

Hastings Museum and Art Gallery

Old Town Hall Museum

(Hastings Borough Council)

Collections Development Policy

Date of Approval: January 2015

Date of Review: January 2020

Name of museum: Hastings Museum and Art Gallery

Name of governing body: Hastings Borough Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: *January 2015*

Policy review procedure:

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

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

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

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

1.1 The museum's statement of purpose is:

Hastings Museum aims to fulfil its core role in the preservation, collection, documentation and interpretation of the collections associated with the history and natural history of the area, the fine arts and from a wider cultural context. Visitors and users will be at the heart of what we do, and we believe that our collections have the power to educate and inspire people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, and local communities we serve.

1.2 Our objectives are:

- To care for, record, research and interpret the Museum's collections.
- To increase the number and range of people who use the Museum, both on-site and remotely.
- To enhance the visitor experience through providing the highest standards of customer care.
- To ensure the sustainability of the museum through improving opportunities for income generation.

All of which underpin Hastings Borough Council's current priorities as outlined in Hastings Borough Council Corporate Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16.

1.3 This Collections Development Policy relates to other Museum Policies and Policy statements including:

- Forward Plan
- Collections Management Policy
- Access and Learning Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Statement
- Policy for the Care and Treatment of Human Remains
- Guidelines regulating the Detection and Disposal of Archaeological Material found on Hastings Borough Council Land

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

- a. 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.
- b. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- c. 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.
- d. 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.

1.5 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:

- the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
- the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
- the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored
- extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
- the item under consideration lies outside the museum's established core collection

2. History of the collections

The collections of Hastings Museum and Art Gallery and Old Town Hall Museum have been built up since 1890 when the Hastings and St Leonards Museum Association were founded. The first Public Museum in Hastings was housed in the Brassey Institute, a reference library, art school and exhibition gallery provided for the town by Thomas Brassey, MP. The Museum Association were responsible for the collections of exhibits and the displays. The Museum was handed over to Hastings Corporation in 1905, with the Association retaining membership of the Museums Committee.

The first full-time curator, Ruskin Butterfield, added to the collections particularly in natural history and relics of the old Sussex industries, which he recognised were fast disappearing – ironworking, pottery, hop gardens etc. the foundations of the current Sussex ironwork and Sussex Pottery collections were founded in the first quarter of the 20th century. The Museum moved to its current location in 1928, where space could be found for an exhibition gallery and a home for the Durbar Hall, acquired under the will of Lord Brassey in 1919. Much of the World Art was acquired at this time, from the Brassey family.

In 1935, Ruskin Butterfield was succeeded as curator by John Manwaring Baines, whose interest in local history led to the acquisition of archaeology and local history. These collections were strengthened when the town acquired a branch Museum in 1949 in the Old Town Hall. J M Baines also added considerably to the ceramic collections.

In the 1980s under the curatorship of Victoria Williams the Museum began to add to its collection of World Art, particularly Native American material, with the donation of the Edward Blackmore collection and material relating to Grey Owl. Other items relating to famous people with Hastings connections were acquired at this time, including John Logie Baird, James and Decimus Burton and Robert Tressell. The Museum continues actively to collect in these two areas, with the acquisition in 2004 and 2013 of the Colin Taylor collection of Native American material.

3. An overview of current collections

3.1 Local and Social History

This is the largest section of the Museum's holdings numbering, with Archives, around 60,000 items. Local History has been displayed at the Old Town Hall Museum of Local History since 1949, with 20th century Hastings material displayed at HMAG.

Most social history items are collected for their local associations and cover the fields of laundry, dairy, cooking, toys and games, theatre and entertainment, smoking, writing, education, law and order, fire-fighting, transport, church history (not including parish records which are required to be deposited in the County Record Office), agriculture, early electrical appliances, television and domestic items from the First and Second World Wars.

Of more specific local interest are the collections relating to tourism, fishing and boat building, smuggling, wrecks, the Cinque Ports, the Bonfire Societies, Sussex Ironwork, gypsum, gunpowder, hops, commemorative and civic items, photographs, guide books, printed ephemera and architectural details from demolished buildings.

Since 1995 old film footage belonging to the Museum has been placed on deposit with South East Film and Video Archive at the West Sussex County Record Office due to the fragile and, in some cases, inflammable nature of the material. Most of the reels have since been digitally copied.

The Museum has also built up significant collections relating to well-known local people, in

particular items associated with the development of television in the town in 1923 by John Logie Baird. The writer, Robert Tressell who based his book "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists" on life in Edwardian Hastings is also represented by the archive of his biographer, Fred Ball. A selection of exhibits from the Baird and Tressell collections can be found on the Museum's website.

There is an important collection of over 100 architectural drawings, scrapbooks and family ephemera relating to James and Decimus Burton, the architects of St Leonards. A special gallery is devoted to a growing number of exhibits that relate to the Hastings born conservationist Grey Owl.

3.2 Archaeology

The archaeological collection consists both of material from Hastings and the surrounding area, and, to a lesser extent, material from other parts of the world. Most of the local items have been acquired by organised excavation, some by chance find. There are around 12,500 items in total.

One of the largest single collections of material is from Pevensey Castle (Roman and Norman), which is now outside the collecting area. Some of the major excavations, which have taken place, have been at Hastings Castle (Norman/Medieval), Beauport (Roman), Hastings Priory (Medieval), Winding Street, Hastings (Medieval), Phoenix Brewery, Hastings (Saxon-Medieval) and Winchelsea, (Medieval/Post-Medieval).

Material from earlier periods is represented by large quantities of flints, including the work of J Moore within the Country Park at Fairlight (Mesolithic to Iron Age) and a collection of early Palaeolithic hand axes from the important North Kent site of Swanscombe. There is an important group of bronze items from the Bronze Age, discovered during building work at Marina, St Leonards.

Archaeological exhibits are included in the local history displays at the Old Town Hall Museum.

Greek and Roman pottery from all periods is well represented. There are smaller groups of Etruscan and Egyptian material, and a larger group, some 300 items, of pottery and glassware from Cyprus, part of the Brassey collection. There are a few pieces from pre-Columbian South America and a small number of flints from New Zealand, Florida, Sweden and Denmark. A small number of these exhibits are included in displays in the Durbar Hall and Ceramics Gallery.

3.3 Natural History

The Natural History collections contain fish, mammals and particularly birds, mainly specimens obtained locally and including examples of the so-called "Hastings Rarities". However, there are some specimens from other parts of the country, collected to form a representative survey of British wildlife. There is also a small group of skulls, bones and skeletons of vertebrates from all around the world. Invertebrates, many found or caught locally, are represented by a small collection of marine life preserved in formalin, and collections of butterflies, moths and other insects in collector's cabinets. There is also a small collection of shells, corals and sponges of both local and foreign origin.

3.4 Geology

The Geology collection consists of plant and animal fossils of the Wealden area, including the collections made locally by Teilhard de Chardin, Phillip Rufford and Samuel Beckles. The Wealden plants in Rufford's collection are particularly important, and include specimens described as the finest in the country. Hastings has long been a classic site for Iguanodon

remains, and the Museum holds many bones of this well as footprints from the Cretaceous rocks at Fairlight and Galley Hill.

Other animals of the period, which are well represented in the collection, are the fish *Lepidotus Mantelli*, the crocodile *Goniopholis Crassidens*, and the Hybodont shark species. A good selection of local fossils is on display in a gallery where they transform into models of the animals they once were. These interactive displays are popular with children and school groups.

There is also a small collection of minerals from around the world.

3.5 Fine Art

The Museum possesses a large collection of mainly topographical paintings, drawings, prints and photographs relating to the Hastings area and ranging in date from the late 18th century to the present day.

There is also a small collection of 20th century British art and a few examples of works from the main European Schools. There are about a dozen examples of sculpture by artists associated with the Hastings area.

A selection of the Museum's paintings is permanently on show. They are also used in temporary exhibitions, loaned to exhibitions elsewhere and used by local history researchers. The Museum has extensive records of artists working in the town and receives a large number of enquiries on this topic.

3.6 Decorative Art

The Ceramics collection is the largest and most significant of the Museum's Applied Art collections, numbering around 1100 pieces. Exhibits range from the pottery of the Ancient Civilizations of the Mediterranean, America and the Orient to European Pottery and porcelain from the 17th to the 20th centuries. It includes rare examples such as the large maiolica piece known as the Modena Dish. There is also a comprehensive selection of locally made, Sussex pottery. One gallery is currently devoted to the display of ceramics.

There is also a substantial collection of Oriental Art and much of this is on show in the Durbar Hall, itself a carved wooden building originally designed for the Indian and Colonial Exhibition of 1886. Exhibits include Chinese, Japanese, Indian and Middle Eastern Ceramics, Japanese and South East Asian armour, Japanese lacquer, Indian and Middle Eastern metalwork and jewellery, Indian and South East Asian textiles, Buddhist and Hindu Sculpture, Indian and South East Asian woodcarving.

The Museum also has a large number of Sussex firebacks ranging in date from the 16th to the 18th century. Other smaller collections, which are held in the reserve collection and used occasionally in social history displays or temporary exhibitions, include:-

- English silver, of which there are approximately 70 items mostly of local significance and including early 18th century church plate on deposit from All Saints and St Clements Church.
- English and continental pewter, a few examples.
- English and continental glass, approximately 65 pieces dating from the 17th to the 19th century.
- Furniture and woodwork, about a dozen pieces and a representative collection of Tunbridge and Mauchlin ware, also a small collection of miniature furniture.
- Clocks and watches, approximately 40 cased verge watches mainly from the 18th century,

8 long case clocks predominantly by local makers.

- Jewellery, a small collection of brooches associated with the Royal St Leonards Archers.

The costume and textiles collection is large but miscellaneous and includes local smocks, 18th century waistcoats, 19th century women's' and children's clothing, accessories, fans and parasols, clothing from World War II, lace, whitework and samplers. There is also a good collection of English, French and German dolls. A small proportion of this material is used in social history displays.

3.7 World Art

The bulk of the world art collection was put together by the first Lady Brassey (1839-1887) in the 1870's and 80's and bequeathed to the Museum on the death of the 2nd Lord Brassey in 1918. The largest section is devoted to material from the Pacific and Melanesia, much of it collected at first hand on the Brasseys' voyage round the world in 1876. The collection includes an important royal feather cloak from Hawaii. The Brassey material also features items from India and Burma, China and Japan, Indonesia, the Middle East and the Balkans, Scandinavia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand, North and South America.

The Museum's ethnographic collections are housed in the Durbar Hall, the building in which they were originally displayed by the Brasseys at the end of the 19th century. This structure was built for the Indian and Colonial Exhibition of 1886, transferred to Lord Brassey's home in Park Lane and finally re-erected as part of the Hastings Museum in 1930.

In addition to the Brassey Collection, there are a number of smaller, ethnographic collections, in particular the Ambrose Jones Collection of stone carvings from Costa Rica and the Cullen Collection of artefacts from the Cook Islands and New Guinea. The latter has been on loan to the Museum since 1914.

Other important collections include the Blackmore Collection of Native American Art, bequeathed to the Museum in 1982 and relating mainly to the Plains Indians. It includes material acquired by local writer and sculptress Claire Sheridan, on her visit to America in 1937. Some pieces have been added in the last 20 years including a fringed and beaded jacket and child's "honouring" tipi, as well as the large collection of material from the late Colin Taylor.

There is a growing collection of exhibits relating to the conservationist and Indian protagonist, Grey Owl, who was born and brought up in Hastings in the early years of the 20th century.

3.8 Numismatics

Roman coins, including the coin hoard found on the outskirts of Hastings in 1989 consisting of 53 silver denarii and 92 bronze coins dating from the 1st and 2nd centuries, an important collection of silver pennies from the Hastings Saxon Mint (approximately 6 examples) and other Sussex mints of the period such as Chichester, Lewes and Steyning, a large collection of local hop tokens (over 700) and other local trade tokens, gold, silver and base metal English coinage from the Medieval period to 1953, an album of Chinese cash, miscellaneous commemorative and civic medallions and a collection of approximately 200 campaign medals dating from the late 18th to early 20th century and including the George Cross awarded to local nurse, Dorothy Gardiner and the medals of Sir Henry Webster of Battle Abbey whose portrait is also in the Museum collection.

The Roman coin hoard and examples of the Saxon and Norman mint are on display at the Old

Town Hall Museum.

3.9 Archives

Since 1999 the Museum has transferred a large number of official Borough Council documents to the East Sussex County Record Office at Lewes, now The Keep. The Museum has a Local Studies Research Room which is open one day a week and is supervised by volunteers working under the direction of the archivist.

In line with the recommendations of a report funded jointly by Hastings Borough and East Sussex County Councils in 1996, the Museum's archive collections are now restricted to areas of special Hastings interest. These include papers relating to Baird, Tressell, Charles Dawson and the Burton family, the Cinque Ports, smuggling, fishing, local societies, maps, photographs, local ephemera and items concerning the town's development. There are currently around 51,000 items in the Museum's collection, including photographs, maps, books as well as documents.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to the collections, to ensure that the care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

Hastings Museum and Art Gallery and Old Town Hall Museum on behalf of Hastings Borough Council will continue to acquire material in the following subject areas:

4.1 Local History

This is the most important area of collection activity and concerns items relating to the town of Hastings and immediate neighbourhood. Material will only be acquired under the following headings if they have a local association: agriculture, trade and industry, costume, entertainment, tourism, fishing, militaria, photographs and film.

Emphasis will be placed on the acquisition of items associated with John logie Baird and the early history of television, particularly as it related to Baird's experiments in the town in 1923-4. Also material relating to Robert Tressell, author of 'the Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' and exhibits relating to other prominent local people.

4.2 Archaeology

The Museum will continue to collect archaeological material from all periods found within the Hastings Borough boundary. Following an amendment to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy approved in June 2012, the Museum no longer collects from the Sussex parishes formerly agreed by the Sussex Curator Archaeological Working party in 1988.

4.3 Social History

The Museum will continue to collect objects relating to English social and domestic life where it is felt these items will enhance displays or can be used for educational purposes.

4.4 Natural History and Geology

Further acquisition will be confined to local specimens from Hastings and surrounding area, but lack of specialist staff limits expansion.

4.6 Fine Art

The Museum will continue to build up a collection of work by nationally significant artists with local connections, both historical and contemporary. Also paintings, drawings and prints of topographical interest showing areas of the town previously unrecorded.

4.7 Decorative Art

The Museum will accept examples of English and European ceramics particularly good examples of 19th and 20th century wares which are currently under-represented. Also accepted is Sussex pottery but avoiding duplication of exhibits.

Due to the shortage of space acquisition will not take place in the following areas unless there is a local association or these items can be used in social history displays: silver and other metalwork, glass, furniture, clocks and watches, costume and textiles.

4.8 World Art

There will be an emphasis on the acquisition of Native American artefacts, particularly material from the Plains, Woodland and sub-Arctic areas to complement existing material. Donations to other areas of World Art will be accepted if complementary to existing themes, and of good quality.

4.9 Numismatics

Further acquisition will be restricted to examples from the Hastings mint or coins found in the Hastings area. Medals will be collected if they belonged to people with local associations.

4.10 Archives

The Museum will continue to acquire archive material in the following areas: photographs, maps, local ephemera, smuggling, local societies, Cinque Port and items concerning development of the town as well as material relating to important local personalities.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.
- 5.2 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.
 - a. Responsible, curatorially-motivated disposal will take place during the life of this Collections Development Policy, in order to increase public benefit derived from the collections (see 5.1) and to rationalise the Museum's limited storage.
 - b. All rationalisation and disposal of items from the Museum will be undertaken in strict accordance with the Disposal procedures in Section 16 Of this Policy.

c. Each collection will continue to be audited by curatorial staff to identify priority areas for rationalisation. Particular attention will be given to:

- **Archaeology**
- Excavated material from areas outside the Museum's collecting area where another museum is able to accept them
- Unpublished bulk finds

- **Natural History and Geology**
- Insect and animal specimens without data and in poor condition
- Poor quality geological specimens without data that have deteriorated through decay

- **Social History**
- Duplicate objects and those in poor condition with weak provenance and limited potential for future use

- **Archives**
- Duplicate maps and ephemera, and Hastings Borough Council records still to be transferred to the Keep

- Out-of-date non-accessioned books and journals

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

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

7 Collecting policies of other museums

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

- 7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museums and organisations

- Shipwreck Museum, Hastings
- Hastings Fishermens Museum
- Bexhill Museum
- Rye Museum
- Winchelsea Museum
- Battle Museum
- The Keep

8 Archival holdings

- 8.1 As the Museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, Hastings Borough Council as the governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museum and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition 2002).
- 8.2 In line with the recommendations of a report funded jointly by Hastings Borough and East Sussex County Councils in 1996, the Museum's archive collections are now restricted to areas of special Hastings interest. Hastings Borough Records are acquired by The Keep in Brighton.

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

- a. Decisions relating to future acquisitions, by donation, bequest, fieldwork or purchase, will be considered by the Museums Committee and formally approved by Hastings Borough Council Cabinet, based on specialist advice provided either by a responsible officer or external advisor.
- b. Recent acquisitions are presented quarterly to the Museum Committee for
 - i. consideration. There should be no conflict of interest during the acquisition process and no person or organisation with any possibility of financial gain should be involved.
- c. Where possible legal copyright and other rights to the item are to be transferred to Hastings Borough Council at the time of acquisition.
- d. There will be a presumption against collecting duplicates of items already in the collection unless an exceptional case can be made, for example, as material for handling or group value for display purposes.
- e. The acquisition of material for handling will conform to the same standards as material in the permanent collections.
- f. Material currently retained for handling includes objects in the accessioned collection and some which are not. These differences will be clarified during the life of this policy.
- g. Loans will only be accepted for special exhibitions and will be for a specified period of time.
- h. The status of existing 'long-term' loans will be clarified during the life of this policy.

9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

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

10 Human remains

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

11 Biological and geological material

- 11.1 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.

12 Archaeological material

- 12.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 12.2 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

13 Exceptions

- 13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:
- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
 - acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

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

14 Spoliation

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

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

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

16 Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.
- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.12.1 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.

- 16.12.2 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 16.12.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.12.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.12 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.13 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.14 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.15 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.16 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.