

PENLEE HOUSE GALLERY & MUSEUM COLLECTIONS CARE POLICY

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1. Mission and Commitment

Penlee House Gallery & Museum's mission statement outlines the importance of preservation of collections in relation to the accessibility and learning initiatives of the organisation:

Penlee House Gallery & Museum exists to collect, preserve, interpret and make accessible objects and works of art related to the history and culture of the far west of Cornwall, at the same time providing a service to the local community and the visiting public through educational activities and special exhibitions.

2. Collections Conditions Overview

2.1 The collections undergo an audit every 3 years and during this process each work or object is visually inspected. This allows staff to determine priority areas for conservation and arrange specific conservation work with professional conservators as appropriate.

2.2 Objects in store are regularly accessed for research and exhibition, allowing for checks to be made in-between audits.

3. Preventative Conservation

3.1 Provision of suitable building conditions

3.1.1 Penlee House Gallery & Museum is a Victorian house built in the grounds of Penlee Park. As such, it was not purpose-built as a museum/gallery, however it underwent major renovation in 1997 to bring it up to Government Indemnity standards. This means that Penlee House regularly borrows works of art from national collections, including the British Museum, Tate Britain and the Royal Academy.

3.1.2 Penlee House staff will carry out regular visual checks of the building to ensure it provides the best possible conditions for the collection and exhibitions and report any faults or problems immediately to the Director or the Curator.

3.2 Safeguarding the collections

3.2.1 Staff will familiarise themselves with the contents of the **Emergency Plan** and keep a copy at home in the event of a call-out/emergency at the Gallery.

3.2.2 The alarm monitoring company will contact the nominated keyholder in the event of an emergency via the dedicated mobile phone. The mobile phone will be allocated to the Gallery keyholders on a monthly rota system.

3.3 Environmental monitoring

Penlee House Gallery & Museum will:

3.3.1 Have the environmental conditions of the galleries and store constantly monitored by a Building Maintenance System (BMS), with a programme of regular servicing and testing.

3.3.2 Ensure that the environmental data is collected using a continuous recording system and, in addition, undertake regular visual checks.

3.3.3 Use environmental data to maintain a stable and appropriate condition for the collections and exhibitions.

3.3.4 Monitor, manage and eradicate pests where appropriate.

3.4 Environmental control

Penlee House Gallery & Museum will store and display the collection in controlled environmental conditions in order to minimise the rate of deterioration. To maintain the conditions, the following control factors and methods are adhered to:

Control factors:

Relative humidity (RH): gallery and storage areas are maintained between 55% +/- 5

Temperature: 20 ° centigrade +/-2

Visible light: 0-500 lux

UV radiation: all UV is excluded

Storage: paintings are stored on moveable racking or wrapped in protective covers and stored on blocks and shelves.

Control methods to be used:

Relative Humidity (RH) & Temperature: Building Maintenance System (BMS) computer controlled, calibrated and checked with free-standing thermohydrographs, polymeter and whirling hygrometers.

UV radiation: Use of LED lighting and daylight exclusion.

3.5 Housekeeping

3.5.1 Cleaning

Dust levels are monitored throughout storage and exhibition spaces. A professional cleaner cleans the Gallery on a daily basis. Appropriate cleaning products are used so they are not detrimental to the collection. The cleaner is not permitted to clean the artefacts, glazed area of paintings, or frames.

3.5.2 Pest monitoring

The risk of insect damage is monitored regularly by the use of traps, and by visual inspections and audits.

3.6 Handling, moving and transport

3.6.1 Items in the collection are particularly at risk when being handled or moved, so only trained members of staff will undertake such tasks.

3.6.2 All objects being transported (for loan or conservation purposes) will be suitably wrapped and/or crated to give the most suitable protection. In some cases, a member of staff will accompany works on outward loan.

4. Remedial Conservation

4.1 Only qualified and experienced conservators will be employed to carry out conservation work.

4.2 All conservation work will be planned in consultation with the Director and recorded in the appropriate file.

4.3 Penlee House Gallery & Museum has a full time Curator who is responsible for overseeing and organising conservation work and the general care of the collection.

4.4 The policies and procedures relating to care and conservation are made available to all members of staff. This ensures that all staff members are aware of correct handling procedures, etc.

5. Review date

This policy was reviewed and approved on 30 September 2019 by the Penlee House Committee

It is next due for review in September 2022.