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# **Leicestershire County Council Communities and Well Being**

## **MUSEUMS COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2015-2019**

**Name of museum:** Leicestershire County Council Museum Services (LCCMS)

**Name of governing body:** Leicestershire County Council

**Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:** Reviewed Jan 2016 and approved by Lead Member on 2 February 2016

**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:** 2019

**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:**

#### **Our Vision**

We see a Leicestershire with a rich history that values its heritage, engages its communities, welcomes those who visit the county, and works together to ensure a future for the past.

#### **Our Purpose**

In line with our vision the purpose of Leicestershire Museums is to safeguard the future of the rich and irreplaceable natural and human heritage of Leicestershire and to provide an accessible, engaging, innovative, sustainable and responsive service of the highest quality.

Leicestershire Museums ('the Museum') form part of the Communities & Wellbeing Service alongside Libraries, Archives, Adult Learning and Creative Leicestershire Services and is part of the Adults and Communities Directorate in Leicestershire County Council. The service is solely responsible for Bosworth Battlefield, The Collections Resources Centre, Melton Carnegie Museum and Donington le Heath Manor House. Charnwood Museum and Harborough Museum are delivered in partnerships with the relevant borough and district Councils and other organisations.

The Museum's acquisition policy is

***To collect and record the natural life of the County of Leicestershire and to reflect the histories, interests and aspirations of the people who have made it their home.***

We do this in association with the Museum services of Leicester City, Rutland County and the many independent museums across Leicestershire.\*

\* (The agreement reached with Leicester City Museum Service (LCMS) in 1999 on the sharing of museum collections, following local government re-organisation, specified certain areas of

specialism for the LCMS, and LCCMS respectively. This means the County Service does not acquire material in those areas being developed by LCMS, and vice versa. In effect, this limits collecting by mutual agreement and is supported by robust access arrangements for the joint use of certain collections. Following a significant restructuring and review of the Service in 2008 and a subsequent strategic review of collections the 1999 agreement was revised following consultation with user groups and other interested partners. The revision agreed to house the County Geology Collection with LCMS and the Higher Plant Botany with the County Service.)

- 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**
  - 1.7.1 If, after following the Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and Disposal (see Section 5) and the Disposal Procedures (see Section 16), 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.**

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

The Leicestershire County Council Museum collections were formed from the core collections of the Leicester Town (and later City) Museum and the Melton Mowbray Museum.

Leicester Museum developed from the middle of the C19th with the support of the Town and later (from 1922) City council and the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society. In the 1930s a Schools Loans collection was created as a significant part of Service delivery. In the 1940s some rationalisation of collections transferred material from the main

collections to School loans and also out of the Service to other UK museums which had sustained loss due to war time bombing.

In 1974 the re-organisation of local government in Leicestershire created the Leicestershire County Council Museums, Arts & Records Service (LMARS) with responsibility for museums in Leicester, Leicestershire and the historic county of Rutland.

Between 1974 and 1997 LMARS developed collections based on curatorial specialisms of Fine Art, Archaeology, Social History, Biology, Geology, Science & Technology and Decorative Arts (including Costume, Ethnography and historic buildings and interiors) Museums reflecting these collections were developed in Leicester and local community museums were developed in Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Oakham, Donington-Heath Manor House. The County Record Office was responsible for archive collections.

Active collecting continued throughout this period and the collections grew in size and the curatorial departments increased in numbers of staff and focus of specialisation. From 1983 a separate collection group was formed to reflect the new partnership arrangements that created the new Harborough Museum in Market Harborough. (The new museum collection was formed around the founding collection of the Market Harborough Historical Society ownership of which is retained by the Society)

In 1992 LMARS opened Snibston to showcase its coal mining and other Science and Technology collections.

In 1997 subsequent reform of local government in Leicestershire gave unitary status to Leicester City and to Rutland and effectively formed three museum services, one for each authority area.

In 1998 Charnwood Borough Council commissioned LMARS to co-create the Charnwood Museum in Loughborough using existing collections and curatorial knowledge. In 2007 the new Bosworth Battlefield Heritage centre was awarded Accredited Museum status with an associated collection objects discovered through the process of landscape investigation to determine the actual site of the battle.

From 1999 the collections sharing agreement between Leicester city, Rutland and Leicestershire County Councils and the subsequent Acquisition and Disposal Policies of the three authorities have defined the collecting priorities and lead areas for the services.

In 1999 LMARS re-named its collecting areas on a thematic basis, re-forming the previous curatorial specialisms into commonly understood concepts of Natural Life, Home and Family Life, Working Life, Cultural Life and Sporting Life with Archaeology as a process driven collection that underpins all of the other themes. The Harborough Museum Collection continues to be developed under its own collections title.

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

#### **3.1 Natural Life**

Collections primarily of specimens and information which reflect the landscape, flora and fauna of the county. They demonstrate the changing natural environment of Leicestershire and its place in the rest of the world over time, comprising two main groups of botany and zoology. They include supporting archives about individual collectors, groups, societies and institutions that help tell the history and development of the study of natural science. These

collections are linked to environmental information, species and site records (much in digital formats). They include type and voucher specimens, microscopy, a comprehensive historic and contemporary book collection, some comparative specimens for reference, educational and display purposes and a handling collection for use by communities.

### **Botany Areas of Excellence**

- British non-flowering plants (lichens)
- British non-flowering plants (bryophytes)
- Records and personalia of important historical Leicestershire naturalists and collectors (Pulteney, Bloxham, Berkeley)
- Leicestershire flowering plants, ferns, slime moulds and algae.
- Collections of local natural history societies
- Records and personalia of local naturalists and collectors (Sowter, Ballard, Fletcher)
- Botanical microscope slide collection

### **Zoology Areas of excellence**

- Important reference collections of Leicestershire (Leicester and Rutland) insects, from the 1800s to the present day and supporting reference collection of insects taken in the UK (England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales).
- Reference collection of moth genitalia stored in gelatine capsules or mounted on to microscope slides.
- A comprehensive reference collection of un-mounted bird and mammal skins and zoology skeletons.
- Spirit Collection

## **3.2 Archaeology**

The archaeology collections provide evidence of human activity in what is now Leicestershire. They cover all periods of time from the prehistoric to the modern: some half a million years.

The collections include both 'finds' and 'records'.

The finds comprise artefacts and objects which have been produced or affected by humans, together with associated samples of various kinds, human and animal remains, and biological specimens: this material is collectively referred to as the Finds Archive.

The records comprise information relating to the discovery, recovery and conservation of, and research into, the finds, together with archaeological fieldwork archives and published reports. This material is referred to as the Documentary Archive.

A sub group of the Archaeology Collections is The Bosworth Collection. This collection contains material traditionally associated with the Battle of Bosworth 1485 as well as artefacts of all periods collected during the Bosworth Battlefield Survey. [See separate entry for Bosworth under discrete Collections]

The collections are supported by a library of selective reference works, and a handling collection.

### **Areas of excellence:**

- Lower Palaeolithic stone tools;

- collections from Leicestershire's scheduled monuments;
- The Hallaton Treasure
- exploitation and bridging of the River Trent in the medieval period;
- coal mining before the Industrial Revolution;
- structural and functional analyses of Leicestershire buildings: standing, ruinous and buried;
- the rural economy from earliest times to the 18<sup>th</sup> century;
- Medieval and early post-medieval urban life;
- rituals of life and death from the Neolithic to the Medieval period;
- The Bosworth Collection.

### **3.3 Home and Family Life**

The Home and Family Life collections reflect the way the Leicestershire people build, decorate and manage their homes now and in the past. They show changes in domestic technology, hygiene and outside influences on the home.

The collections also record important aspects of family life including rites of passage, family structures and entertainment. Objects including Christmas cards, games, toys, sporting equipment and the ephemera and objects related to things like shopping and holidays all fall within the collecting sphere of Home and Family Life.

The home is also an outlet for creative expression and objects associated with interior decoration, furnishings and home crafts are an important aspect of the collections.

A pro-active collections policy ensures that as many different experiences of home and family life are explored as possible and also that the collection reflects the latest as well as the historical trends in this collecting field.

#### **Areas of excellence**

- The collection associated with the Palitoy toy company. We now hold the largest public collection of Palitoy toys outside of London.
- The Ladybird book collection
- The board and card game collection
- The home craft collection of objects exploring female creativity in the home

### **3.4 Working Life**

This collection reflects local trades and industries, partly through collections of tools and equipment, and increasingly through the acquisition of finished products and ephemera, pictures and recordings.

The collection has focussed on the work of traditional craftsmen such as the blacksmith, wheelwright, farmer and baker and secondly on the commercial life of the County's market towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the latter mainly with collections from long-established shops.

The collections of the larger manufacturing industries of the C19th and C20th reflect the growth and decline of the industrial era and now focus on Engineering, Transport, Mining and other Extractive Industries.

The Working Life collection today preserves and displays material evidence of specifically local Leicestershire trades and industries. The core of the collection is a representative selection of hand tools and products from the area's traditional crafts, mainly dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. More recent collecting has concentrated on local businesses, mainly small and innovative concerns producing a unique local product. We are also continuing to collect items illustrating modern agriculture and changes to the countryside.

#### **Working Life, Areas of Excellence:**

- The Deacon Family clock making workshop from Barton in the Beans, with many original 18<sup>th</sup> century tools and benches.
- The Leicestershire Clock Collection made by local craftsmen in the period 1720 - 1820
- Historic Farm Wagons and Carts – regionally important collection including a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century wagon and the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Beaumanor Coach

### **3.5 Mining and Transport**

Mining and transport have played an important part in Leicestershire's development for hundreds of years.

The Museum collections represent the history of extractive industries, coal mining and the local mining communities. They range from large underground coal cutters to small personal items and equipment and objects and ephemera of the Miners' Strike. The story also draws on the Archaeology collections to tell the earliest story of coal mining with the nationally-important collection of Tudor and later artefacts from the Lounge Opencast Site.

The focus of the coal mining collections is a comprehensive set of artefacts used by Leicestershire miners in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of which are directly associated with Snibston Colliery. It should be noted that the mine buildings at Snibston are Ancient Scheduled Monuments and intrinsic to the context of the mining collections.

Several Leicestershire-based businesses played an important role in transport technology; for example Brush Electrical Engineering built steam and Diesel locomotives, tramcars, and bus bodies. Our collections include the only standard-gauge Brush steam locomotive in existence, and five small locomotives used by local mines, quarries and power stations.

Our collections reflect Leicestershire's contribution to aircraft design and production. They include five Auster aircraft and the unique "Desford" training aeroplane. Sir Frank Whittle's team, Power Jets Ltd, perfected Britain's first jet engine at Lutterworth and the World's first jet engine factory was opened at Whetstone in 1943.

#### **Mining and Transport, Areas of Excellence:**

- N.C.B. Era coal mining artefacts (and Snibston buildings, oral history, and documentary evidence in Record office)
- Auster aircraft (plus Auster archive in Record Office)
- Leicestershire Industrial locomotives
- Power Jets engines, components and models

### **3.6 Cultural Life**

The cultural life collections reflect the artistic and cultural interests and aspirations of the people and institutions of the County in terms of Visual Art, Fashion and design-led products. The collections are currently formed in two main parts the Visual Arts Collection and the Fashion Collection

The Visual Arts collection consists of works on paper and easel paintings which reflect the artist's record of the changing landscape and built environment of the county, portraits of local people, their working and social lives and the traditional pursuits of local people particularly in the field of country sports. There is a small collection of works by Leicestershire artists whose subjects are not the life of the county.

The Fashion collections reflect fashionable and occupational dress of adult men and women from the middle of the eighteenth century to the present day and are considered to be one of the pre-eminent collections in the Midlands.

The Service has no historic collection of decorative art objects; these will only be acquired where they contribute to one or more of the other themes of the life of the County. However, fine examples of contemporary craftworks by local crafts people, or makers with local connections, will be collected, as appropriate.

#### **Areas of excellence:**

- Symington collection of corsetry, foundation-wear and swimwear
- NEXT archive and collection (which has been developed in partnership with NEXT plc and is now nationally important, demonstrating one successful retailer's approach to high street fashion and the retail business. Curatorial staff select one male and female outfit every season, which is then donated to the Service by the company. This is the only relationship of its kind in the UK between a retailer and public museum.)
- International Fashion Design
- Sportswear collection
- The work of John Ferneley and the Sporting art collection

### **3.7 Reflecting Leicestershire Life at Harborough Museum, Melton Carnegie Museum, Charnwood Museum, Snibston and Donington**

Leicestershire is a predominantly rural county with specialist centres of industry, learning, innovation and cultural and sporting activity. The overarching Leicestershire Life themes reflect the particular qualities of the story of Leicestershire including working on the land and earning a living from it as well as the villages, towns and industries that sprang from these activities.

Each Museum site reflects the particular nature of the areas and communities which they serve and these are in turn reflected in the focus of collecting through these sites.

**3.7.1 Harborough Museum** is a formal partnership with the Harborough District Council and the Market Harborough Historical Society, whose collection of local history items and antiquities is the foundation of the museum. The Museum is supported by The Market Harborough and The Bowdens Charity.

The Harborough Museum collects material relating to the landscape and communities of Market Harborough and its surrounding area as defined by the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century carrier routes. It includes areas of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire from Billesdon in the north, Lamport in the south, Husbands Bosworth in the west and Caldecot in the east.



The collecting area includes the parishes of Arthingworth, Ashley, Billesdon, Blaston, Brampton Ash, Braybrooke, Bringham, Caldecot, Church Langton, Clipston, Cottingham, Cranoe, Desborough, Dingley, Drayton, East Carlton, East Farndon, East Langton, Fleckney, Foxton, Glooston, Goadby, Great Bowden, Great Easton, Great Oxendon, Gumley, Hallaton, Harrington, Haselbech, Horninghold, Husbands Bosworth, Illston, Kelmars, Kibworth Harcourt, Kibworth Beauchamp, Lamport, Laughton, Little Bowden, Lubenham, Lutterworth, Maidwell, Marston, Trussell, Medbourne, Middleton, Mowsley, Naseby, Nevill Holt, North Kilworth, Noseley, Rockingham, Rolleston, Rothwell, Rushton, St Mary in Arden, Saddington, Shangton, Sibbertoft, Slawston, Smeeton, Westerby, South Kilworth, Stoke Albany, Stonton Wyville, Sulby, Sutton Bassett, Swinford, Theddingworth, Thorpe Langton, Tur Langton, Walcote, Walton & Kimcote, Welford, Welham, West Langton, Weston by Welland, Wilbarston and Wistow.

Consideration is given to the collecting policies of other museums in this area including Lutterworth, Fleckney, Foxton, Hallaton, Desborough and Rothwell. Consideration is also given to the collecting policies of the Accredited museums in Northamptonshire.

The Harborough Collections reflect the history and development of the area and include manufacturing including R & W H Symington & Co Ltd, W Symington (Foods) The Harborough Rubber Company, local retailers, agriculture and food production and the complete contents of the Falkner shoe workshop.

The collections also reflect local domestic and social life and record the contribution of local individuals. The museum has an extensive collection of local photographs including the work of pioneer photographer the Rev. Law and the commercial photographer Gulliver Speight.

**3.7.2 Melton Carnegie Museum** exhibits the changing nature of rural Leicestershire and the relationship of the countryside with the market town. It reflects recent and current agriculture, local food production (particularly Stilton cheese making and Pork Pie production) animal husbandry and countryside management generally.

The changing lives of the area's geographic and cultural communities from the earliest times to the present are also told within the galleries and enhanced through specific collecting and recording projects. Contemporary Collecting and recording are a particular focus. The Museum leads on the collecting and recording of material associated with fox hunting and its related trades, crafts, and roles and its social and cultural life in partnership with the Museum of Hunting Trust.

**3.7.3 Charnwood Museum** is a partnership with Charnwood Borough Council and reflects the communities, working life and natural life of the area. The objects relating to the area are drawn out of the established collecting themes but have particular strengths in Working Life, Home and Family Life and Natural Life.

The Collections also reflect life in the town of Loughborough including its changing communities and their faiths, the principal industries and the University. The history of the Herrick family and the Beaumanor estate also form part of the collections. The Charnwood area has traditionally been home to a number of leading naturalists and environmental groups and societies and has been a creative focus for artists.

**3.7.4 Snibston Colliery Site**

The Snibston site is the former Snibston colliery with many of the original mine buildings and infrastructure remaining on the surface. Many of these structures are scheduled as Ancient Monuments by Historic England and are considered to be part of the collections in terms of their interpretation.

As part of the Working Life Collections, the Service holds an important collection of Mining artefacts charting the development of Coal mining from the Tudor period through to the present day (see 3.5). These collections include material relating to the communities that formed the Leicestershire (and related South Derbyshire) Coalfield. The collections include an important library of books and archives related to coal mining, training, surveying and engineering.

Snibston is also home to the Century Theatre (see 3.8 Discrete Collections) and the Sheepy Magna wheelwright's workshop; a building of which the earliest part dates from 1742 and is a unique survival of a late C19th and C20th wheelwright and coffin maker's workshop. The buildings and their contents were taken down and re-assembled on the Snibston site in 1992. The contents are part of the Working Life Collections.

The Colliery railway was completed by the Stephensons in 1836 and is one of the earliest surviving mineral railways in the UK. There is an associated collection of locomotives.

**3.7.5 Donington le Heath Manor House** is a late Medieval manor with Tudor and early Stuart additions. The contents of the building are a mixture of accessioned, un-accessioned historic and replica objects which tell the story of the lifestyle of the people who lived there in the past.

### **3.8 Discrete collections**

#### **3.8.1 Bosworth Battlefield**

A sub group of the Archaeology Collection is The Bosworth Collection. This is stored and exhibited at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre. The collection contains material traditionally associated with the battle as well as over 5000 artefacts collected during the Bosworth Battlefield Survey.

This material includes an internationally important collection of 15<sup>th</sup> century round shot (some of which is on loan from the landowner) and nationally important objects associated with the newly rediscovered battle site (including the Boar Badge of King Richard III). The rest of the material, including objects from a regionally important Roman temple site, as well as objects from all periods, acts as an important research collection.

#### **3.8.2 The Century Theatre**

The Century Theatre was built in Burbage, Hinckley in 1950 and is the Service's largest single accessioned object. It is housed at Snibston and still functions as a working performance venue. The theatre and a small number of objects and images related to its inception, development and history are supported by an archive housed at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

**3.8.3 Donington le Heath Manor House** is a late medieval manor house with a re-created historic garden. Material beyond the scope of the main Museum Collecting themes may occasionally be collected for display within the house.

### **3.9 Partnership Collections**

### 3.9.1 The Hunting Collection

Because of Melton's unique position both as a centre for fox-hunting and as a pivotal location in the evolution of fox-hunting as an organised sport, special consideration needs to be afforded to the scope and content of the hunting collections which are developed in partnership with the Museum of Hunting Trust.

The hunting collections reflect the aspirations of the Museum of Hunting Trust by covering, at a representative level only, the broad scope of hunting and its opposition in the UK. This provides a national context against which the more detailed local collections can be set. These are specific to the 'Leicestershire' hunts (which straddle the county boundary) and represent all facets of the sport, its social milieu and its impact on the landscape of Leicestershire and its neighbouring counties.

The objectives of the hunting collection are to gather a body of material evidence which demonstrates:

- The role hunting has played in Leicestershire society and economic history, particularly in the Melton area; the families that spent the season there and the celebrities they entertained.
- How the hunt is organised, the hunt year and its established pattern of activities; the Leicestershire hunts, their territories, traditions and trophies.
- The hunting landscape, shaped to support fox populations and the chase, with traditional patterns of hedges, ditches and coverts; hunting lodges, country houses and estates.
- The rural crafts and trades which are closely associated with hunting and equestrianism generally: for example saddlers, boot makers, farriers, grooms, victuallers, inn keepers, tailors, photographers and equestrian artists.
- Hunting people themselves and how fox-hunting impacted on their lives; hunting family histories; the hunt employees and hunt followers.
- Anti-hunting groups and the people who support them; their beliefs and commitments, and the information they produce.
- Hunting dress, from field clothes and liveries to hunt balls and hunt followers.

It is important for this collection to be set in a wider, national context. To this end, collecting objects and information relating to different forms of hunting practised elsewhere in the UK is included in the remit. This is for illustrative purposes only – to provide a synoptic view of hunting nationally, not to acquire in great detail further study collections from beyond the 'county' hunt boundaries.

The Museum of Hunting Trust will support collecting in these areas and will facilitate the acquisition of key items which will develop the national identity of the collections. These acquisitions will become part of the main collections and will be accessioned and used in the usual way.

### 3.9.2 The Harbrough Collections

Life in and around Market Harbrough are reflected in three ways: through the collection of the Market Harbrough Historical Society, the LCC Harbrough Collection (denoted by the L (pre 1997) or X.MH accession prefix) and objects from the area that are accessioned by curatorial theme within the LCC collection (e.g. the Symington Collection and the Hallaton Treasure).

The Market Harborough Historical Society has ownership of its own collection and appoints an Honorary Curator (traditionally an LCC museum professional) to liaise with other LCC colleagues teams to ensure the collection's management, care and display.

### **3.10 Special Considerations:**

#### **3.10.1 The Reserve Collection**

The Reserve collection is a collection of original historic objects, which are available for loan by community groups and (primarily) schools in their own venues.

Collection management principles are the same as those outlined in the policy document, with the added requirement for inspection, conservation, repair and cleaning between loan periods.

The collection is currently undergoing assessment and review to determine its significance and future purpose.

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

### **4.1 Natural Life**

**The focus of collecting over the next 5 years will be:**

- to demonstrate the impact of habitat and climate change on the local natural environment
- new species recorded in the county
- reflect the continuing activities of local societies, institutions and individuals
- develop better handling and teaching resources for study by non-specialists as an introduction to science
- continue to add relevant publications to the book collection
- create a small collection of historic objects including taxidermy, jewellery, decorative arts etc to illustrate the use of natural life in man-made objects

The Collection will not accept any further spirit collections or specimens, large taxidermy, specimens requiring taxidermy or unprepared archives and collections of material which are unrelated to Leicestershire.

### **4.2 Archaeology**

- Archives from professional and amateur fieldwork in Leicestershire that meet the standards laid down in '*The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire Museums*';
- Objects from Leicestershire that enhance the Service's visitor offer;
- Objects from Leicestershire of regional or wider significance that become available for acquisition through the procedures laid down in the Treasure Act 1996.

The collections will not accept:

- archives and collections from living creators, extant bodies and trading businesses that do not meet the minimum standards laid down in '*The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire Museums*';
- archives and collections no part of which derives from Leicestershire;
- objects that lack a provenance, or were found outside Leicestershire, except as reference material;

- Human remains for which explicit scientific justification for their retention in an archaeological archive is lacking.

### 4.3 Home and Family Life

- Continuing to add to the Palitoy collection with particular reference to older and archive material.
- Developing the home craft collection as a reflection of creative expression
- New domestic and personal technologies
- Collecting the memories of Leicestershire people with particular reference to the material culture of domestic life
- Material for the re-interpretation of Donington le Heath Manor House

The collections will not accept furniture, large domestic appliances, sewing machines or duplicate Ladybird books.

### 4.4 Working Life

- Leicestershire Agriculture in an era of change
- Leicestershire inventions and innovations
- Disappearing trades and industries
- Working life at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, particularly creative industries, e and digital technology.

### 4.5 Mining and Transport

- The Leicestershire Coalfield, in particular Snibston Colliery and its owners (including George and Robert Stephenson) and workforce.

### 4.6 Cultural Life

- International fashion design including the work of emerging designers
- Establish new archives and collections representing pre-eminent fashion retailers from the area
- Menswear
- Sportswear
- Commission local artists to produce works that record the local landscape and built environment
- Relevant works that reflect the country sports of Leicestershire, record local individuals or are by local artists of significance
- Dress associated with Civil Partnership ceremonies of local people

The Collections will not accept children's clothing or wedding dresses that are not connected with a ceremony conducted in Leicestershire

## 5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

**Please note Section 1.3:**

**By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and should possess (or intend to acquire) permanent collections in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body**

accepts the principle that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

- 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.
- 5.3 As outlined in Leicestershire County Council Museums Collections Management Framework 2015-2019 (p.10)

A programme of collections review and rationalisation ensures that our collections are accessible, well looked after, and fit for use. Where gaps in the collections (usually in terms of representation of our communities) are identified, targeted collecting will be planned to fill them. This review and rationalisation also informs our recommendations to dispose of material no-longer relevant to our collections or Service offer.

This disposal of objects from the museum collections is done in accordance with the Accreditation Standard for Museums, taking into account the Museum Association's (MA) Code of Ethics (2014) and SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on Disposal

#### **OUR COMMITMENT:**

Collections will be reviewed periodically, and rationalised where necessary, to ensure they remain relevant to the services offered and fit the cultures and aspirations of the communities they represent.

#### **Policy Points**

- The Service undertakes to review its collections in the light of the requirements of its communities, partner and supporting organisations, local and regional heritage networks and the objectives of the county council.
- Collection rationalisation, as well as targeted collecting, will be undertaken to ensure the collections are fit for use.
- The approved procedures for disposal of objects, or groups of objects from the museum and related collections **MUST** be adhered to in all circumstances.
- Significant acquisitions and all disposals will be considered by the Lead Member who meets regularly with the professional Head of Service to maintain an overview of museum collecting activity and to instigate disposal procedures where necessary.

Current areas of review relate to the Working Life and Mining and Transport Collections and the collection known as 'The Reserve' (See 3.10.1)

The closure of Snibston Discovery Museum on 31 July 2015 has meant that a process of audit and review of objects at that museum has been planned and implemented. The audit and review is divided into a number of phases based on site location, provenance and ownership. The priority first phase involved objects displayed in the museum gallery building. This phase will end on 19 Feb 2016. This has prioritised establishment of title and ownership, return of loans, safe storage of LCC Collections both on site and in other collections facilities and response to expressions of interest for loans from other Accredited museums and heritage organisations. Leicestershire County Council has worked closely with Leicester City Museum Service under the terms of the existing Collections Sharing Agreement to return loans and transfer a small number of objects with a City connection or provenance, including two Gimson beam engines and a Merryweather fire engine.

The review specifically looks at the Working Life and Mining and Transport Collections which were displayed and are stored at Snibston. As the review phases continue, this will also extend to a small number of Working Life and Mining and Transport collections housed at the Collections Resources Centre.

The remaining collections that were displayed at Snibston (including the Fashion Collection and toys and other objects from the Home and Family Life collection) will be rehoused in our collections facilities and continue to be publicly accessible by appointment.

Phase 2 and subsequent phases will be to investigate all objects, collections and other material on the Snibston Colliery site to determine their future purpose.

The Reserve Collection was formed in an ad-hoc way, beginning in the 1930s. Its purpose was to provide the basis for customised loans to communities particularly schools and colleges. Since the rationalisation of the Resource Box and Artworks Collections (museum loans to schools) the Reserve Collection feeds into the this service in a more limited way. The purpose of the review is therefore to determine the history of the objects (e.g. were they transfers from accessioned main collections or acquired specifically for the purpose of educational loan?) and to determine the best use of those objects by the service in the future.

## **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 museum(s)/organisation(s):**

We maintain regular contact with Derby Museums, Nottingham City Museums Service, Rutland County Museum, Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, Lincolnshire County Council Museums and with independent museums in the Leicestershire via the Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage Forum.

We continue to participate in the specialist networks for curators fostered by the Renaissance East Midlands and now Arts Council's programme of Museum Development (East Midlands).

**7.3** The agreement reached with Leicester City Museum Service (LCMS) in 1999 on the sharing of museum collections, following local government re-organisation, specified certain areas of specialism for the LCMS, and LCCMS respectively. This means the County Service does not acquire material in those areas being developed by LCMS, and vice versa. In effect, this limits collecting by mutual agreement and is supported by robust access arrangements for the joint use of certain collections. Following a significant restructuring and review of the Service in 2008 and a subsequent strategic review of collections the 1999 agreement was revised following consultation with user groups and other interested partners. The revision agreed to house the County Geology Collection with LCMS and the Higher Plant Botany with the County Service.

## **8 Acquisition**

### **8.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:**

*The Museum's acquisition policy is*

***To collect and record the natural life of the County of Leicestershire and to reflect the histories, interests and aspirations of the people who have made it their home.***

#### **8.1.1 Criteria governing future collecting policy, including the subjects or themes for collecting**

This procedure supports the Collections Management Framework by establishing parameters for the acquisition of objects and their status once acquired. It also conforms to the requirements of the Accreditation Standard in respect of new acquisitions, and will be reviewed no later than 2019.

The rationale for the collections is contained within the 'Collecting the Life of the County' thematic approach to collecting, and this provides a framework by which collecting effort can be prioritised and structured.

#### **8.1.2 General Restrictions**

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

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.



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

The Service recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure adequate care of collections, documentation arrangements and proper use of such collections.

It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as inadequate staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

All items being considered for addition to the collections should conform to the following criteria:-

- Acquisition falls within the scheme of delegation to the Head of Service – otherwise Lead Member or Cabinet approval is required (e.g. high value or sensitive items).
- There should be a clear reason why the Service needs the item.
- The Service has the knowledge, professional care and management skills, space and financial resources to ensure the object's future.
- The ownership of the item should be clearly established.
- The position regarding copyright should be clarified, the preferred option being a transfer of copyright to the Service.
- If the item is offered for sale on the open market, the funding to support its purchase must be in place, including grant monies and any contribution from the Service's purchase fund, and approval by an appropriate authority (normally the Assistant Director of the Service department) obtained before the purchase is finalised; a purchase order should be issued and payment is normally made on receipt of an invoice.
- The item should fall within the 'Collecting the Life of the County' rationale.
- The item is best acquired by this Service rather than another. In deciding this, the Service will take account of the collecting policies of other national and in particular local and East Midlands museums 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.
- The Service can house the item and store it to an appropriate standard.
- Given the objects condition the Service can conserve or restore the item within an acceptable timescale, and allow access to it to an appropriate professional standard.
- Acquisition does not contravene any legal, ethical or local laws or regulations.

### **8.1.3 Acquisition**

Acquisition is the permanent addition of an item or collection into the Museum collections through the transfer of legal title by gift or sale, or in the case of archives as deposits on indefinite loan. Items may be acquired through:

- Agreed gifts (donation) and bequests (usually via an executor).
- Purchase from reputable dealers and auctioneers, organisations or individuals who either have legal title, or are acting on behalf of parties that have legal title.
- Collecting by staff, contractors or associates to support research, excavation, interpretation or similar activities.

- Transfer from like institutions.
- The disaggregation of collections resulting from local government re-organisation in 1997, and in accordance with the legal agreement between the County and City Councils.
- Deposits of archives on indefinite loan by the owners or their legitimate agents.

Many of these processes may involve intermediaries who can be neutral or can act either for the owner or for the Service. The position of intermediaries should be established and recorded as part of the acquisition procedure.

Transfer of title and copyright, or deposit on indefinite loan can only be done by the legal owner or by a legally appointed intermediary (e.g. executor or legal representative).

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the Senior Management Team following a strong recommendation from the curatorial team and having regard to the interests of other museums.

#### 8.1.4 Curatorial Selection

Curatorial staff consider acquisitions to, and disposals from, the main collections. This group may co-opt others outside the organisation to give expert opinion as required.

The remit of the curators is to:

- Provide an overview of acquisitions across the Service so everyone has a picture of what is coming into the Service and why.
- Develop and review a Collections Development Strategy to support the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy, which is part of the Collections Development Policy.
- Manage a range of issues relating to collections and their management (e.g. standards for storage and conservation) as necessary.
- Support documentation procedures and develop strategies for tackling any backlog.
- Ensure the profile of collections, their requirements and management is maintained in the Service and outside.
- Initiate and carry out fundraising initiatives for the acquisition of key objects.
- The Senior Curator and Resources and Collections Manager support curatorial decisions on the routine acceptance of objects for the collections and decide on acceptance or rejection of less clear-cut offers of gift.
- The Senior Curator and Resources and Collections Manager consider recommendations for disposal to ensure objects are surplus to requirements across the whole Service, and present these recommendations to SMT and ultimately the responsible Lead Member.

#### 8.1.5 Period of time and/or geographical area to which collecting relates

- Although the collections are predominantly of Leicestershire origin, in some areas we collect material which is from outside Leicestershire. These can be summarised as:
- Important **regionally** and not well represented elsewhere in the East Midlands (e.g. the River Trent collection).
- Known **nationally** because of their exceptional quality (e.g. the fox-hunting collection).
- Renowned **internationally** because of their unique holdings (e.g. the Symington foundation wear collection, the Hallaton Treasure).
- Archive collections including material relating to areas elsewhere in the UK or abroad, but retained as a unit because of the primary principle of not splitting archive groups.

- The collection covers the human experience from the pre-historic Palaeolithic period (around 400,000 years ago) to the present day.

### **8.1.6 Limitations on collecting**

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.

### **8.1.7 Collecting policies of other museums**

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.

Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

We maintain regular contact with Derby Museums, Nottingham City Museums Service, Rutland County Museum, Northampton Museum and Art Gallery, Lincolnshire County Council Museums and with independent museums in the Leicestershire via the Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage Forum.

The agreement reached with Leicester City Museum Service (LCMS) in 1999 on the sharing of museum collections, following local government re-organisation, specified certain areas of specialism for the LCMS, and LCCMS respectively. This means the County Service does not acquire material in those areas being developed by LCMS, and vice versa. In effect, this limits collecting by mutual agreement and is supported by robust access arrangements for the joint use of certain collections. Following a significant restructuring and review of the Service in 2008 and a subsequent strategic review of collections the 1999 agreement was revised following consultation with user groups and other interested partners. The revision agreed to house the County Geology Collection with LCMS and the Higher Plant Botany with the County Service.

We continue to participate in the specialist networks for curators fostered by the Renaissance East Midlands and now Arts Council's programme of Museum Development (East Midlands).

### **8.1.8 Policy review procedure**

The Collections Development Policy will be published and reviewed, at least once every five years and more frequently if substantial change in either policy or delivery is required (e.g. significant re-structuring of the Service) The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above (page 1).

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

### **8.1.9 Acquisitions not covered by the policy**

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

**8.2 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).**

**8.3 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.**

## **9 Human remains**

**9.1 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**

**10.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.**

## **11 Archaeological material**

**11.1 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.**

**11.2 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).**

## **12 Exceptions**

**12.1 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.**

### **13 Spoliation**

**13.1 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.**

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

**14.1 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.**

**14.2 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’.**

### **15 Disposal procedures**

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

**15.2 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.**

**15.3 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.**

**15.4 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.**

**15.5 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.

- 15.6** 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.
- 15.7** 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.
- 15.8** 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).
- 15.9** 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.
- 15.10** 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.
- 15.11** 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.
- 15.12** 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*

15.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

*Disposal by destruction*

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

15.15 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.

15.16 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.

15.17 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.

15.18 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.

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