

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

Collections Management Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales’ Collections Management Framework comprises a suite of strategies, policies and procedures which detail how we will develop, manage and care for our collections. This policy details the purpose, principles and structures the Museum has in place to manage its collection. It provides the information, including the legal and ethical frameworks, which underpin collections management policy across the organization.

1.2 Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales maintains large and exceptionally diverse collections that have been developed since its foundation in 1907. The Royal Charter of 2006 identifies our purpose as: ‘the advancement of the education of the public ... by the comprehensive representation of science, art, industry, history and culture of, or relevant to, Wales, and generally, by the collection, recording, preservation, elucidation and presentation of objects and things and associated knowledge, whether connected or not with Wales, which are calculated to further the enhancement of understanding and the promotion of research’.

1.3 The Museum is the chief repository of three-dimensional material relating to Wales’ natural and cultural heritage and of international material that helps to define Wales’ place in the world. The collections currently extend to some 5 million items ranging across social and industrial history, archaeology, art and the natural sciences and including artefacts, scientific specimens, paintings, prints and drawings, paper archives, digital assets, photographs, recordings and publications.

1.4 The collections are held in trust for the people of Wales and exist to serve society. They are at the heart of our service to the public, used by our staff to enable the museum experience, the on-line experience, learning, research, participation and our contribution to making a difference to Wales. These would include their use externally in an ever-wider range of ways for enjoyment, learning, inspiration, research and discovery. As such they are a crucial part of the role of the Museum and the cultural and scientific infrastructure of the nation.

2. Purpose

2.1 The Museum’s ten-year Vision – *Inspiring People, Changing Lives* - provides clear priorities and focus for all the organisation’s activities. As the collections play a fundamental role in these activities, this policy sets out a clear framework for the management of the collections that will enable us to meet the needs of our programmes, users and partners. It will also help us manage the changing requirements that arise from the decline in resources for acquisition and collections care, co-production and co-collecting with communities, new priorities for display and rapidly evolving public expectations of digital delivery.

2.2 Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales is an Accredited Museum. The Accreditation Scheme is administered by Arts Council England (ACE) which sets nationally agreed standards for U.K. Museums. This policy sets out the framework for how the Museum will meet its obligations under the scheme for collections management.

3. Definition

3.1 Collections management is an active on-going process through which the Museum fulfils its obligations for its collections as defined by the Charter. It enables the Museum to meet its legal and ethical responsibilities and apply best practice so we know what we have, where it is and can care for it appropriately to facilitate sustainable access and use.

4. Objectives of Collections Management

4.1 The objectives of collection management are to:

- Plan for the sustainable development of collections
- Plan for the sustainable care of the collections
- Facilitate understanding of, managing access to, and use of collections and collection information
- Provide accountability through compliance with legal and ethical responsibilities
- Support the Museum's reputation and status as a national museum by conforming with external benchmarks such as PAS197 and 198 and the requirements of the Accreditation Scheme.

5. Applicability

5.1 This policy applies to all Museum collecting departments that have delegated authority to acquire, manage and use collections and collection information. All Museum staff, researchers, volunteers, interns and others with delegated collection management responsibility or access to collections are required to adhere to the collections management strategies, policies, procedures and practices established in this and all the associated documentation which together forms the Museum's Collections Management Framework.

5.2 This policy applies to all Museum collections, which fall into the following categories:

- Permanent accessioned collection: items deemed to be of major significance for research and/or exhibition or considered important to preserve as part of, or in relationship to, the natural or cultural heritage of Wales. Items accessioned into the permanent collection are expected to be preserved for an indefinite period of time. The permanent collection includes ancillary collections, which are of two types:

- Those items that are not themselves collection materials, but that support a collection item such as documentation.
- Collections of digital assets, models or archival materials that are representations of items.
- Items to be accessioned: items that are part of the processing backlog of materials that will eventually become part of the permanent collection e.g. items on object entry, prospective purchases.
- Items where ownership is retained by a third party and must be maintained per agreement e.g. inward loans.

5.3 This policy does not apply to items that are not suitable for inclusion in the permanent accessioned collection because of an agreement, impediment, duplication or other consideration which leaves them available for handling/educational use, sampling, exchange and destruction.

6. Authority and Responsibilities

The acquisition and possession of collections impose legal and ethical obligations to provide proper management, preservation and use of the collections and their associated information. Authorities and responsibilities for collections management at Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales are delegated as follows:

6.1 Trustees:

- Ensuring an appropriate framework of strategies and policies is in place to demonstrate appropriate accountability with regard to Charter obligations and their contemporary interpretation via Vision documents, strategic and operational plans etc.
- As part of their advocacy role promoting the Museum as a centre of excellence for collection care and management.

6.2 Directors

- Approving strategies, policies and plans, including performance measures that will ensure the sustainability of the national collections and associated knowledge base.
- Making sufficient resources available to enable exemplary collection care and management.

6.3 Keepers

- Developing strategies, policies and plans for collection care and management including performance measures.
- Monitoring progress against plans.
- Approving procedures.
- Ensuring compliance with strategy, policy and procedures.

- Allocating resources to enable collection management activities to meet relevant standards and best practice.

6.4 Collection Care and Management Group

- Advising on strategy, policy and performance measures.
- Developing and reviewing procedures.
- Monitoring compliance with strategy, policy and procedures.
- Supporting best practice in collection care and management through delivering training to both collection and non-collection staff.

6.5 Collection staff

- Undertaking collection care and management activities in accordance with strategy, policies and procedures.
- Ensuring students, interns, volunteers, Honorary Research Fellows etc. undertake their work in accordance with strategy, policy and procedures.

6.6 Non-collection staff

- Being aware of our collections management framework and undertaking their work in ways which do not compromise the care and management of the collection.
- Playing a role in promoting the importance of collections care and management to users of their services.

7 Overview of Supporting Policies

The implementation of this policy is effected via a range of policies and procedures that relate to specific areas of collection management.

7.1 Collections Development Policy

This policy aims to establish policies and guidelines for the development of our collections and to detail the policy for the acquisition and disposal of items within our collections. It outlines the circumstances in which we will acquire and dispose of objects and specimens, as well as the methods we will use to do this.

7.2 Access and Use

This policy sets out how we will make the collections accessible and useable to all within the reasonable constraints of resources, conservation and security. Collection information may include supplementary information, including photographs and any digital media. This policy incorporates appendices which detail our policy about the destructive sampling of collection items, including DNA-based studies and our policy on working historic machinery.

7.3 Care and Conservation

This policy demonstrates how we will care for the collections using a combination of preventative and interventive conservation, aimed at ensuring preservation and maximizing access.

7.4 Collection Information

This policy sets out how the Museum will maintain professional standards in documentation and collections information and attain the very highest standard. It demonstrates how we will strengthen the security of the collections through accurate collections information and how we will improve accountability for collections and collections information.

7.5 Outward Loans

The aim of this policy is to ensure that we lend our objects or specimens to a wide range of institutions and bodies in order to ensure they are used as fully as possible and for the benefit of all.

7.6 Inward Loans

The aim of this policy is to ensure that when we borrow objects or specimens they are used appropriately and for the benefit of all. It is the Museum's policy to only accept new items on inward loan for the purpose of display or research.

7.7 Human Remains

Human remains were once living people, accordingly, we will care for them in a culturally respectful manner, while also making them available for research, learning and display.

8 Ethical Considerations

All museums are entrusted with collections which they hold for the benefit of the community they serve. Accordingly they have a responsibility to act in the best interest of the public in terms of the stewardship of those collections. Underlying this principle is the need for museums to act ethically, and Lord Nolan's seven principles for public life, presented below, are as applicable to those who work in museums as in any other public service; they also apply to those who serve on museum governing bodies. The seven principles are:

- **Selflessness** - all decisions taken should be undertaken solely in the public interest
- **Integrity** - individuals should not place themselves under financial or other obligation to outside bodies that jeopardises their performance for the Museum
- **Objectivity** - all choices made should be on merit
- **Accountability** - individuals should be accountable for their decisions and actions

- **Openness** - individuals should be open about the decisions reached and actions taken
- **Honesty** - any private interests should be declared and any conflicts resolved in favour of the public interest
- **Leadership** - individuals should promote these principles by leadership and example

Museum employees are expected to be aware of and adhere to the Museum Association Code of Ethics and generally accepted codes of ethics, ethical guidelines and professional standards applicable in their fields, as published by reputable professional membership societies and organizations.

Museum staff, members of the Board of Trustees and other advisory committees, researchers, volunteers, interns, students etc. shall not maintain personal collections in Museum facilities. The only exceptions to this shall be personal book collections used for work purposes and personal collections determined to be reasonably outside of the scope of the individuals collecting on behalf of the Museum.

Collections acquired or possessed contrary to legal requirements may not be brought into Museum facilities.

Staff shall not provide valuations or market appraisals of collections or collection items except for official Museum purposes

All our resources, including collections, data, facilities, equipment and personnel, are to be used only for officially approved activities.

9 Legislation and Guidance

National and international laws and regulations to which due reference is made by Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales in implementing its Collections Management Policies are listed below.

9.1 National:

Control of Asbestos Regulation 2012
 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation 2002
 Copyright Act 1911, 1956
 Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003
 Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
 Copyright (Visually Impaired Person) Act 2002
 Data Protection Act 1998
 Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003
 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)
 Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act, 1976
 Environmental Information Regulation 2004
 Equality Act 2006

Fire Precautions Act 1971
Freedom of Information Act 2000
General Data Protection Regulations 2018
Government of Wales Act 1998
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016
Human Rights Act 1998
Human Tissue Act 2004
Import, Export and Customs Powers (Defence) Act, 1939
Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999
Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Merchant Shipping Act, 1894
Merchant Shipping Act, 1995
National Heritage Act, 1980
Museums and Galleries Act 1992
The Nagoya Protocol (Compliance) Regulations 2015
Protection of Wrecks Act, 1973
Protection of Military Remains Act, 1986
Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
Return of Cultural Objects Regulations, 1994
Sex Discrimination Act 1975
Treasure Act, 1996 [England, Wales and Northern Ireland]
Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981: including recent schedules

9.2 International:

EC Council Directive No. 93/7/EEC on the return of cultural objects unlawfully removed from the territory of a member state
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, 1973
Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD, 1992
UNESCO Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), 1975
Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act, United States 1990
UNESCO Convention and Protocol for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Hague Convention), 1954 and second protocol 1999
UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972
UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970
UNESCO Human Rights Commission Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of the Heritage of Indigenous Peoples, 1997
UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003
UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, 2001
UNIDROIT Convention on the Return of Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, 1995
United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Maatatua

Declaration), 1993
United Nations Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (2014)
World Archaeological Congress: The Vermilion Accord on Human Remains, 1989

9.3 Non-legislative guidelines:

Department for Culture, Media and Sport: The Treasure Act, 1996 - a Guide for Museum Curators and Local Government Archaeologists, 1997
Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Due Diligence Guidelines for Collecting and Borrowing Cultural Material: Combating Illicit Trade, 2005
Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums, 2005
Department of National Heritage: The Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice (England and Wales), 1997
ICOM: Code of Professional Ethics, 1986 (published with ICOM Statutes, 1990)
International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, 1988
International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants, 1969
International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, 1985
Museum Ethnographers' Group: Guidelines on Management of Human Remains, 1991 (revised 1994)
Museums & Galleries Commission series of Standards, 1992-1998
Museums & Galleries Commission Registration Scheme for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom, 1995
Museums Association: Code of Practice for Governing Bodies, 1994
Museums Association: Code of Conduct for People who Work in Museums, 1996
Museums Association: Collections for the Future. Report of a Museums Association Inquiry, 2005
Museums Association: Ethical Guidelines: 1. Acquisition, 1996
Museums Association: Ethical Guidelines: 2. Disposal, 1996
Museums Association: Code of Ethics, 2015
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council: Museum Accreditation Scheme, 2004
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council: The Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS), 2004
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council: Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries, 2002
National Museum Directors Conference: Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II Period - Statement of Principles and Proposed Actions, 1998
National Museum Directors Conference: Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II Period - Interim Report on Provenance Research and Information for Enquirers, 2000
National Museum Directors Conference: Too Much Stuff? Disposal from Museums, 2003
Public Sector Information Directive statement of Public Task
Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Sale of Works of Art by Public Bodies, 1964
Society of Antiquaries: Statement of Principles on Portable Antiquities, 1993
Society of Museum Archaeologists: Policy on Portable Antiquities, 1999

9.4 Museum Strategies and Other Policies which have Relevance to Collections Management

Audience Development Strategy
Collections Development Strategy
Community Engagement Strategy
Interpretation Strategy

Our Public Task Statement

Data Protection Policy
Digital Asset Management Policy
Digital Preservation Policy
Exhibition Strategy
Freedom of Information Policy
Information Governance Policy
Intellectual Property Rights Policy
Interpretation Strategy
Learning Strategy
Records Management Policy

Museum Display Guidelines

9.5 Other Key Publications

Archive Collection Policy Statements: checklist of suggested contents, The National Archives, 2004.

Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom, Standing Conference on Archives in Museums, 2002.

McLeod, J. and Hare, C. 2006. *How to Manage Records in the e-Environment*. Routledge.

Elliot, P. 2002. *Managing Archive Collections in Museums*. MDA.

Standard for Record Repositories, The National Archives, 2004.

The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping: the care of collections in historic houses open to the public, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005.

Accreditation Scheme for Museums in the United Kingdom: Accreditation Standard, Arts Council for England, 2014.

International Council of Museums (ICOM) *Code of Ethics for Museums*, 2013.

Code of Ethics for Museums, The Museums Association, 2014.

SPECTRUM: The UK Museum Documentation Standard, Version 4, Collections Trust.

Acquisition – Guidance on the Ethics and Practicalities of Acquisition, Museums Association, 2004.

Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation, D. Brown, Archaeological Archives Forum, 2007.

Collections for the Future, Museums Association, 2005.

Combating Illicit Trade: due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives when acquiring cultural material, DCMS, 2005.

Making Collections Effective, Museums Association, 2007.

UK Export Licensing for Cultural Goods – procedures and guidance for exporters of works of art and other cultural goods, DCMS, 1997.

BS ISO 14721, Space data and information transfer systems – open archival information systems – reference model.

BS ISO 15836, Information and documentation – the Dublin Core metadata element set.

Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books), Library of Congress, 2007.

ISAAR (CPF): International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families, International Council on Archives, 2003.

ISAD (G): General International Standard Archival Description, International Council on Archives, 1999.

Dewey Decimal Classification System (DDC), Online Computer Library Center (OCLC)

UK Archival Thesaurus (UKAT)

UNESCO Thesaurus: a structured list of descriptors for indexing and retrieving literature in the fields of education, science, social and human science, culture, communication and information, UNESCO, 1995.

BS ISO 15489-1:2001, Information and documentation – Records Management – Part 1: General.

PD ISO/TR 15489-2, Information and documentation – Records Management – Part 2: Guidelines.

Ethical guidelines 4 – Access, Museums Association.

BS 8300, Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice.

BS 5454, Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents.

PAS 197:2009 Code of practice for cultural collections management.

PAS 198:2012 Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections.

Standard Facilities Report, UK Registrars' Group.

Standard Facilities Report Security Supplement, UK Registrars' Group.

UK Courier Guidelines, UK Registrars' Group.

Display Case supplement, UK Registrars' Group.

Cassar, M. 1995. *Environmental Management: guidelines for museums and galleries*. Routledge.

Standards in the museum care series, Collections Link.

BS 4971:2002, Repair and allied processes for the conservation of documents – Recommendations.