences - To provide an unmatched, inspirational and enjoyable experience for all users of The Historic Dockyard – whether visitors, tenants, residents or students – that exceeds their expectations.

As a fully Accredited Museum we collect, preserve, study and exhibit objects and material connected with the history of:

- The role of the dockyard and its people;
- The development of Royal Navy warship design and construction; and
- The use of the River Medway by the Royal Navy and its support services, and their role in the development of Medway.

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, bequest or exchange, 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

The Historic Dockyard Chatham is a site of exceptional international maritime heritage significance. Encompassing an area of around 80 acres, with approximately 100 buildings and structures it was in use as a Royal Dockyard from 1613 to 1984 and is arguably the most complete Dockyard of the Age of Sail to survive in the world. It also contains a number of important later 19th century structures.

The Chatham Dockyard played a highly important and significant role in supporting the Royal Navy for over four hundred years, building over 400 ships including HMS *Victory*, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar and repairing and maintaining thousands more. In that time the Royal Navy achieved and maintained an unrivalled mastery of the seas – a critical factor in the development of Britain's global influence.

For over 400 years, from its earliest foundations in the reign of Henry VIII to the Falklands Crisis in 1982 – the Dockyard touched the lives of thousands of local people through:

- Employment – directly and indirectly – the dockyard direct workforce rose to over 17,000 people during the Second World War;
- Service in the Royal Navy on ships built at Chatham and manned from Chatham – in the two world wars nearly a third of the Navy's seamen – c.35,000 men had Chatham as their home port;
- Economically and socially – as the area's principal employer;
- Educationally – entrance to the dockyard workforce was by examination – for much of the 20th century local schools targeted many of their pupils towards success in the dockyard entrance examinations rather than national qualifications.

Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust was formally established by government on 31 March 1984 on the closure of the Dockyard. The initial object collection was formed of material that was on site and identified to be of historical importance to the Dockyard transferred to the Trust by government through a Command Paper laid before Parliament. In 1984 part of this collection was in the care of the Chatham Dockyard Historical Society, a separate charity who continued to collect material in their own right. An agreement signed with the Society in 2013 has clarified ownership of these latter items and a process of separating them continues.

Subsequent growth in the collection has been focused on our three primary collecting areas identified in section 1.1.

As well as the founding collection there have been a number of gifts and acquisitions that have grown the Trust's collection. This includes the Library from the Merchant Navy Training College at Greenhithe on its closure in 1989 and the Ashcroft Collection of books gifted in 1999. These two collections enabled the Trust to have a comprehensive research library that covers the history of the Dockyard, the ships it built, maritime engineering as well as generic naval histories and biographies.

Another key collection that was acquired in 1988 was that of the 18th century third rate ship of the line, the *Invincible*. The *Invincible* wreck was excavated during the late 1970s and early 1980s off the coast of Portsmouth. At the time there was no identified repository for the objects to go to and their long term future was unsure. The Trust acted to become the holder of the representative collection. The material related to the age of sail, the heyday of the Dockyard. The *Invincible* was also linked to the Dockyard as the first ship to be built off her lines, the *Valiant*, was built and launched at Chatham in 1759.

In c.1986 Trustees identified the need to acquire a small number of historic warships to demonstrate the role of the dockyard in ship construction from the age of sail through to post war submarines. This led to the acquisition of HMS Gannet (1878) a transitional period composite construction sloop in 1987 and HM Submarine Ocelot, the last warship built for the Royal Navy by Chatham Dockyard in 1992. In 1998 following a Parliamentary Enquiry by the Culture Media & Sport Committee, the Trust agreed to become a party to the preservation of HMS Cavalier, the Royal Navy's last operational Second World War destroyer at Chatham as the National Destroyer Memorial, taking full control of the vessel in 2010.

Overall, the collections have grown through individual donations and strategic acquisitions as and when key objects have become available.

3. An overview of current collections

The collections have been divided into three categories - object collections; general reference collections and Historic Dockyard reference collections. They are presented in alphabetical order and therefore **no** significance should be attached to the order in which they are listed.

Object Collections

i. Archaeology

Current archaeological material held falls into three distinct groups:

a. Invincible Collection

Material related to the wreck of the *Invincible*, a 3rd Rate ship of the line which sank in 1758 (some 700 or so items collected between 1986 and 1990);

b. The Ship Beneath the Floor

25% of the frame of the Chatham-built 2nd Rate Ship of the Line, *Namur*, launched in 1756, discovered under the floor of the Wheelwrights' Shop in 1995 now preserved in situ as part of the 2016 Command of the Oceans galleries

c. Historic Dockyard Site

Archaeological material which has resulted from archaeological investigations carried out on the Historic Dockyard site and the larger Chatham Dockyard site, since the closure of the naval base in 1984 as part of re-development and regeneration works.

ii. Clothing

A relatively small quantity of items of clothing and personal equipment relating to dockyard workers - particularly protective clothing - and naval uniform.

iii. Ephemera

A small collection of miscellaneous items having a connection with the Trust's areas of collecting which do not readily fall into other categories, most generally items made for or by dockyard workers, often from scrap material.

iv. Models

Models of items of naval, engineering, ordnance and architectural interest related to the Trust's main areas of collecting of both historic and modern manufacture.

v. Ordnance

The Trust holds a large collection (c 100 items) of naval muzzle loading guns, many of which were gifted to it by the Ministry of Defence on the closure of the dockyard or have been recovered from the Chatham Dockyard site during the demolition of buildings prior to the re-development of Chatham Maritime.

Subsequently further muzzle loading guns have been added to the collection.

The Trust also holds a small number of torpedoes and mines

vi. Ships, Small Craft and Boats

The Trust has acquired a small number of historic vessels that have been carefully selected as essential elements in the interpretation of the site. Most significant are the three historic warships:

- HMS Gannet (1878) a transitional period sloop built on the River Medway at Sheerness
- HMS Cavalier (1944) – the Royal Navy's last operational Second World War destroyer, preserved at Chatham as the National Destroyer memorial
- HMS Ocelot (1962) - an 'O' class submarine Ocelot, the last warship built for the Royal Navy at Chatham

The three warships are complemented by the archaeological ships timber find of 25% of the hull of the 1756 second rate 90 gun ship *Namur*.

The Trust also holds an important collection of smaller naval craft and boats including cutters, whalers and launches, together with HSL 376, a 1944 Harbour Service Launch. During the period of the last Collecting Policy a naval sailing and pulling cutter, previously on loan from the National Maritime Museum was transferred to the Trust.

HMS Gannet, HMS Cavalier and HSL 376 are listed as being part of the UK National Historic Fleet by National Historic Ships UK.

vii. Ships - Marine Engineering and Propulsion

The Trust has sought and collected significant examples of warship propulsion systems. The two main groups of equipment being a 1944 steam triple expansion engine and associated equipment and most recently a sectioned boiler, turbine and gearbox from a 1950's Blackwood class frigate acquired from the Royal Navy's engineering training school at HMS Sultan. Smaller associated items (condensers, thrust blocks, etc.) have also been acquired. These objects are augmented by the complete steam turbine propulsion machinery fitted to HMS Cavalier and HMS Ocelot's twin Admiralty Standard Range 1 (ASRI) diesel engines - that were designed and built at Chatham.

viii. Tools and Industrial Equipment

The Trust holds an extensive collection of hand tools, machine tools and industrial equipment related to the shipbuilding process at Chatham Dockyard. The machine tools collection in particular ranges from the extremely large (a 200 ton Plate Bending Machine) to the relatively small. Miscellaneous equipment related to the dockyard has also been collected.

The Trust is also responsible for a major collection of historic ropemaking equipment and machinery still operated 'on display' to visitors in the Ropery. Centre piece of this collection is the Maudslay Forming Machine of 1811, believed to be one the world's earliest surviving pieces of ropemaking machinery.

ix. Transport

Two of Chatham Dockyard's railway locomotives (one steam and one diesel), together with two steam cranes and a number of railway goods vehicles are held by the Trust. In addition, a few examples of mechanised road transport vehicles are represented in the collections.

The Trust has also made an exceptional acquisition of a naval aircraft – a Dragonfly helicopter. It has been acquired principally as an 'aid to display'.

x. Worcester Collection

In 1989, following the closure of the Merchant Navy College at Greenhithe in North Kent, the Trust took over responsibility for the collection of historic material, objects and some records relating to the Training Ship Worcester that were held there. Some items, principally decorative silver pieces are on loan from the Marine Society.

General Reference Collections

The Trust will collect reference material related to its main museum collecting themes. In particular:

- the design and construction of warships for the Royal Navy, particularly those built, repaired or refitted at Chatham and Sheerness;
- the history and topography of Royal Dockyards, particularly those on the River Medway at Chatham and Sheerness;
- crafts, trades and skills of the dockyard worker;
- personalities connected with the dockyard and naval base;
- design and development of naval ordnance;
- general reference material relating to navies, shipbuilding, other dockyards and private yards;
- development of Chatham Dockyard site after closure of the Naval Base (see also Historic Dockyard Reference Collections).

Much primary material concerning the dockyard and its history is held by other institutions and collections, most significantly in The National Archives and Royal Museums Greenwich (National Maritime Museum). Selective copying of such material may take place with the agreement of the institutions concerned to enable primary source material to be made available within the dockyard.

i. Works of Art

In addition to a major ceiling painting attributed to Thomas Highmore and Sir James Thornhill, known to have been on board the Royal Sovereign in 1701 and now in the Commissioner's House, the Trust holds a number of paintings of topographical and personality interest relating to the development of the dockyard at Chatham. Most important is a major work in oil by Elias Martin, an early Royal Academician and Sergeant-Painter to the Swedish Court.

ii. Printed Books and Manuscripts

A further 8,500 volumes were donated to the Library by Mrs Joan Ashcroft in 1999, complementing the 10,000 volumes acquired following the demise of the Merchant Navy College at Greenhithe in 1989, and a major donation of 20th century Navy Lists. Over the past decade acquisitions have been concentrated on the key areas of interest outlined above and on the history and development of the Historic Dockyard (see Section C).

iii. Maps, Plans and Drawings

The Trust holds three distinct groups of drawings that can be categorised into three areas:

a. Maps

A number of maps relating to the Historic Dockyard site, some of which are originals;

b. Plans

A growing collection that mainly relates to ships constructed at the dockyard as well as

the historic vessels that are now on display at the dockyard;

c. **Architectural Drawings**

An extensive collection of drawings relating to the historic buildings and docks across the Chatham Dockyard site. Some of these are held on loan from the National Maritime Museum.

iv. **Photographs and Film**

The Trust holds over 10,000 photographs relating to dockyard workers, trades, shipbuilding and repair and the wider dockyard site. The photographic collection ranges from the mid to late 19th century until closure in 1984. The collection also contains a number of images related to ships and men who served in the Chatham Division of the Royal Navy in the First and Second World War.

v. **Oral History**

Until 2004, only a small amount of oral history material was held, mostly generated by others and copied for the Trust. Since 2004, a number of oral history projects have been undertaken by members of the curatorial team. These projects have concentrated on interviews with ex-Dockyard and Naval personnel.

Historic Dockyard Reference Collections

Collection of material, both objects and archival based to provide a record of the development of the Historic Dockyard after 1984, covering archaeological investigation, building repair and restoration, gallery development and programmes. Collecting will take place in the following areas:

- i. Archaeological finds
- ii. Architectural samples
- iii. Contract and other documents
- iv. Correspondence and other records
- v. Architectural drawings
- vi. Photographs and film
- vii. Printed material

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

Priorities

During the next five year period we will focus on the development of three main areas of collecting:

- Personal testimony of former dockyard workers, those who served in the Chatham Division of the Royal Navy and those who served in HMS Cavalier and HMS Ocelot;
- Social history – stories, objects & archival material relating to dockyard workers, those who served in the Chatham Division of the Royal Navy, HMS Cavalier & Ocelot in general – but with a particular focus on the period of the Cold War;
- Artefacts, documentary evidence and pictures relating to Chatham Dockyard and Chatham-build ships during the Age of Sail with the objective of supporting the development of new

Age of Sail Galleries associated with the Namur;

- The Ropery – artefacts and documentary evidence related to Rope Making at Chatham Dockyard as well as contextual material that helps set the Ropery into context, developing the collection that reflects not only industrial rope manufacture in naval dockyards but also its subsequent use and the industries related to it.

Due to a constraint on storage, the collection of further large objects is not considered a priority and will be acquired only in exceptional circumstances based on a full assessment of relevance, likely future display potential and cost.

Themes for Future Collecting

Collecting during the period 2017 - 2022 will be guided by the priorities outlined above – and the themes, identified on a collection by collection basis below:

Object Collections

i. Archaeological Material

Priority will be given to items found within the site of Chatham Dockyard as the result of archaeological excavations carried out during the repair or re- development of the site, taking into account the Museum's Association code of practice with respect of archaeological material.

Sections of ships and material recovered from other underwater cultural sites will only be collected where particularly relevant to the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust's museum mission and will take into account the provisions of the International Congress of Maritime Museums Standards approved at Barcelona in September 1993.

ii. Clothing

Will concentrate on clothing and personal equipment issued to or used by dockyard workers in all trades in the dockyard with the intention of expanding the Trust's holdings in this area of collections considerably. Naval uniform will be collected primarily for interpretation and display purposes, except where there is clear evidence of a direct link between the original owner/wearer and the dockyard, naval base or Chatham Division. This is not seen as an area of major expansion of collecting.

iii. Ephemera

As above. Not anticipated to be a major growth area of the collections, all items to have a specific Chatham Dockyard/Naval Base connection and history.

iv. Models

a. Ships

Collecting to be primarily restricted to models of warships built on the Medway, or with a strong connection to the Chatham Dockyard and naval base, although the interpretation requirements of future galleries will be recognised and the scope broadened to include models of vessels of particular technical merit, Models of ships built by dockyard or naval personnel based at Chatham or Sheerness yards.

b. Engineering

Models of warship propulsion systems and of other ship's mechanical fittings, machine tools and engineering processes associated with shipbuilding and the work of the dockyard.

c. Architectural

Models of dockyard buildings and processes - primarily of Chatham or Sheerness yards, but

also to be expanded to include Medway based Ordnance Board and Victualling Board premises.

v. Ordnance

a. Guns

Further ordnance items will only be added to the collection to enable the collection to adequately demonstrate the evolution of naval ordnance, particularly those specimens relevant to the interpretation requirements of existing or future galleries. This is not seen as an area of major collecting in the future.

b. Torpedoes and Mines

Further appropriate examples to be acquired, as required, for the development of existing and future galleries including the future interpretation requirements of the submarine Ocelot. It is not anticipated that this will become an area of major expansion of the collections.

vi. Ships, Small Craft and Boats

The Trust does not plan to acquire further large vessels and given constraints on funding, storage, restoration and conservation, is unlikely to pursue the acquisition of any further small craft during the lifetime of this Collections Development Policy.

Small sections of ships demonstrating particular methods of design and construction may be acquired, particularly if relevant to future galleries.

vii. Ships - Marine Engineering and Propulsion

Two examples of other marine power systems are still sought to complete the Trust's collections of marine engineering systems - an early 'simple' marine steam engine and a modern marinised gas turbine. Neither are seen as a high priority.

viii. Tools and Industrial Equipment

A small number of hand and machine tools may be added to the collections either to fill significant gaps or if related to a particular person of interest to the history of the Dockyard.

ix. Transport

Further road and railway objects may be added to the collection providing that they have a direct relevance to the dockyard and its history. This is not seen as a major area of future collecting.

x. Worcester Collection

Additional items relating to the training ship, mostly sourced through the Association of Old Worcesters, will be added to the collection. This is not seen as a major growth area.

General Reference

i. Works of Art

Works of Art of particular relevance to Chatham Dockyard, in particular those of topographical interest and those relating to ships, trades and people connected with the Dockyards at Chatham and Sheerness.

ii. Printed Books and Manuscripts

Will follow the format of previous years concentrating on the acquisition of appropriate works in the key areas of interest.

iii. Maps, Plans and Drawings

Maps, plans and drawings relating to the Royal Dockyards at Chatham and Sheerness and the Royal Navy's use of the River Medway and environs. Historic drawings will also be collected as appropriate bearing in mind the holdings of the National Maritime Museum, The National Archives and The Historic England Archive .

iv. Photographs and Film

Photographs relating to the dockyards at Chatham and Sheerness and warships built or refitted at either dockyard. In particular, efforts are to be made to increase holdings of dockyard photographs remaining within the local community, as the official dockyard photographic collection would appear to have been largely destroyed. During the next five years there will also be an increased effort to collect photographs relating to ships and people related to Chatham during the First World War.

v. Oral History

As already mentioned, oral history will be prioritised in the next five year period. With the final generation of dockyard workers slowly diminishing it is vital to capture their stories before it is too late. Further to this, there will be a concerted effort to collect second generation stories related to relatives who either worked at the dockyard or served in the Chatham Division of the Royal Navy during the First World War.

Historic Dockyard Reference Collections

Collection of material, both objects and archival based to provide a record of the development of the Historic Dockyard after 1984, covering archaeological investigation, building repair and restoration, gallery development and programmes. Collecting will take place in the following areas:

- i. Archaeological finds
- ii. Architectural sample
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- iv. Correspondence and other records
- v. Architectural drawings
- vi. Photographs and film
- vii. Printed material

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 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.**
- 5.2 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.**

In 1984 the Trust inherited substantial collections of dockyard material that has either been set

aside by the Dockyard prior to the Trust's foundation, or left behind in buildings vacated by the Navy as they withdrew from the site.

Between 2006 and 2008, as a precursor to its plans to develop 3 Slip as an open access store, the Trust undertook a major review of its large object collections, especially inherited machine tools and dockyard equipment and undertook a limited process of rationalisation and disposal.

Between 2008 and 2010 collections of ironworking equipment and associated material, left within No 1 Smithery on the closure of the dockyard were recovered from the building as part of the first phase of restoration works, identified and rationalised.

During the period of this plan the Trust intends to more closely integrate its collections of dockyard related material with those of the Chatham Dockyard Historical Society. This process will identify the extent to which material is duplicated or falls outside the collecting policy and if necessary a process of rationalisation and disposal will take place.

The improvement of the Library and Archive which is tied up with the Fitted Rigging House Project due to commence in the autumn of 2017 will present an opportunity to review photographic and archival material. This review will identify potential issues of duplication and inappropriate accessioning which has occurred in the past and seek to rectify this issue.

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 Trust 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 museum(s)/organisation(s):

- National Maritime Museum
- Imperial War Museum
- Science Museum
- The National Archives
- National Museum of the Royal Navy
- Scottish Maritime Museum
- Guildhall Museum, Rochester
- Medway Archives
- Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive

The Trust will consult with members of the UK Maritime Heritage Forum if it considers any potential acquisition raises issues of conflict of interest, or duplication might arise.

8 Archival holdings

The Trust holds a variety of archival collections identified in section 3.

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

- a. The Trust will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the Trust can acquire a valid title to the item in question;
- b. In particular, the Trust 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);
- c. The Trust will heed the guidance of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 when acquiring objects that may contain asbestos. An initial assessment on the likelihood of an object containing asbestos will be undertaken. If deemed probable, the Trust will not accept the acquisition before assessment by a competent professional and if such assessment proves positive for asbestos, the appropriate authorities are notified and the hazard is contained by licensed professionals. This will also apply to Loans In and Out.

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 The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 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:

- o **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 Not relevant to Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust – (not included on the advice of Kate Hebditch)

16 Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 16.2 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.
- 16.3 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.
- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5 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 will also be sought.
- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, 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, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 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.
- 16.8 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).

- 16.9** 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.
- 16.10** 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.
- 16.11** 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.
- 16.12** 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

- 16.13** The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1** In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2** If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 16.13.3** If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4** Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the

museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.**
- 16.15 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.**
- 16.16 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.**
- 16.17 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.**
- 16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.**