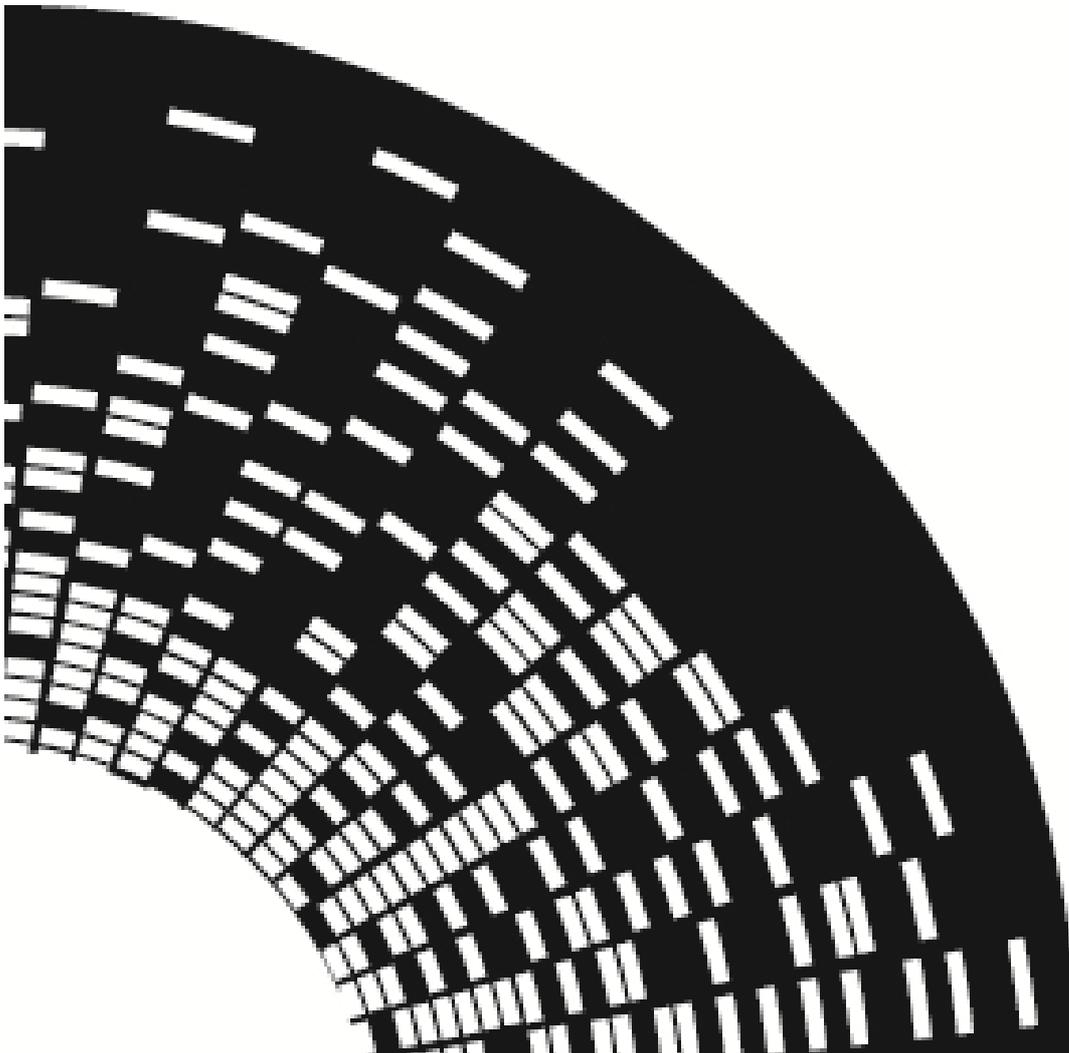




Accreditation

Collections development policy: Colchester



2014

Collections Development Policy: Colchester

1. Name of museums:

- 1.1** The three museums of Colchester Borough Council (CBC) are operated by Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service on behalf of the Council and in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement 2007-2018. Hereafter the CBC museums will be referred to as Colchester Museums. The three are:-
- 1.2** Colchester Castle: Situated in Castle Park in Colchester, this is a Norman castle keep, converted to a museum in the late Victorian period. The displays are predominantly of archaeology, with a changing temporary exhibition gallery.
- 1.3** Natural History Museum: A disused church, converted to museum use in the 1970s. Its diverse displays cover wildlife habitats, biodiversity and climate change.
- 1.4** Hollytrees Museum: An early Georgian townhouse, converted to museum use in the 1920s. Its displays show domestic life and childhood, include part of the Bernard Mason clock collection, and in addition there is a changing temporary exhibition space. The building also houses Colchester's visitor information centre.

2. Name of governing body:

- 2.1** The collections of Colchester Museums are owned by Colchester Borough Council.
- 2.2** Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service will acquire collections according to this policy on behalf of Colchester Borough Council and in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement 2007-2018 which states that 'All acquisitions or additions to the collections of the joint museums service shall be acquired in the name of Colchester or Ipswich and the ownership shall be clearly recorded in the collections register' (p. 9, sec. 2.5).
- 2.3** Colchester Borough Council will ensure that the disposal process is carried out according to this policy and in accordance with the Joint Committee Agreement 2007-2018.

3. Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

3.1 *to be added*

4. Policy review procedure:

- 4.1** The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted below.
- 4.2** 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 existing collections.
- 4.3** **Date at which this policy is due for review:** *to be added*

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

- 5.1** Our vision for the future is for Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service to be a regional resource which offers inspiring venues and collections that appeal to and connect with

audiences locally, regionally and nationally. We recognise the economic benefits and the contribution tourism that the Museum Service brings to the area and will ensure that this contribution is maximised for the benefit of the local economy.

5.2 We want our Museum Service to contribute significantly to the lives of all our residents, to enrich their lives, increase their knowledge and understanding and feed their aspirations and imaginations. We want our visitors to have access to all that our Museums have to offer and to learn to enjoy and value what they experience during their visits and the significant and positive impact that it makes upon their lives.

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

5.4 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.

5.5 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

5.6 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 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.

5.7 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.

5.8 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

6. History of the collections

6.1 From the beginnings of the museum service in the 1840s archaeological material has formed the bulk and core of the collections. This is still true of Colchester Museums today. In 1855 an agreement was entered into by which the collections of the Essex Archaeological Society were housed with those of Colchester Borough Council. In 1926 the two collections were formally amalgamated. This historic relationship and the unity of the material collected by the Essex Archaeological Society needs to be acknowledged particularly when making decisions about the future of the archaeological collections of Colchester Museums. In June 1998 Colchester Museums was awarded 'Designated' status because of the importance of the archaeological collections. They were stated to be 'of outstanding historical importance' and 'recognised as having national and international standing'.

7. An overview of current collections

7.1 Archaeology

7.1.1 The strongest elements of Colchester Museums's archaeological collection relate to the late Iron Age and Roman periods. In particular objects from individual find spots or from the extensive excavations conducted in the 19th and 20th centuries in Colchester represent probably the finest and most extensive collection of Romano-British archaeology in the world.

7.1.2 Much of the archaeological collections, and their associated excavations, have been published between 1981 and 2000 by the Colchester Archaeological Trust in the twelve Colchester Archaeological Reports with more recent finds continuing to be published by the Trust. The collections are particularly noteworthy with regard to the evidence for late Iron Age and Roman pottery production and use, and for the remarkable group of Roman glass vessels found in Colchester.

7.2 Community History

7.2.1 General

Because of the Museum Service's historic concentration on archaeological acquisition, the social history collections are modest for a town of Colchester's importance.

7.2.2 Fine Art

The collection is at present limited to topographical works mostly of Colchester and district, local historical depictions, portraits of local individuals, including the civic portraits in Colchester Town Hall, ship portraits and a few still lifes and religious paintings. There are a number of important works by John Constable in the collection, including a collection of nude sketches and an oil painting depicting his mother Ann Constable, authenticated as an original by Tate Britain.

7.2.3 Decorative Art

This presently consists principally of the A. H. Mackmurdo Collection illustrating the Arts and Crafts Movement, Castle Hedingham pottery, donated by Mr S. H. Rothschild, and various ceramic pieces, including a rare Bow inkwell made in New Canton in 1750. There is also a large collection of tea caddy spoons bequeathed by Mr H. W. Lewer containing 300 examples. In addition, the museum owns the Penrose Collection of illuminated medieval manuscripts and rare books some of which are of international importance such as the Colchester Antiphony.

7.2.4 Clocks and Watches

This collection is almost entirely that bequeathed by Bernard Mason in 1979. It consists principally of long-case, lantern, bracket and wall clocks made in Colchester from 1680 to 1840. The Mason archive provides an outstanding research tool from which to research and interpret the collection. A proportion of the collection is displayed at Hollytrees Museum; the remainder is available to view by appointment in store. There are also a few additional clocks from other sources and locations. This is the largest collection in Britain of provincial clocks relating to one town.

7.2.5 Costume

Presently garments and textiles range from the 1600s to the present. The collection is incomplete in its coverage, but has a number of exceptional objects including a complete baby's layette dating from 1660. The collection also includes the fragmentary remains of a man's coat, the earliest part of which dates from 1650. This concealed garment has been researched in detail and a replica produced by textile conservator Kate Gill. The strength of the collection is in female clothing from the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries.

7.2.6 Local history

The present collection is wide-ranging and covers most aspects of local history to some degree. The particular strengths are toys and dolls, household items and local Napoleonic volunteer forces. There is also a substantial representation of farming and agricultural equipment collected in the 1930s by curator Eric Rudsdale.

7.2.7 Photographs, Negatives and Film

The museum holds a modest collection of photographic images and glass plate negatives. The main strength of this collection is topography. The Lovell Collection of 1920s photographs and the Poulter Collection of 1940s photographs provide a particularly comprehensive view of life in Colchester during these periods. In addition Colchester Museums currently holds a very limited amount of digital photographs, which have been acquired and accessioned into the collection. These are in inconsistent formats.

7.2.8 Documents

The museum holds the town charters granted to Colchester by a succession of English monarchs, including a fine surviving example of a Henry V charter dated 1413. A limited collection of papers, certificates and maps is held by the museum, associated with collections and as part of archaeological archives.

7.3 Numismatics (Coins and Medals)

7.3.1 The first entry in the Accessions Register for the institution now known as Colchester Borough Council Museums was made on 2nd September 1846 and was in the field of numismatics: 'an Antique Cabinet containing 497 coins (chiefly Roman), collected by Isaac Lemyng Rebow, Esqre'.

7.3.2 Since 1846 Colchester Museums has established a large numismatic collection that, in some categories, is of regional and national importance. It contains many thousands of Roman examples and substantial Iron Age holdings, in addition to several hoards of medieval silver pennies. There is also a substantial collection of later Colchester and Essex trade tokens. Modern coins are poorly represented.

7.3.3 The institution holds a small collection of military medals, mostly with local associations.

7.4 Natural History

7.4.1 General

Natural History is regarded as a significant part of Colchester's heritage. The museum specimens form an archive of the biodiversity of the borough and enable changes to be monitored. There are two main (but not mutually exclusive) groups: specimens for display and education purposes, and specimens that verify records (vouchers) or assist in the identification of material as many have been checked by national and other experts. The data associated with the museum specimens is often of key importance in the identification of County Wildlife Sites in Colchester.

7.4.2 Of particular note is the large collection of lepidoptera (moths and butterflies) and of coleoptera (beetles).

7.4.3 Other areas of note are study skins, skeletons, a spirit collection and a substantial geology and fossil collection.

7.5 World Cultures (Ethnography)

7.5.1 The bulk of Colchester Museums's world cultures collection was loaned to Saffron Walden Museum in the late 1970s as part of a rationalisation of ethnographic collections throughout Essex and in recognition of a qualified ethnographic curator being on the staff there at the time. This arrangement is due for review during the lifetime of this Collections Development Policy.

7.6 Handling Collection

7.6.1 The policies outlined above relate solely to the core permanent collections of the museum service. In addition Colchester Museums own and maintain a separate collection of items for handling purposes, primarily associated with schools and outreach activities.

7.6.2 The handling collection comprises school loan boxes, reminiscence loan boxes and sensory loan boxes. There is also a handling collection and resource room in the Natural History Museum.

7.6.3 A wider 'object library' of various social history items has been collected over recent years. This has limited room for expansion.

8. Themes and priorities for future collecting

8.1 Archaeology

8.1.1 Historically Colchester Museums collected over a far wider area than it does today. This was due to its relationship with the Essex Archaeological Society and its broader regional role in the absence of museum services with archaeological provision in other areas of the county. With the development of other museum services the collecting area has inevitably been reduced.

8.1.2 Colchester Museums now collects archaeological material primarily from within the boundaries of Colchester District. Colchester Museums may also continue to collect archaeological material from the districts of Maldon and Tendring in the absence of Accredited museum services in these districts if resources are available to do so. In the

event of Accredited museum services (with proper provision for archaeological curation) being established in Maldon and/or Tendring Districts, Colchester Museums will cease to collect archaeological material from these areas and the transfer of archaeological material previously collected from these areas will be actively considered. Colchester Museums will act as 'a museum of last resort' in the circumstances outlined in Section 17.1.

8.1.3 Colchester Museums's archaeological collections should be representative of all periods and cultures found in the collection area.

8.1.4 Colchester Museums will identify gaps in its current collection and actively collect to fill these gaps so as to attain the objective set out in 7.2.

8.1.5 Colchester Museums acknowledge the significance of acquiring the complete archive (which is defined as comprising the total body of material, both artefactual and documentary) from controlled archaeological excavation and other fieldwork.

8.1.6 Colchester Museums will normally only accept an archaeological archive if it meets the guidelines as laid down by Colchester Museums. These guidelines are laid down in the separate document entitled 'Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service'. This document forms part of the Collections Development Policy of Colchester Museums.

8.1.7 Colchester Museums will not normally accept material from archaeological excavation and fieldwork unless it consists of the complete archive.

8.1.8 Colchester Museums may collect archaeological material that is not from controlled archaeological excavation and other fieldwork based on at least one of the following criteria:

- a. It is declared to be Treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act and the British Museum declines to acquire it. (See also Section 16.2)
- b. The museum is satisfied that it can acquire valid title to the object.
- c. The museum is satisfied that it has a reliable provenance.
- d. It fills a gap in the existing collections.

8.2 Community History: General

8.2.1 Colchester Museums will collect contemporary material to ensure that the collection is a living asset and representative of all sections of the local community (see Appendix 1).

8.2.2 Future collecting will be restricted to objects that have display potential. The exceptions are photographs and negatives which are treated as archive material or, rarely, items without display potential that are of exceptional local and/or historical interest and which would otherwise be lost if not collected by the museum.

8.2.3 Colchester Museums will concentrate on collecting community history material from or relating to Colchester District. Collecting will be in co-ordination with Mersea Museum, the East Anglian Railway Museum, the Essex Record Office, the Essex Regimental Museum, the Essex Police Museum and any future independent accredited museum within the district.

8.2.4 Colchester Museums may also collect community history material which is considered of high historical value from the areas (mostly inland) of Tendring District not covered by

Accredited museums. In the event of Accredited museum services (with proper provision for social history curation) being established, Colchester Museums will cease to collect from these areas and the transfer of previously collected material will be considered.

8.3 Fine Art

8.3.1 Colchester Museums will collect pictures illustrating the social, industrial, military and maritime history of Colchester and contemporary depictions of Colchester and District. Colchester Museums will also selectively collect works of quality by artists who have lived and worked locally.

8.3.2 A particular initiative for active collecting is the work of recent and current printmakers to build up a Colchester Artists's Print Collection. Acquisitions will be made in consultation with firstsite who have knowledge of the local art scene to maintain the integrity and impetus of the collection.

8.4 Decorative Art

8.4.1 Colchester Museums will not acquire further items unless they are of particular local relevance or by a local maker.

8.5 Clocks and Watches

8.5.1 Colchester Museums will not acquire further items unless they are by a Colchester maker not already represented in the collection or are outstanding examples of a particular maker's work.

8.6 Costume

8.6.1 Colchester Museums will actively collect male, children's and working costume from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. These are gaps identified in 1989 following an assessment of the collection by conservator Poppy Singer. In addition, contemporary clothing worn by people who live in the district and which is representative of everyday fashion will be actively collected. This is in response to an assessment of the collection in 2006 by Oriole Cullen who recommended that the collection, 'would benefit from the inclusion of some examples from the 1980s-2000s'.

8.6.2 Storage has been improved with provision of dedicated storage areas. However, this has limited capacity so collection will always be mindful of available provision.

8.7 Local History

8.7.1 Smaller items can be easily accommodated in extant storage provision, so capacity is not a barrier to collecting.

8.7.2 Collecting of larger items must be limited until rationalisation can be undertaken.

8.7.3 It is particularly important that there is a high degree of active collecting to ensure that newly acquired material has a detailed context and is of particular relevance. Some of this collecting will be achieved through outreach projects and other contacts with local groups.

8.7.4 The existing collection will be researched, as the opportunity arises, to uncover further contextual information, taking a lead from work previously carried out to reveal aspects of disability history hidden within the collection.

8.8 Photographs, negatives and film

8.8.1 The collection is regarded as an archive and all forms of collecting will continue including copying of original photographs loaned to the museum for this purpose. The image rather than the material nature of the medium is of importance in this collection.

8.8.2 Late 20th century topographical images are under represented and moves will be made to acquire images where possible. There are plans to acquire an archive of photographs from the 'Colchester 24' project. This includes images taken in 1985 over a 24-hour period and again in 2011. The images capture all aspects of contemporary life in the town.

8.8.3 Colchester Museums will pass original film to the University of East Anglia's East Anglian Film Archive based at the Archive Centre, Norwich and digital copies made for museum use.

8.8.4 It is anticipated that the digital archive of the museum will expand considerably in the future owing to the changing nature of photography and also the growth of audio and visual recordings, microforms and other digital media. Standardisation of formats and preservation media with reference to BS: 545 and PAS: 197 will be followed.

8.9 Documents and Archives

8.9.1 Archival material will be dealt with in consultation with the Essex Record Office (ERO). It is unlikely archival material in the strictest sense will be collected in future by the museum unless directly associated with accessioned objects.

8.9.2 Original documents and ephemera that are not worthy of display or which form part of larger archives that are offered to the museum will be referred to the ERO according to agreed national policy. The option of transferring to the ERO any such material that is already accessioned in the museum collections will be pursued where appropriate.

8.10 Numismatics

8.10.1 Colchester Museums will collect numismatics according to period specific collecting areas as follows:

Iron Age coins

Colchester Museums will collect Iron Age coins minted in Camulodunon (ancient Colchester), irrespective of findspot, as well as any other type found in the districts of Colchester, Tendring and Maldon.

Roman coins

Colchester Museums will concentrate on collecting Roman coins found in the districts of Colchester, Tendring and Maldon.

Post-Roman and medieval coins

Colchester Museums will concentrate on collecting coins produced in local mints, irrespective of findspot, as well as any other types found in the districts of Colchester, Tendring and Maldon.

Post-medieval and modern coins

Colchester Museums will collect English and, after 1707, British coins used in Essex up to the present day. There are, however, no plans to expand the modern coin collections.

8.10.2 All coins that form part of an archaeological archive will be collected (see Section 7.1.5).

8.10.3 Tokens and Medals

Colchester Museums will develop its collections of Essex trade tokens and commemorative medals of local interest. There are no plans to actively collect military medals unless directly associated with costume.

8.11 Natural History

8.11.1 Subject to nature conservation considerations, including any conservation laws and bylaws, the museum will collect evidence of local geology (rocks, fossils and minerals), flora (plants) and fauna (animals) for display, study, reference and educational purposes. Important collections of local natural sciences material and associated documentation will be acquired (by purchase where necessary). Priority will be given to collections made by local naturalists. Where resources allow, material will be collected by controlled and properly documented field collecting by museum staff and voluntary supporters.

8.11.2 Special efforts will be made to acquire voucher specimens representing published records.

8.11.3 Colchester Museums will collect primarily from north-east Essex. This includes brackish and marine habitats of the adjacent areas of the south-western North Sea and its river estuaries. Where necessary for comparative study, display and taxonomy, collecting will take place from a wider area to include the rest of Essex, the British Isles and Western Europe.

8.11.4 Colchester Museums will aim to acquire examples of those species that occur within the museum's collecting area, except where this would contravene existing wildlife legislation or place local populations at risk. All collecting will be done in accordance with recognised codes (for example, Joint Committee for the Conservation of British Insects Code for Insect Collecting). Species will be taken to include male, female, immatures, varieties and subspecies, cast shells, skins etc, together with associated feeding signs, mines, galls and other evidence.

8.11.5 Colchester Museums will not actively collect exotic material. This will only be acquired where needed for educational, display or similar uses.

8.11.6 Collecting area and range

Macroinvertebrates (Insects, Molluscs, Crustaceans)

Colchester Museums will actively collect examples of the 20,000 or so British insects that occur in the collecting area. Additions to the larger Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) and

Coleoptera (Beetles) collections will be confined to the filling of gaps and to deposition of voucher or survey material or when required for educational use. Other macroinvertebrate examples will be collected from all major habitats within the collecting area.

Microscopic Organisms

Colchester Museums will build up a collection of locally occurring species as time and expertise allow.

Vertebrates: Mammals and birds

These are reasonably represented in Colchester Museums's collections. Additional material will be acquired where it demonstrates historic change in species, or to fill gaps, or to provide duplicate unaccessioned material for handling.

Vertebrates: Fishes

These are poorly represented in Colchester Museums's collections. Colchester Museums will collect local, fully documented material where the species are required for display or educational purposes.

Vertebrates: Reptiles and amphibians

Colchester Museums will only collect a limited amount of significant local material.

Botany: Vascular plants

Colchester Museums will principally collect local material including voucher specimens, particularly critical species and introductions. Non-local material will be restricted to very limited numbers of specimens that aid identification of local material.

Botany: Lichens, mosses, liverworts

Colchester Museums will only collect local material unless for educational use.

Botany: Fungi

Colchester Museums will only collect local material.

Botany: Algae

Colchester Museums will actively collect local marine and brackish water species. Freshwater species will be accepted from outside specialists or as vouchers from survey work.

Geology: Fossils and rocks

Colchester Museums will collect as the opportunity arises from the Cretaceous and later periods. Display quality material may be accepted from outside the area under exceptional circumstances.

Geology: Minerals

Colchester Museums will not collect minerals except for the few that are found locally.

Biological Records

Colchester Museums is the main holder of historic biological records for north-east Essex, although in the future consideration should be given to transferring these records to a suitable alternative repository. These often have voucher material associated with them which needs proper storage. The current archive is mainly paper-based, much of it the result of survey work conducted by or initiated by the museum. Colchester Museums will

work with other interested parties towards the establishment and maintenance of a county-wide Essex Biological Records Centre.

8.12 World Cultures (Ethnography)

8.12.1 World cultures material is currently not collected by Colchester Museums, but this arrangement may be reviewed as outlined in paragraph 7.5 above.

8.13 Handling Collection

8.13.1 There is some limited space to permit expansion of the education collection. The redeveloped Colchester Castle, which opened in May 2014, has dedicated storage for school loan boxes.

8.13.2 It is accepted that the handling collection is maintained for current educational use and does not impose a responsibility for long term preservation. Although reasonable care will be taken to extend the useful life of such material, it is accepted that its usefulness is finite and that disposal and replacement will be at the discretion of the appropriate officers.

8.13.3 The same legal and moral criteria that apply to acquisition (as stated in Sections 7 and 13) apply to the handling collection.

8.13.4 Any material of such significance that its long-term preservation is desirable will not form part of the handling collection.

8.13.5 Replicas as well as real artefacts will be added to the handling collection.

8.13.6 Material will only be added to the handling collection after consultation with appropriate colleagues. There is a presumption that items collected will tie in with the National Curriculum or similar national guidelines.

9. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

9.1 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 The criteria governing rationalisation and disposal will include condition and associated information. Items in very poor condition or, in the case of natural history specimens and some social history objects, subject to severe infestation by insects or other organisms, will be identified for disposal. Items with little or no associated documentation will be regarded as suitable for disposal as will those without a direct local connection unless covered by another category as described as above. Any duplicate items will also be considered for disposal. Decisions will be made by Colchester Borough Council and in each case the reasons for and method of disposal will be detailed.

9.4 Archaeological archives will be considered for rationalisation with reference to the 1993 standards and guidance document 'Selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological collections' produced by the Society of Museum Archaeologists. An archaeological archive is defined by the Archaeological Archives Forum as 'All parts of the archaeological record, including the finds and digital records as well as the written, drawn and photographic documentation' (see AAF 2007, Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation', p. 3, sec. 1.2.1).

9.5 Collection areas with substantial overlap with other Accredited local museums may be considered as future areas of rationalisation. This included agricultural machinery and implements.

10. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

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

10.2 The museum also recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that 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.

10.3 The museum will continue to rely heavily on private individuals making gifts and bequests to the collections. It will seek to make the fullest possible use of grant aid for proposed purchases. Other than charitable sources, grant-giving bodies and possible sponsorship, the main sources of funds for proposed purchases to strengthen the collections are The Friends of Colchester Museums.

11. Collecting policies of other museums

11.1 Colchester Borough Council recognises the need for co-operation and consultation between national and local museums, art galleries and record offices with similar, or overlapping, interests and collecting policies. 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.

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

- Ipswich Borough Council museum collections
- Chelmsford Museum
- Braintree District Museum
- Brightlingsea Museum
- Mersea Island Museum
- East Anglian Railway Museum
- Essex Record Office
- Essex Regimental Museum, Chelmsford
- Essex Police Museum, Chelmsford
- The Museum of East Anglian Life

11.3 Further consultation on individual acquisitions will occur as appropriate with members of Museums Essex (Formerly the Museums In Essex Committee and Essex Museum Workers Group).

12. Archival holdings

12.1 Documentary evidence, including photographs, associated with the collections form a vital resource essential for interpretation, research, publication, education and for answering enquiries. Wherever possible all documentation with an object, specimen or collection obtained by the museum will be acquired. There will be a general presumption against acquiring material without data, except for specific displays or educational purposes.

12.2 As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002) and PD5454:2012 Recommendations for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Documents.

12.3 The museum will also aim to meet the standards outlined in the Archive Service Accreditation Standard May 2013 (which is aligned with the Museums Accreditation Scheme).

13. Acquisition

13.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is that decisions will generally be taken collectively by museum staff with due consideration being paid to all aspects of the proposed acquisition including title, cost (if appropriate), provenance, significance, display potential, educational potential, scientific value, conservation requirements and associated information.

13.2 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).

13.3 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.

14. Human remains

14.1 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.

14.2 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.

15. Biological and geological material

15.1 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.

16. Archaeological material

16.1 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.

16.2 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).

17. Exceptions

17.1 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.

18. Spoliation

18.1 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.

19. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

19.1 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 20.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

19.2 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'.

20. Disposal procedures

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

20.2 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.

20.3 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.

20.4 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.

20.5 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.

20.6 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.

20.7 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.

20.8 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).

20.9 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.

20.10 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.

20.11 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.

20.12 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

20.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

20.14 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 20.1-5 will apply.

20.15 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.

20.16 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).

20.17 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

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

20.19 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.

20.20 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.

20.21 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.

20.22 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.