



Collections development policy Trowbridge Museum

2018

Name of museum: Trowbridge Museum

Name of governing body: Trowbridge Town Council Museum Committee

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 25/09/18

Policy review procedure: To be reviewed every three years

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: September 2021

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.

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

- I.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:**
Trowbridge Museum's collections exist to help to tell the story of life in the communities which make up the Museum Collecting Area.
- I.2. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.**
- I.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.**
- I.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.**
- I.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.**
- I.6. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.**

1.7. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

2. History of the collections

The collection consists of just over 25,000 documented objects.

Garlick Collection

This consists of 69 items given to the Trowbridge Urban District Council by Henry Herbert Garlick in 1932 to form the basis of a museum. It includes prints, paintings, photographs and printed ephemera.

Whitaker Collection

A collection of just over 1400 domestic items from a Bratton family, donated by Kathleen and Marjorie Reeves in 1977.

Crabbe Collection

Rocks, fossils and plants collected by the poet George Crabbe when he was rector of Trowbridge from 1814- 1832.

Taylor's the Drapers

Most of this is on display. It includes the contents of the shop when it closed in 1986. Much of the material is 1950s in date.

Aplin's the Chemist

This collection consists of objects donated after the closure of the shop in 1992. It includes a set of apothecary's drawers.

Usher's Brewery

This consists of material donated by the company on its sale and closure in 2000 as well as previous and subsequent donations.

The Morrison Collection

A collection of over 400 items collected by local folklorist and historian Jean Morrison. The collection mostly comprises costume, accessories and domestic textile crafts.

Textile Machinery

The Museum gallery contains a number of machines related to the textile industry.

3. An overview of current collections

The Collection consists of 22,137 items.

Main Collection: Objects relating to the West of England Woollen cloth industry and general Social history items.

Learning and Outreach Collection: Original and replica objects used to bring local history to life, through hands on experiences for users.

Library and Research Collection: Printed material providing a resource for users to study local history and specifically the development of the West of England woollen cloth industry.

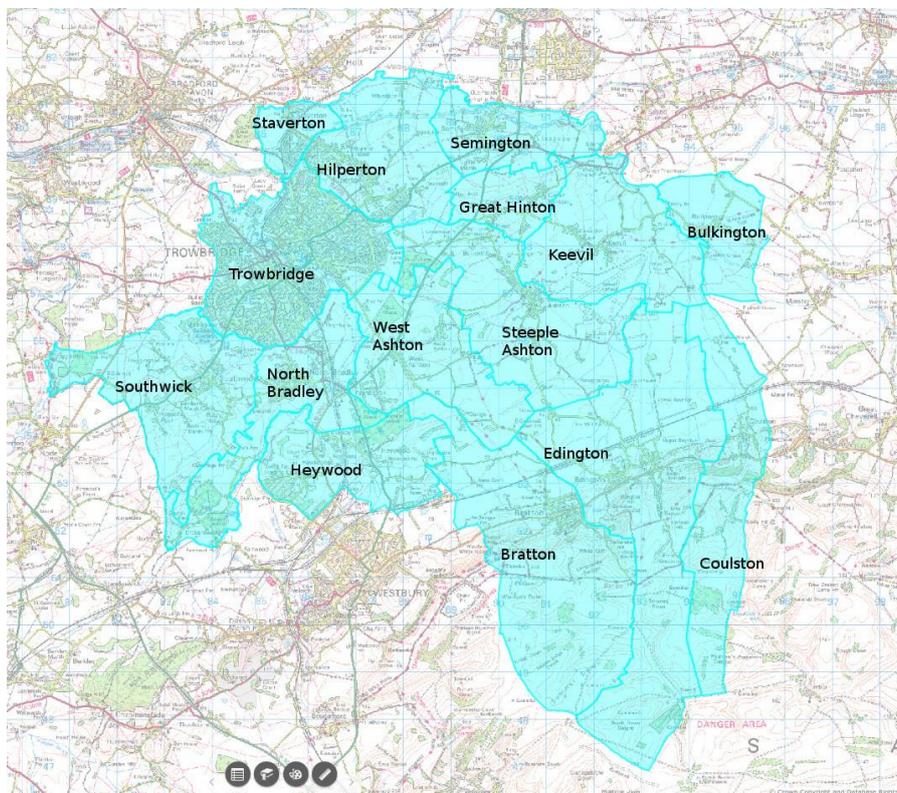
Photographic Collection: a visual record of local life, buildings and Industry.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Trowbridge Museum Collecting Area

The parishes of:

Bratton, Bulkington, Coulston, Edington, Great Hinton, Heywood, Hilperton, Keevil, North Bradley, Semington, Southwick, Staverton, Steeple Ashton, Trowbridge, West Ashton



4.2 Priorities for future acquisitions:

Post 1960s Secondary School photographs

Local WW2 Spitfire production objects

Local tennis ball and billiard ball production items

Garments woven in Trowbridge mills

Items that represent the changing demographics of our communities

Post 1960s Trowbridge Industries and events

Items relating to mill owning families and workers

4.3 Closed Collections

The Museum has particularly strong holdings in the following:

Pitman Collection: life and work of Isaac Pitman, pioneer of shorthand, born in Trowbridge

Ushers Collection: Trowbridge brewery from 1824-2000

Bowyers Collection: Trowbridge meat company from 1805-2008

Haden's Collection: Trowbridge engineering company from 1816-1945

Taylor's Collection: Trowbridge drapery company from 1869 to 1986 (pre 1900 items would still be considered for collection)

There is a presumption against collecting further material in these particular areas excepting particularly significant items.

4.4 The Museum does not collect

Any item which is likely to be beyond the capabilities and resources of the Museum to house adequately and conserve

Natural history and geological material

Large textile machines

Business and Family archives

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.

Certain objects within the main Collection are being considered for disposal. The reasons for consideration will be based solely on our holding of duplicate items, their lack of relevance to the West of England woollen cloth industry or our collecting area, poor condition and unlikely hood for potential of conservation or potentially hazardous nature.

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):

The Wiltshire Museum in Devizes

7.3 Archaeology:

Trowbridge Museum does not collect archaeological archives, (identified as finds and associated paper archives from archaeological excavations as well as casual finds and items declared as 'treasure' under the Treasure Act 1996). Deposition of such material is referred to The Wiltshire Museum, Devizes who have specific expertise and resources to curate and make accessible this material. Trowbridge Museum will have first refusal on opportunities to borrow and display archaeological finds, (including items declared as treasure), from within the Trowbridge collecting area which is held by The Wiltshire Museum, Devizes, subject to meeting any terms and conditions as agreed with The Wiltshire Museum, Devizes. Such loans will be fixed term. Trowbridge Museum will offer support to the Wiltshire Museum, Devizes, for the agreed acquisition and purchase of objects from within the Trowbridge Museum collecting area which have been declared as treasure.

8. Acquisition

8.1. The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

The Museum holds monthly Collections Committee meetings (these meetings are attended by the Curator, Museum Manager, Collections and Exhibitions Officer and Assistant Learning and Outreach Officer). Any potential acquisitions that are outstanding are discussed and a collective decision is made based on whether the object is relevant according to our policy and collecting area.

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.

9.0 Human remains

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

10 Biological and geological material

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

11 Archaeological material

11.1 The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.

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 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.

15.13 Disposal by exchange

15.13.1 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.

15.13.2 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.

15.13.3 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.

15.13.4 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).

- 15.13.5 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.**
- 15.14 Disposal by destruction**
- 15.15 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.**
- 15.16 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.**
- 15.17 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.**
- 15.18 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.**
- 15.19 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.**