



MUSEUM
ACCREDITATION

Accreditation Scheme for Museums
and Galleries in the United Kingdom

Collections development policy

2014

Reprinted November 2018

Name of museum:

Penlee House Gallery & Museum

Name of governing body:

Penzance Town Council (known as Penzance Council)

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

21 March 2022

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:

March 2025

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:
 - (i) **Vision:** To be at the centre of Penzance's cultural regeneration.
 - (ii) **Mission:** To inspire all who visit us, and transform lives in our local community, through the art and heritage of Penzance and west Cornwall.
 - (iii) **Values:** We are a diverse and inclusive space for all.
We are a place of fun and enjoyment.
We strive for high quality and act with integrity.
We are trusted, dependable and professional.
- 1.2 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.3 By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- 1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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 institution now called Penlee House was initially known as Penzance and District Museum, and was founded by the Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society in 1839. Its first home was in the Market House, which had just been completed. The Museum was situated in the dome of the building and contained a mixture of Natural Science, Archaeology and Ethnological artefacts - a typical antiquarian museum of the period.

In 1867, the growing Museum moved to the newly constructed St John's Hall, the town's main public building. By the end of the decade, however, the Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society had more-or-less ceased to exist and the Museum was in a sort of hibernation. The society was reformed in the mid-1880s, but as no rent had been paid for the museum premises for many years, specimens were sold to raise money and to clear the debt. Insect damage to the Natural History collection meant that much of it was subsequently destroyed.

The Museum remained in St John's Hall until 1947. The society sold the collections to Penzance Borough Council in 1937 for a nominal sum, with an agreement that they would be displayed for the public good. In 1939 the collections were put into storage and unfortunately many items subsequently disappeared. No record of the Museum's extensive Egyptian collection can be found. Also missing is a Bronze Age gold torque, and more unusual items such as the hand of a Mummy with a gold signet ring, a shrunken head and poisoned arrows.

At the end of World War II, the owners of the Penlee Estate were planning to build on the land and to demolish the house. The then Mayor, Robert Thomas, decided to open a public appeal and purchase the estate as a War Memorial. The estate is about 15 acres, and the purchase price was £13,000. It was decided to use the house as a museum and arts centre, plus two domestic council dwellings.

The Museum was opened in its new home by Sir Cyril Fox on 24th June 1949. It was administered by the Borough Librarian from 1949 until 1974, when Penzance lost its borough status and the Museum became the property of Penwith District Council. In April 1983, ownership of the Penlee Estate reverted back to Penzance Town Council.

In the 1990s, substantial funding was raised from various sources, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, Penwith District Council, Penzance Town Council and the Friends of Penlee House, to refurbish and develop the Museum and Art Gallery. Overseen by Robert Allen, architect, the building was completely redeveloped, adding Gallery spaces, lift access and the cafe and shop, as well as refurbishing the museum. Care was taken to preserve the feel of the original genteel Victorian home, while providing state-of-the-art conditions for the display and care of the collections.

Penlee House re-opened in its current form in 1997 and now offers changing displays drawn from its own collections, supplemented by loans from public and private collections, reflecting the unique, rich heritage of the far west of Cornwall. Penlee House is at the heart of the local community and uses its collections to engage with children, young people, adults and older people. The learning programme at Penlee House is well-established. Its aims are to introduce children and young people to Penlee House and to understand and remove the barriers that anyone may face when trying to access Penlee House and its collections.

An overview of current collections

The Museum Collections

Comprise of Archaeological, Natural History and Social History Collections. A large proportion of these were owned by the former Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society, founded in 1839. This collection became the property of Penzance Borough Council in 1939 and, subsequently, as a result of Local Government reorganisation in 1974, the property of Penwith District Council: since further Local Government reorganisation in 2009, ownership currently rests with Cornwall Council until 31 March 2022. In March 2022 the Service Level Agreement with Cornwall Council will come to an end and ownership of the collection will be transferred to Penzance Council. This comprises 65% of the present collection and it is supplemented by items which are the property of the Penzance Council (32%) and items in private ownership which are held on loan (3%).

The Art Collection

Includes items that were formerly owned by Penzance Borough Council and were subsequently transferred to the ownership of Penzance Town Council. This comprises 99.5% of Penlee House's total permanent art collection and the remaining 0.5% consists of works which are currently the property of Cornwall Council until 31 March 2022. The Governing Body regularly solicits and accepts works of art on loan for temporary exhibition. In addition, it accepts works on long term loan to supplement the collections, and approximately 9% of the fine art collection is on long term loan, including 29 works belonging to Newlyn Art Gallery.

The following gives more detail about each sub-section of the collections

Archaeology Collection

The present collection covers all periods from the Palaeolithic to the Mediaeval, encompassing the Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Romano British and Mediaeval periods. The collection includes flint, stone and pottery, plus a selection of replica gold Torcs and Bracelets (the originals of which are held by the British Museum). Much of the material was field collected between 1875 and 1930. The collection at present numbers about 3,500 items or item groups, including a recently acquired hoard of approximately 2,000 Roman coins, which are in the process of being accessioned, plus two large deposits from Lesingey and Bosilliac.

Fine Art

The collection currently consists of approximately 920 works including 260 oil paintings, 170 watercolours, 115 drawings and 375 prints. These range in date from the late 18th Century to the present day, the majority being the work of artists associated with the Newlyn School c.1880-1940.

Significant artists currently represented include Samuel John 'Lamorna' Birch, Frank Bramley, Percy Craft, Stanhope Forbes, Elizabeth Forbes, Norman Garstin, Fred Hall, Harold Harvey, Frank Gascoigne Heath, Harold Knight, Laura Knight, Walter Langley, Ernest Procter, Charles Simpson and Ralph Todd.

The most significant items are a small group of well-known paintings including '***The Rain it Raineth Every Day***' by Norman Garstin, '***School is Out***' by Elizabeth Forbes, '***Eyes and No Eyes***' by Frank Bramley, '***Among the Missing***', '***Departure of the Fleet for the North***' and '***Time Moveth Not, Our Being 'Tis That Moves***' by Walter

Langley and **'Abbey Slip'** and **'On Paul Hill'** by Stanhope Forbes.

Included in this total are 29 Newlyn School works on long-term loan from Newlyn Art Gallery and a further 60 on long-term loan from other institutions or private individuals.

The print collection is mainly topographical but also includes fine art prints by artists such as Elizabeth Forbes, Laura Knight and Edward Bouverie Hoyton.

Sculpture

There are currently only six examples: - two bronzes and one terracotta by Barbara Tribe ('Medusa', 'Simon' and 'Linda'); two stone relief carvings by Rosamund Fletcher (daughter of William Blandford Fletcher), dating from the 1930s, and a head study of Barbara Tribe by Eric Hiller.

Decorative Art

The collection consists of decorative metalwork, ceramics and printed textiles:

Decorative Metalwork: The core of this collection comprises around 40 examples of Newlyn copper, one of Newlyn silver and three of Newlyn enamel. There are also a small number of items of Hayle copperware, three examples of work by Francis Cargeeg (on long-term loan) and one necklace by Ella Naper.

Ceramics: Following donations of over 130 items in 2007 and 2009, the collection consists of around 225 items of 20th Century studio pottery from West Cornwall, including examples by Bernard Leach and the Leach Pottery; Seth Cardew; the Celtic Pottery, Newlyn; Troika Pottery, St. Ives, and Arch Pottery, St. Ives. A further 40 items of Troika Pottery were donated in 2018 (having previously been on long-term loan).

Textiles: Penlee House has a special interest in the activities of the Cryséde factory (Newlyn 1920-25, St Ives 1925-40) and that of its founder, the designer and artist Alec Walker, and holds approximately 480 examples of garments, pieces and lengths, which includes around 150 items on loan from a private collection. Other textiles include an example of Newlyn embroidery and examples of local hand-block printing from Mill House Textiles, Penzance (1950s).

Natural Science

The present collection comprises:

- A case of butterflies and bees
- 117 items of taxidermy including mammals and birds.
- A large collection of birds' eggs comprising 304 accessioned items containing approximately 700 eggs in clutches, nests and loose eggs.
- All items are primarily of local significance.

Social History

The present collection comprises artefacts that have been acquired by Penlee House since its inception in 1839. The collection covers all the headings listed in the statement above and totals approximately 4,230 items.

The collections range from around 1800 to the present day with the bulk of items dating from 1850-1910 and have a direct connection with the far west of Cornwall: Commerce, Domestic (home, personal and family life), Education, Entertainment, Farming, Fishing, Horticulture, Local Government, Military, Mining, Quarrying, Religion Tourism, Transport and War.

In general, the collection has been developed by passive, rather than planned

collecting. The exceptions to this are Tourism and Transport, where efforts have been made to cover the subject areas in more depth.

The collections are primarily owned by Penzance Town Council and Cornwall Council (until 2022 when Penzance Town Council will assume sole ownership). A very small percentage of these items (3%) are on loan.

Photographic and Image collection

The present collection comprises photographs (including photographic prints, glass and film negatives, magic lantern slides and digitised images), postcards and other printed images. Included are Cartes de Visite, Cabinet cards, albums and large mounted images.

The collection numbers in excess of 10,000 items ranging in date from 1850 to the present day and is the largest single collection housed in Penlee House. Photographers represented include Preston, Gibson, Richards, Penhaul, Frith and Valentine. Processes represented in the collection include Ambrotype, Daguerreotype, Ferrotypes, Collodion, and Albumen prints. As resources allow, images will be copied onto archival negatives and fibre-based paper to safeguard the collection. The Penhaul Archive consists of around 4,000 prints and 2,000 glass plate negatives, in 2009 we acquired a group of 465 magic lantern slides depicting West Cornwall and in 2016 we purchased the Gibson archive, containing over 1500 prints and glass plate negatives.

4

Themes and priorities for future collecting

Penlee House's Collecting objectives are to collect, preserve, display and interpret a representative collection of objects, photographs and works of art to illustrate the way of life of the inhabitants of the far west of Cornwall. Future collecting will be considered with reference to the significance, use and storage of objects.

Archaeology

The Governing Body will seek to add to the collections when appropriate finds are offered.

Fine and Decorative Art

The Governing Body will collect, preserve, display and interpret works of art depicting the far west of Cornwall and works of art associated with that area. It especially recognises the importance of the Newlyn School and Lamorna group artists and of the art colonies centred around Newlyn and St Ives in the late 19th and early 20th Century.

It will seek to build upon its present collection of works of art so that it is representative of the arts scene of the area. This will include the collecting of both contemporary and historic works that complement the themes of the existing collections, but will focus on developing the current areas of strength, which is in the period 1880-1940.

The Governing Body will collect, preserve, display and interpret a representative selection of metalwork, pottery, glass, textiles and other items falling under the general heading of Decorative Arts, these all having a connection with the far west of Cornwall.

It recognises that the Fine and Decorative Art collection needs to be actively developed in the following specific ways:

- By endeavouring to fill gaps in the existing collection of fine art, by acquiring

examples of work produced in the area by significant artists who are currently not represented in the collections.

- By acquiring further works by artists already represented where these will provide a more in-depth coverage of their work, and in particular to acquire major works by key figures.
- By seeking to acquire works of intrinsic artistic value which also represent the social history of West Cornwall, including depictions of the area's fishing and maritime, agriculture, mining and tourism industries; images of both town and rural landscape, and portraits of significant individuals.
- By seeking to develop more representative holdings of fine art works by each of the leading artistic groups in West Cornwall from the period 1880 – 1940, to include significant works by artists from the Newlyn School, Lamorna group and St. Ives colony of this period.
- By seeking out additions to the Cryséde collection, including textile pieces, garments, designs and relevant supporting documents, including photographs.
- By seeking to acquire well-documented and inscribed pieces of Newlyn and Hayle copper, further examples of Newlyn enamels and other material related to this local craft industry including tools, patterns, documents and photographs.
- By seeking to acquire examples of studio pottery by significant potters associated with West Cornwall, particularly the work of Bernard Leach and his followers.
- By the collection of contemporary works of fine and decorative art by gift, purchase or commission where these enhance and compliment the core collection.

Natural Science

Whilst recognising the importance of this subject as one of the main concerns of the founding body, Penlee House realises that at present it does not have the specialist knowledge or staff required to acquire further specimens and is not actively collecting in this field at present.

Social History

The Governing Body will collect interpret, preserve and display a representative selection of items in the following fields, provided such items have a direct connection with the far west of Cornwall: Commerce, Domestic (home, personal and family life), Education, Entertainment, Farming, Fishing, Horticulture, Local Government, Military, Mining, Quarrying, Religion, Tourism, Transport and War.

The collections are generally lacking in material relating to the 20th Century. The collecting policy has been extended to add 20th Century items relevant to all subject areas of the collection, taking into consideration at all times Penlee House's limitations in relation to display and storage. We will consider prospective acquisitions carefully.

Farming, Horticulture, Mining and Quarrying (including China Clay extraction) are not well-represented and should opportunities arise to improve the holdings in these specific areas, these will be seriously considered. At all times the importance of the Geevor Mining Museum, Wheal Martyn Museum, Museum of Cornish Life, Helston and the Royal Cornwall Museum will be taken into account.

Fishing

Material relating to fishing remains a priority area for adding to the collection in order to demonstrate the historical importance of the industry to this area. The term 'fishing' covers all fishing activities including inshore, deep-sea and shellfish. With the closure of The Pilchard Works in 2005, the requirement for Penlee House to represent this subject area gained additional importance. At all times, the importance of the National Maritime Museum Cornwall will be taken into account.

Textiles and costume:

This collection currently numbers approximately 240 items and consists mainly of women's clothing dating from c.1870-1930, and civic and mayoral robes. Penlee House will seek to review this collection and will add objects only in exceptional circumstances where they relate specifically to the local area, concentrating on uniquely relevant clothing made and/or worn in the far west of Cornwall. Whenever possible, the associated history of garments will be recorded and contemporary photographs showing them in use will be obtained.

Religious Life

Penlee House will seek to build upon its holding of artefacts relating to faiths practised in the area.

The Tourist Industry:

The collection of railway advertising posters, other advertising material, guidebooks, promotional material and souvenirs will be added to when suitable opportunities arise.

Domestic Life

Holdings range from around 1800 to the late 20th Century and include a number of electrical appliances. The collection will be reviewed with due regard to the collections held and displayed elsewhere in the county, including at the Museum of Cornish Life, Helston and Royal Cornwall Museum, and developed as opportunities arise where items are of particular local significance.

Items relating to the **history of Penlee House** and its original inhabitants, the **Branwell** family, and items relating to the present War Memorial function of the House and Park will be added when opportunities arise.

Oral history

Penlee House will work in partnership with other organisations to encourage or pursue the collection of oral history in all fields and to use existing and future oral history archives in its interpretative materials.

Photographic and Image collection

The Governing body will collect, interpret, preserve and display a representative collection of photographs and other forms of images of the far west of Cornwall in so far as it already has a substantial collection of such material. The material can be historic or contemporary.

The Governing Body recognises the particular significance of this collection and will seek to develop it in the following areas:

Images of Mining, Quarrying, Clay works, Factories, Foundries, Farming, Horticulture, Retail, Tourism and the Fishing industry.

Depictions of the settlements of the Penwith area, specifically, Penzance, Pendeen, Trewellard, Carnyorth, St Buryan, St. Levan, Sennen, St Just, Sancreed, Newbridge, Paul, Gulval, Marazion, St Erth, Hayle, Lelant, Carbis Bay, St Ives and Ludgvan, and

their surrounding environs.

The collections are specifically lacking in images covering the latter half of the twentieth century, and in consideration of this, collections from this period will be sought for acquisition in all subject areas.

Where resources allow, Penlee House may commission contemporary photographers to produce archival records of the West Cornwall area. Where possible, copyright in commissioned images will be vested with Penlee House.

Penlee House is keen to acquire, or to secure for public access, a wide range of Gibson photographs of the Cornish mainland, and has made significant progress with acquiring items following a major purchase in 2016. This has been achieved in conjunction with the family-owned Gibson archive on the Isles of Scilly and the possibility of acquiring further holdings is currently being explored.

Penlee House wishes to acquire further examples of Stereoscope Cards and Magic Lantern slides depicting the area.

Although the collection of archive film is seen as being of importance, Penlee House is currently unable to provide suitable storage conditions or viewing equipment for film archives, and does not therefore currently collect in this area. Any original films collected will be passed to the South West Film and Television Archive (currently held at The Box, Plymouth), with copies being held at Penlee House.

Penlee House will look into the possibility of acquiring original digital images as objects in their own right and accessioning them as such.

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.

Penlee House will seek to prioritise the review of collections in two main areas: Textiles & Costume and Domestic Life.

Textiles and costume:

This collection currently numbers approximately 240 items and consists mainly of women's clothing dating from c.1870 – 1930, and civic and mayoral robes. We will seek to review this collection, to ensure that it relates specifically to the local area. We will look to address the areas of significant duplication within the collection (e.g. nightgowns) by first undertaking a review and then looking to responsibly dispose of items no

longer required for the collection. The collection may also require some development where it relates specifically to the local area, concentrating on clothing made and/or worn in the far west of Cornwall, in particular working clothes, children's clothes and men's clothing and beach wear. Whenever possible, the associated history of garments will be recorded and contemporary photographs showing them in use will be obtained.

Domestic Life

At present this collection is not comprehensive or representative of life in the area. Holdings range from around 1800 to the late 20th Century and include a number of electrical appliances. The collection will be reviewed with due regard to the collections held and displayed elsewhere in the county, including at the Museum of Cornish Life, Helston and Royal Cornwall Museum and developed as opportunities arise where items are of particular local significance. As with the textiles and costume collection, where there are significant levels of duplication or where items are not deemed relevant to the collection, responsible disposal procedures will be followed.

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):

- Barbara Hepworth Museum
- Falmouth Art Gallery
- Geevor Mining Museum
- Hayle Heritage Centre
- Museum of Cornish Life, Helston
- The Isles of Scilly Museum
- Marazion Museum
- National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Falmouth
- Newlyn Art Gallery & The Exchange
- Telegraph Museum, Porthcurno
- Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro (Royal Institution of Cornwall)
- St Ives Museum

- Tate St Ives
- Wheal Martyn China Clay Museum

8

Archival holdings

The Governing Body will generally not acquire documents for Penlee House other than those directly related to items in the collection, but will work with and deposit documents at Kresen Kernow, Redruth and Morrab Library, Penzance. The Governing Body recognises the 'West Cornwall Arts Archive' (now housed within The Newlyn Archive) and, providing that this is able to house the items in accordance with nationally agreed standards, will consider the transfer of its art archive material on loan to that institution.

9

Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

Authority to acquire objects is delegated by the governing body (Penlee House Committee) to the Director and Curator/ Deputy Director and reported to the Penlee House Committee at the earliest opportunity.

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

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, 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** 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

- 16.13** The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Disposal by destruction

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

circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Policy approval and review

This policy was reviewed and approved on 21 March 2022 by the Penlee House Committee

It is next due for review in March 2025.



MUSEUM
ACCREDITATION



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

