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# **Leicestershire County Council Culture Leicestershire**

## **MUSEUMS COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2025-2030**

**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:**

**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).

**Date at which this policy is due for review:** 2030

*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.

## **Section 1 - Relationship to Other Relevant Policies/Plans of the Organisation:**

1.1 The museum's statement of purpose is:

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.

**Our Vision:** To create space to spark imagination, celebrate communities & enhance wellbeing.

**Our Mission:** Work to shape Leicestershire as a place with a rich and distinctive history that values its heritage, engages its communities, welcomes those who visit the county and works together to ensure a future for the past.

Leicestershire Museums ('the Museum') form part of the Culture Leicestershire Service alongside Libraries, Archives, and Creative Learning Services, and is part of the Adults and Communities Directorate in Leicestershire County Council.

The service is solely responsible for Bosworth Battlefield, Melton Carnegie Museum and the 1620s House and Garden at Donington-le-Heath.

Charnwood Museum and Harborough Museum are delivered in partnership with the relevant borough and district councils and other organisations.

The Museum houses its collections at the Collections Resources Centre, Barrow upon Soar; the Eastern Annexe of County Hall, Glenfield; collections spaces on the Snibston site in Coalville; Unit 1 Stephenson's Court, Coalville and Unit 8 Riverside Court in Measham.

## 1.2 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 and place of work.*

We do this by working closely with the Museum Services of Leicester City Council, Rutland County Council 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. In November 2017 Leicester Arts and Museums and Leicestershire County Council Museums agreed that the active process of collections sharing had reached a conclusion. This agreement allows for the future transfer of any objects, parts of objects, material, and information between the two Services by mutual agreement.)

- 1.3 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.6 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 Arts Council England (ACE) Museum Accreditation Standard (2018). This includes using Spectrum primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, financial resources, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.
- 1.9 If, after following the Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and Disposal (see Section 5) and the Disposal Procedures (see Section 15), 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.

## Section 2 - History of the Collections

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 Leicester Museum developed from the middle of C19<sup>th</sup> with the support of the Town and later (from 1922) City Councils 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 losses due to war time bombing.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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 and Donington-le-Heath Manor House. The County Record Office was responsible for archive collections.
- 2.5 Active collecting continued throughout this period and the collections grew in size and the curatorial departments developed focussed specialisms and increased numbers of staff.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 In 1992 LMARS opened Snibston Discovery Museum to showcase its coal mining and other Science and Technology collections.
- 2.8 In 1997 subsequent reform of local government in Leicestershire awarded unitary status to Leicester City and to Rutland and effectively formed three museum services, one for each authority area.
- 2.9 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 of objects discovered through the process of landscape investigation to determine the actual site of the battle.

- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 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.
- 2.12 The Harborough Museum Collection continues to be developed under its own collections title.
- 2.13 In 2014 Harborough Museum became part of a new culture hub on the first floor of the Symington Building as a result of a redevelopment project by Harborough District Council, Leicestershire County Council supported by the Market Harborough and The Bowdens Charity.
- 2.14 In 2015 Leicestershire County Council took the decision to close Snibston Discovery Museum, objects on display were returned to their 'home location' storage spaces, returned to lenders or loaned to other museums and heritage bodies.
- 2.15 In 2016 Donington-le-Heath Manor House was transformed into The 1620s House and Garden, a curatorially-led project to re-interpret the house and its gardens in a more focussed way.
- 2.16 Since 2019 Leicestershire County Council has been investigating the viability of co-locating the museum collections, Creative Learning Services and the archive collections in a partial redevelopment/new development on the County Hall site at Glenfield.
- 2.17 As part of Culture Leicestershire, this policy has been co-created with representatives from local communities who were invited to an interactive session to brief them about the policy and record their feedback about what our collecting priorities should be for the period of this policy. This consultation will inform our new Collections Development Plan.
- 2.18 From 2025 there will be a programme of work to co-locate museum collections from some of our smaller stores into the Eastern Annex Collections Centre.

### **Section 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. They include type and voucher specimens,

microscopy, a comprehensive historic and modern reference library, some comparative specimens for reference, educational and display purposes. The collections are linked to environmental information, species and site records (much in digital formats) and has strong connections to Leicestershire & Rutland's Environmental Records Centre.

#### Botany Areas of Excellence

- British non-flowering plants (lichens and bryophytes)
- Records and personalia of significant Leicestershire naturalists and collectors (including Pulteney, Bloxham, Berkeley, Sowter, Ballard, Fletcher, Hesselgreaves, Hering, Iliffe)
- Leicestershire flowering plants, ferns, slime moulds and fungi.
- Microscope slides of historic collections of algae

Zoology Areas of excellence- Important reference collections of the Vice County of Leicestershire & Rutland (VC55) insects, from the 1800s to the present day and supporting reference collection of insects taken in the UK.

### 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 documentary archives resulting from excavations, fieldwalking, metal detecting and chance finds across the county.

The Finds Archive comprises a variety of archaeological materials, including human and animal remains.

The Documentary Archive comprises information relating to the discovery, recovery and conservation of, and research into, the finds, together with archaeological fieldwork archives and published reports.

#### Areas of excellence:

- Lower Palaeolithic stone tools
- The Hallaton Treasure
- Coal mining before the Industrial Revolution
- The Bosworth Collection. The collection contains material traditionally associated with the battle as well as over 5000 artefacts collected during the Bosworth Battlefield Survey. Other material includes objects from an important Roman temple site.

### 3.3 Home and Family Life

The home and family life collections reflect domestic life now and in the past.

Alongside changes in domestic and personal technology the collections also record important aspects of family life including rites of passage, family structures and entertainment.

Objects including games, toys, sporting equipment and the ephemera and objects related to things like festivals and special occasions, shopping and holidays all fall within this collection.

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 collection.

#### Areas of excellence

- The Palitoy toy company collection
- The Ladybird book collection

### 3.4 Working Life

This collection reflects local trades and industries, partly through collections of tools and equipment, focussing on the work of traditional craftspeople such as the blacksmith, wheelwright, farmer and food producers. It also reflects the commercial life of the County's market towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

More recent collecting has concentrated on local businesses, mainly small and innovative concerns producing a unique local product, through the acquisition of finished products, ephemera and images.

The collections also include the larger manufacturing industries of the C19th and C20th and reflect the growth and decline of the industrial era and focus on engineering, transport and travel, coal mining and other extractive Industries.

#### Areas of Excellence

- C18th – C19th Leicestershire clock makers - including the contents of the Deacon Family clock making workshop.
- Horse-drawn vehicles (including the Beaumanor Coach of 1740)
- The Thomas Cook collection
- N.C.B. Era coal mining artefacts
- Leicestershire aircraft design and manufacture
- Brush Electrical Engineering

### 3.5 Cultural Life

The cultural life collections reflect the cultural interests of the people of Leicestershire and its centres of skills development for the creative industries. The collections form two main parts: the art collection and the fashion collection.

The art collection consists of sculpture, 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 traditional pursuits particularly in the field of country sports.

The fashion collections reflect fashionable and occupational dress of adult men and women from the middle of the eighteenth century to the present day.

### Areas of excellence

- Symington collection of corsetry, foundation-wear and swimwear
- NEXT archive and collection
- The paintings and drawings of John Ferneley Snr and his family

### 3.6 Reflecting Leicestershire Life at our Market Town Museums

Leicestershire is a predominantly rural county with specialist centres of manufacturing, trade, learning, innovation and cultural and sporting activity. 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, objects collected to reflect life in these areas enters the collections within the thematic groups listed above.

- 3.7 The exception to this is the Harborough Museum Collection. The 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\*. 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 Market Harborough Historical Society has ownership of its own collection and appoints an Honorary Curator to liaise with collections teams to ensure its care and management.

- 3.8 The Harborough Collections reflect the history and development of the town and surrounding villages, local domestic and social life and record the contribution of local individuals and communities of Market Harborough and the parishes in its surrounding area.

Market Harborough and Surrounding Parishes			
Arthingworth	Ashley	Billesdon	Blaston
Brampton Ash	Braybrooke	Bringhurst	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	Ilston
Kelmarsh	Kibworth Harcourt	Kibworth Beauchamp	Lampport
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	Wistow

- 3.9 Melton Carnegie Museum exhibits the changing nature of rural Leicestershire and the relationship of the countryside with the market town. It reflects agriculture, local food production (particularly Stilton cheese making and pork pie production) animal husbandry and countryside management and diversification.

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.

### 3.10 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 have been developed in association with the Museum of Hunting Trust. All the objects which relate to the history of fox hunting are accessioned items in the County Council's collections.

The collection reflects, 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.

- 3.11 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.

### 3.12 Heritage Sites and Landscapes

The 1620s House and Garden at Donington le Heath is a late Medieval manor house 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 during the early C17th.

Bosworth Battlefield interprets the landscape and events of the decisive battle of the Wars of the Roses on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1485; the end to the Plantagenet dynasty and the

beginning of the Tudor period. Displays include material from the Battlefield Research Project (see 3.2 Archaeology Collections Areas of Excellence).

### 3.13 The 'Reserve' Collection

The 'Reserve' is a collection of historic objects originally established for use by the Museum Education Service as handling loan material for schools during the 1930s and has been continuously added to since then. It is now used to support displays, exhibitions and loan requests. Some of the original loans boxes have been retained as evidence of the service's early activities.

## Section 4 - Themes and Priorities for Future Collecting

### 4.1 Natural Life

The focus of collecting over the next five years will be limited due to a lack of curatorial specialism in this area, however volunteer organisations and individuals who work closely with the museum will on occasion:

- add new species recorded in the county
- reflect the continuing activities of local societies, institutions and individuals.

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

The focus of collecting over the next five years will be:

- Archives from professional and amateur fieldwork in Leicestershire that meet the standards laid down in '*The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire Museum (2024)*'.
- Objects from Leicestershire that become available for acquisition through the procedures laid down in the Treasure Act 1996 and the Treasure (Designation)(Amendment) Order 2023, subject to curatorial assessment of significance and availability of financial resources including external funding.
- Digital elements of archaeological archives (including photographs etc) will be deposited with Archaeology Data Service (ADS) which acts as a digital storage organisation for most local authority archaeological archives.

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 (2024)*'.
- archives and collections no part of which derives from Leicestershire.
- objects that lack a provenance or were found outside Leicestershire.
- human remains lacking explicit scientific justification for their retention in an archaeological archive.

#### 4.3 Home and Family Life

The focus of collecting over the next five years will be:

- The home and family lives of people who are currently underrepresented in our collections. Contemporary collecting will be linked to targeted community engagement and participation. Where possible our approach will be through collaborative and co-curated projects representing the views and voices of local people as part of the collecting process.

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

#### 4.4 Working Life

The focus of collecting/recording over the next five years will be:

- Leicestershire's innovation and diversification from traditional working life.
- Leicestershire's small businesses and creative industries.
- Contemporary collecting will be linked to targeted engagement and participation with businesses, employees, trade unions etc. Where possible our approach will be through collaborative and co-curated projects representing the views and voices of local people as part of the collecting process.

We will not collect vehicles and/or large industrial machinery.

#### 4.5 Cultural Life

The focus of collecting over the next five years will be:

##### Fashion Collection

- Clothing created and worn by people who are currently under-represented in our collections. Contemporary collecting will be linked to targeted community engagement and participation. Where possible our approach will be through collaborative and co-curated projects representing the views and voices of local people as part of the collecting process.

The Collections will not accept wedding or civil partnership outfits that are not connected with a ceremony conducted in Leicestershire.

##### Art Collection

- Commission local artists to produce works that record, reflect or comment on specific aspects of Leicestershire life.

### **Section 5 - Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and Disposal**

- 5.1 Please note Section 1, paragraph 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.

- 5.2 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well-managed collection.
- 5.3 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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 – currently under review)) and SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on Disposal.

#### 5.6 OUR COMMITMENT:

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

#### 5.7 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 relevant and 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 proposed by the professional Head of Service and considered by the Director under delegated responsibilities. If there are any significant community sensitivities associated with the proposed disposals it will be referred to Cabinet Lead Member, and if necessary Cabinet. They will also maintain an overview of museum collecting activity and instigate disposal procedures where necessary.

Outline plan for the review and rationalisation of specific collections areas 2025-30
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Coal mining and other working life objects	Previously identified duplicate, incomplete, irrelevant objects or those in poor condition.
Fashion Collection	Women's clothing from 1940 to 1970.
Archaeology	De-selection of bulk material where this has not occurred prior to deposition. Timbers (including Hemington River crossing and Lounge mining etc)
Natural Life Spirit Collection	Review and rationalisation of Spirit Collection currently in the care of Leicester City Museums service relating to their plans to relocate.
Subject library collections	Focus on coal mining library at Snibston.
General	Collections containing hazardous materials

## **Section 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.

## **Section 7 - Collecting Policies of Other Museums**

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

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

We maintain regular contact with Rutland County Museum and Leicester City Arts and Museums and with independent museums in Leicestershire.

We continue to engage with Arts Council England's Museum Development Midlands, giving us the ability to access the regional museums network.

- 7.3 The agreement reached with Leicester City Museum Service (LCMS) in 1999 on the sharing of museum collections, following local government re-organisation in 1997, 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. This limits collecting by mutual agreement and is supported by robust access arrangements for the joint use of certain collections. In November 2017 Leicester City Arts and Museums and Leicestershire County Council Museums agreed that the active process of collections sharing had reached a conclusion. This agreement allows for the future transfer of any objects, parts of objects, material, and information between the two Services by mutual agreement.

## **Section 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 and place of work.*

### 8.2 Authorisation Procedure

Items offered to the service are considered by museum The Collections & Conservation and Curatorial teams. Decisions are made on the basis of relevance to the acquisition policy, significance, ability of the service to preserve the object in the long term and that the item is not already represented in the collection. If necessary, recommendations on the decision to acquire an object or collection are put to the Collections and Learning Manager.

Acquisition falls within the scheme of delegation to the Head of Service, otherwise Cabinet Lead Member or Cabinet approval is required (e.g. high value or sensitive items).

The position regarding rights (including copyright) should be clarified, the preferred option being a transfer of relevant rights to the Service where the owner of the object also owns those rights.

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 approval by an appropriate authority (normally the Head of Service) obtained before the purchase is finalised.

### 8.3 General Restrictions

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

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 and public access arrangements.

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

- Acquisition does not contravene any legal, ethical or local laws or regulations.
- 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 ownership of the item should be clearly established.
- 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 Service can house the item and store it to an appropriate standard.
- Given the object's condition the Service can conserve or preserve the item within an acceptable timescale and allow access to it to an appropriate professional standard.

#### 8.4 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. 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.
- Deposits of archaeological archives on indefinite loan by the owners or their legitimate agents (such as The Church of England) where those organisations are prevented from donating objects in their ownership.

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 any relevant rights (or deposit on indefinite loan) can only be done by the legal owner or by a legally appointed intermediary (e.g. executor, agent 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 museum collections teams and having regard to the interests of other museums.

#### 8.5 Curatorial Selection

Curatorial, Conservation and Collections Management staff consider acquisitions to the collections with reference to our acquisition policy and to needs of our museums. This group may consult others outside the organisation to give opinion as required.

The remit of the Curatorial, Conservation and Collections Management Teams is to:

- Provide an overview of acquisitions across the Service so everyone has knowledge of what is coming into the Service and why.
- Develop and review a Collections Development Plan 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 a plan for managing these.
- 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 when necessary.
- The Senior Curator and Collections and Conservation 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 Collections and Learning Manager advises on acquisitions to the collection which may have implications beyond the responsibility of the Senior Curator and Collections and Conservation Manager.
- The Collections and Conservation Manager and Documentation Officer make recommendations for rationalisation and/or disposal after discussion with the wider Museum Teams. These are presented to senior officers and, when relevant, elected members for a final decision.

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

The collection covers the human experience from the pre-historic Palaeolithic period (around 500,000 years ago) to the present day and is predominantly of material directly associated with Leicestershire.

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).

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 1 November 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.

### **Section 9 - Human Remains**

- 9.1 As the museum holds or allows within this policy the acquisition of human remains over 100 years old, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005. This is in line with the museum service's Human Remains Policy 2025.



## **Section 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.

## **Section 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 these 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 and Treasure (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2023).

## **Section 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.

## **Section 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.

## **Section 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 16.5 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'.

## **Section 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 transfer by gift or sale, 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 transfer, gift, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, 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, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

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