

Collections Development Policy

Keswick Museum

2024 - 2029

Version 3

Name of Museum:

Keswick Museum and Art Gallery

Name of governing body:

Cumberland Council as Trustee of the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust.

Charity no. 1088956

Managing body:

Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Ltd.

Charity no. 1156330

Company no. 06051644

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 11/03/2025

Date on which this policy was approved by managing body: 16/12/2024

The policy will be published and reviewed at least every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: December 2029

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 Charitable objective of the **Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust** is to provide and maintain a public museum to advance education.

The statement of purpose of **Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Ltd** is:

Charitable Aims & activities:

The company is established to provide at the museum and art gallery, facilities and premises to advance the education of the public in the arts, crafts and natural and cultural history of Keswick and the surrounding region for the benefit of the public.

Keswick Museum & Art Gallery vision (adopted 2014):

To be a dynamic, popular and sustainable cultural attraction and learning venue run by and for local people as well as for visitors to the area.

We care for and share our unique collections and our whole site to provide an experience that will engage, entertain, inspire, intrigue and inform our audiences

- 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 collection at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery was founded by the local Literary and Scientific Society in 1873, with a particular focus on Natural Sciences. The collection of random, chance finds of local, natural and antiquarian interest was quickly focused under several local naturalists and geologists, including James Clifton Ward, to active systematic collecting. A number of pieces were bought including Flintoft's model of the Lake District, while the bequest of James Edmonson's butterfly collection forms a focus of the entomological collections today. The important literary collections were begun when Canon H D Rawnsley, one of the founders of the National Trust, became a Fitz Park Trustee in the early part of the twentieth century. His fame brought donations and bequest from many quarters including members of the Southey family. The collection is largely provenanced to Keswick and the North Lakes.

The museum was governed by the Fitz Park Trust until it ran into financial difficulties in 1994, at which time the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust was formed, with Allerdale Borough Council as Trustee. In 2003 the museum's collections were formally acknowledged as existing and the collection was transferred to the trust. Since the formation of the unitary authority in 2023, trusteeship of the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust has automatically transferred to Cumberland Council.

In 2007 the management of the museum was delegated to Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Limited from Allerdale Borough Council.

A major building refurbishment was completed in 2014, allowing more space for exhibitions as well as being able to develop more commercial activity to support the sustainability of the museum. The two main galleries were redeveloped into themed zones in 2020 to allow for smaller, more regular updates to displays.

3. An overview of current collections

Archaeology

The small collection comprises mainly Cumbrian artefacts, deriving from a number of sources including bequests, excavations and casual finds. This material can be placed in three categories: Pre-history, Roman, and Medieval.

i) Pre-history

There is a significant collection of worked Neolithic axes from the Langdale axe making sites including rough outs and finished axes, all found within the North Lakes area. Additionally there are several bronze weapons and two Iron Age bangles from the west of Thirlmere.

ii) Roman

The Roman collection is a small number of ceramic sherds from Samian to lower wares, including some from different local sites, and a few unprovenanced coins.

iii) Medieval

The collection is a small number of ceramic sherds from key local sites such as Lords Island, seat of the Earls of Derwentwater, and a lead seal and crucifix mould.

Tullie House Museum (now known as Tullie) in Carlisle holds the premier collection of archaeological material from the Allerdale area, ranging from excavation archives through to specific pieces such as the Cockermouth gold neck ring.

Social History

i) Costume & Textiles

The collection includes little costume material except for the Flather costume collection, comprising non-local 1920s and 30s daily wear and accessories. Also John Ruskin's court suit; Robert Southey's shoes; wedding and May Queen outfits.

ii) Domestic: leisure/pastimes

This collection includes pastimes, sport and music, especially the famous Musical Stones. The museum has three sets of stones and a significant archive of associated material.

iii) Work: industrial, commercial, maritime, agriculture

This area of the collection concentrates on pencil and bobbin manufacture; Cockermouth, Keswick & Penrith Railway; Keswick Gas, Light & Coke Company; tourism & hospitality; shops; quarrying & mining (very little material).

iv) Community: schools, religion, political/military

The collection includes local primary and secondary schools; churches; Keswick Convention; festivals; celebrities such as Sir J G Woodford. The collection features a significant model - Flintoft's relief map of Cumbria, made in 1834.

Natural Sciences

i) Vertebrate Zoology

The collection includes the display collection of mounted British birds and mammals, some not found in Cumbria today, some osteological material, and several hundred clutches of birds eggs and nests.

This collection at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery formed the original basis of the museum and most specimens date from the nineteenth and twentieth century. Most is of local and regional significance with some specimens of national interest, such as the vendace, a local relict of the ice age, together with published examples of taxidermy, for example, Greenwell Blakett's Buzzard. Most have close associations with notable local naturalists such as Joseph Flintoft, and Linneas Eden Hope who helped develop the collections.

ii) Invertebrate Zoology

Keswick Museum houses a large entomological collection of mainly British Lepidoptera and Micro-Lepidoptera, and a comprehensive collection of local Coleoptera. The collection includes fish, reptiles, and amphibians, preserved wet, dried and mounted, with a significant collection of freshwater and marine shells from Britain and the world.

iii) Botany

The herbarium at Keswick Museum and Art Gallery includes over 1000 sheets of pressed material.

iv) Geology (rocks, minerals and fossils)

Keswick Museum and Art Gallery contains an important collection of rocks, minerals and fossils including the collection assembled by James Clifton Ward who surveyed the geology of Keswick for the British Geological Survey. The size and information associated with elements of this collection makes it of regional significance.

The geology collection contains a good balance of rocks, minerals & fossils, mostly from local sites and well representing the complex local geology, industrial activity and the work of important nineteenth century collectors. A large proportion of the mineral and rocks are from named collections, including those of Ward, Robert Harkness, John Postlethwaite and Jonathan Otley, all early geology pioneers. The museum also holds a small collection of minerals collected by John Ruskin and has specimens donated by twentieth century geologists such as Edgar Shackleton. Cumbria has the greatest number of mineral species in the country and the minerals of the Caldbeck Fells, an internationally important mineralogical area, now collecting restricted, are well represented, including many irreplaceable specimens. Local commercial exploitation and use of stone is also documented in the collections. Graptolites and other marine fauna of the Skiddaw Slates are well represented in the fossil collection, with some type and figured material of national importance. Plant fossils of the Coal Measures are also well represented and the museum has one specimen of reptile footprints in Eden Valley Sandstone.

Fine and Decorative Art

i) Fine Art (Oils, Prints, Watercolours)

A collection of prints, watercolours, oils and drawings covering the period c.1700 to the present day, with the majority of the works dating from the nineteenth century. The collection is primarily of works on paper, of regional significance. The exceptions are nationally important works by Nash and Westall, primarily of nineteenth century Southey family portraits and contemporary views, and a significant collection of watercolours and etchings by Brangwyn. Other notable artists include Sir Charles Holmes, Collingwood, and Longmire. The easel paintings are again mainly nineteenth century in date and of regional importance, though the collection does include a number of works by James Durden; a portrait of Robert Southey by Opie; a Redpath oil; and a large oil of Waterfall at Keswick by Joseph Farington.

ii) Metal and Glass

The collection mainly consists of Arts & Craft metal work from the Keswick School of Industrial Arts (KSIA), founded by Canon H D and Edith Rawnsley in 1884. The collection includes some early pieces of repousse and chased copper articles by named artists including W H Mawson, and a portrait of Rawnsley in bronze relief by Edith Maryon. There are also various sporting trophies and shields, some silver, but the bulk is later stainless steel commemorative ware. There are also some KSIA fixtures and fittings in the building itself including electroliers by members of the KSIA. The Goldscope Cup is a fine piece of silversmithing, but its main importance lies in the locally sourced silver. There is a nationally important bust of Hugh Walpole by Jacob Epstein.

iii) Ceramics

The museum holds a very small collection of ceramics including Robert Southey's tea service, and a cup & saucer from Peter Crosthwaite's museum reputedly made for Napoleon.

iv) Furniture

A small eclectic collection includes a large parish trunk; John Peel's chair; Southey's chair and writing desk; Wonderful Walker bobbin chair; Radcliffe arms chair.

Archive Material

The core of the archive is the literary collection of manuscripts; letters, poems and prose and associated material of the Lake Poets and writers, especially Robert Southey who lived in Keswick for 40 years, and, to a lesser degree his contemporaries; William Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Later authors Hugh Walpole, Canon H D Rawnsley and John Ruskin are also well represented. The Southey collection has been built up over several decades primarily from donations and bequests made by members of the Southey family, including a recent bequest of many unpublished letters and early manuscripts of published poems. It is an internationally important archive, in the top 10 repositories of Southey material in the UK. The museum also holds a quantity of correspondence and manuscript material from Peter Crosthwaite.

The museum has an important collection of geological maps associated with James Clifton Ward, who surveyed the area for the British Geological Survey, and other locally significant archives, including that of the Fitz Park Trust who used to own and manage the museum. The strengths of the library lie in the areas of early tourism and nineteenth century guidebooks, and geology, and the museum holds a run of the weekly newspaper, the English Lakes Visitor & Keswick Guardian, from the 1870s to 1910. The photographic archive details the work of important local photographers; the Abrahams, Maysons and Pettitts. The Abrahams firm in particular holds national significance as photographers of pioneering mountaineering climbs locally and elsewhere.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The geographical area which future collecting activity relates to will be Keswick and the Derwent Seven Parishes: Borrowdale, St Johns, Castlerigg & Wythburn, Underskiddaw, Bassenthwaite, Threlkeld, Above Derwent. Potential donors with material from other areas will be referred to the relevant museum.

The collection spans pre-history to the present day.

There is a commitment to targeted contemporary collecting based on identified themes or groups that are currently underrepresented in the collection.

Due to limited storage and display space, only unique items with good provenance and which contribute clearly to the story of the area, complementing current collections, will be collected. Large items will not generally be collected except in exceptional circumstances.

Archaeology

It is not possible for the museum to accept large archives from excavations due to storage limitations. Currently Tullie at Carlisle in partnership with the Carlisle Archaeological Unit serves as the main repository for such collections from Allerdale. In future Tullie will only act as a repository for excavation archives from sites within Carlisle District. The exceptions to this are excavations that are carried out under the auspices of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archive Society, and re-excavated sites where the archive already sits in Tullie. The same criteria apply to archaeological acquisitions other than archive material.

All casual archaeological finds relating to Keswick Museum and Art Gallery are notified to the Portable Antiquities Reporting Officer for the area.

Responsibility for the storage of excavation archives from sites in Keswick and its immediate area (which fall outside the Tullie criteria listed above) could be said to sit within the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery collecting area. The museum will not usually accept material of this sort. Although the museum is not unusual in having to adopt this position, the potential for problems arising in the future from this stance should not be ignored, and officers will look to work with Tullie and other organisations to develop protocols and solutions to this complex and difficult situation.

Future collecting priorities need to be developed in partnership with Tullie and the Senhouse Museum. High quality, accurately provenanced small finds which help to tell the story of human occupation of the area may be added to the collection.

Social History

There are few objects in the collection reflecting life in the area 1950 – present day. Over the course of this policy we will work towards enabling the museum to collect objects and photographs to fill this gap.

i) Personal: Costume & Textiles

Themes collected: rites of passage; special local events; items made within the collecting area.

Only relevant, unique items which may be boxed comfortably and are in good condition will be considered as there is currently no hanging space available. Items must be well provenanced and clearly tell a story about the local area as well as being display-worthy.

Other Personal: personal papers, belongings and photographs illustrating an individual's experience of the area, where well provenanced, may be collected. They must be in good condition and help to tell a story about the local area. Particularly from individuals who have played an important or typical part in the area's history or relating to a significant event in the area's history, building on existing collections about local Keswick Characters e.g. Peter Crosthwaite, Jonathan Otley, etc.

ii) Domestic: leisure/pastimes

Themes collected: items made or used within homes in the collecting area, particularly items telling a local story; textile crafts e.g. Ruskin Lace, wool crafts.

Items relating to mountaineering that are offered to the museum will generally be directed to the Mountain Heritage Trust in the first instance, and thereafter may only be collected after consultation with the Mountain Heritage Trust.

iii) Work

Particular themes collected: KSIA business records, bobbin making, mining; pencil making; tourism – hotels, laundry, walking guides, boating; town & village crafts.

Accessions will mainly be small objects and photographs. Large machinery/tools will not be collected but may be documented by photography.

iv) Community

Particular themes to be built on: schools, theatre; Cumberland sports – wrestling, hunting, fell running, curling, walking, skating.

Accessions will mainly be small objects and photographs reflecting personal experience. Public records will be lodged with Cumbria Archive Service.

Natural Sciences

i) Vertebrate Zoology

During the course of this policy future specimens will only be acquired if they have a local history context being, for example, the clearly identified work of a local tradesman; to add to items from an existing collector; to replace existing collections; or fill gaps in existing collections.

ii) Invertebrate Zoology

Material will only be acquired to replace existing collections or to fill gaps in existing collections.

iii) Botany

Material will only be acquired to replace existing collections or to fill gaps in existing collections.

iv) Geology (rocks, minerals and fossils)

Only exceptional samples will be collected as the collection is large and there is currently limited scope for study or display. Curator to consult with Tullie / Kendal Museum before acquisition.

Fine and Decorative Art

i) Fine Art (Oils, Prints, Watercolours)

Collecting themes: Keswick artists; local scenes by notable Cumbrian artists (particularly 20th century and 18th century).

ii) Metal and Glass

Particular efforts will be made to acquire material from the Keswick School of Industrial Arts along with contextual information relating to the school.

iii) Ceramics

This collection should be considered to be closed, unless material with a strong local provenance is offered to the museum.

iv) Furniture

Due to restrictions in storage and display space the museum will only collect exceptional pieces of furniture which are well provenanced and in good condition, e.g. KSIA carved wood.

Archive Material and photographs

Keswick Museum will collect relevant personal, domestic and community archives and photographs but public records will be directed to Cumbria Archive Service.

Items associated with Wordsworth and the Romantics, with the exception of Robert Southey, that are offered to the museum will be directed towards Wordsworth Grasmere.

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.
- 5.3 Rationalisation is a key goal owing to a regrettable but ongoing and severe shortage of storage space. There are a number of duplicate or near-duplicate items in the collection, as well as objects that are judged to fall entirely outside the collecting policy of the museum.

5.4 Priorities for rationalisation include the following (with no single priority necessarily constituting grounds for action):

- Items that do not meet the collecting policy;
- Items that are duplicated:
 - Defined as an object that is substantially similar to another accessioned item, and which as a result is highly unlikely to be of interest and future use;
 - Duplication alone may not be sound grounds for transfer or disposal, but duplicate objects that also meet other criteria in this list are to be prioritised in any selection process;
- Items that are in poor condition and which cannot easily or justifiably undergo conservation work:
 - Judgement as to whether an object should undergo restorative conservation will in part depend upon its significance and rarity;
- Items that are irreversibly deteriorating and that are judged unsavable:
 - Early plastics are a particular focus under this criteria, not least because their irreversible degradation can also harm other objects within the collection;
- Objects that contain hazardous materials that are difficult to make safe or would be very costly to make safe:
 - Whether the cost is justified will depend on their significance and rarity;
- Unidentified or miscellaneous parts:
 - This most likely covers boxes or small parts that have become divorced from their parent object, of which most are catalogued with temporary numbers;
 - Careful research should always be conducted into an orphaned item to ensure that its parent cannot be found; some items may be judged suitable for accessioning into the collection in their own right;
 - Instrument boxes that have become separated from their contents should not be considered viable for disposal unless they also meet other criteria on this list;
- Items that have no provenance:
 - Meeting this criteria alone does not provide grounds for rationalisation, but may be a determining factor in selecting items that also meet other criteria in this list (e.g. which duplicate is a candidate for disposal).

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 Museums 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.

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

Tullie

Helena Thompson Museum

Senhouse Roman Museum

The Beacon Museum

Kendal Museum

Lakeland Arts

Maryport Maritime Museum

Penrith & Eden Museum

The Mountain Heritage Trust

Wordsworth Grasmere

8. Archival holdings

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 (3rd ed., 2002). The museum will also adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its acquisition, care and management of archives collections.

9. Acquisition

- 9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

- 9.1.1 The decision to acquire objects for the museum collection is made by curatorial staff employed by Keswick Museum and Art Gallery

Management Ltd., acting as the designated person responsible for the collection on behalf of Cumberland Council. The Curator (or other senior curatorial staff member if there is no Curator) has final decision-making authority over acquisitions. Where relevant, outside advice may be solicited from members of the local community and experts.

- 9.1.2 If the item's value is £1000 or over or is perceived to be over £1000 then Cumberland Council's appropriate officer will be consulted as to the Council's view in acquiring the item. This is to ensure the correct insurance can be put in place by Cumberland Council.
 - 9.1.3 The museum will exercise 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.
 - 9.1.4 Decisions will be made in an open and transparent way and with due regard to all the appropriate guidance and documentation.
 - 9.1.5 Items may then be formally accessioned by curatorial staff on behalf of Cumberland Council. Curatorial staff must keep a record of accessioned objects for Cumberland Council audit purposes.
 - 9.1.6 In the event that no staff with appropriate curatorial experience or training are employed by Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Ltd, responsibility for acquisitions and disposals will revert back to Cumberland Council as the sole trustee of the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust.
- 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 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 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 in accordance with 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, return to donor, exchange, sale, reuse, or as a last resort – destruction.
- 16.5 In order to take a proportional approach to disposal, the museum has a system of delegated authority for some deaccessioning decisions. Curatorial staff employed by Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Ltd will have devolved responsibility for making reviews and any subsequent recommendations for disposal on behalf of Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust. Disposals will be presented by curatorial staff to management and the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Ltd board, who will ensure legal and ethical guidelines are followed on behalf of the governing body.
- 16.6 In the event that no staff with appropriate curatorial experience or training are employed by Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Management Ltd, decisions on acquisitions and disposals will revert back to Cumberland Council as the sole trustee of the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery Trust.
- 16.7 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.
- 16.8 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.
- 16.9 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 another institution or organisation within the public domain, including groups that provide regular public access.

- 16.10 If no organisation is identified directly, then the museum sector and other relevant groups will be informed of the intention to dispose of the material through the Museums Association's Find an Object listing service and/or other relevant channels.
- 16.11 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 institutions or organisations within the public domain or providing regular public access. 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 will consider whether another method of transfer, reuse, or disposal might be suitable, or revisit the decision to dispose of the item.
- 16.12 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the museum and its collections. This might include care of, access to, and engagement with the collection but is not likely to include short-term funding of existing posts or current activities. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way.
- 16.13 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.
- 16.14 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

- 16.15 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.16 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.17 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.
- 16.18 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.

- 16.19 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.
- 16.20 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.