



CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum

Acquisition and Disposal Policy

To be Adopted September 2011

To be Approved by Cheltenham Borough Council September 2011

This policy is due for review in September 2016

1 Museum's statement of purpose

Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum's mission statement is:

"To preserve and develop Cheltenham's unique collections for the future – and to make them accessible to an increasingly broad public in a way that communicates, educates and inspires".

This links to the Museums' Association definition of a museum (1998)

'Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society.' This definition includes art galleries with collections of works of art, as well as museums with historical collections of objects.

2 Existing collections, including the subjects or themes for collecting and the periods of time and /or geographic areas to which the collections relate

Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum (hereafter referred to as 'the museum') holds significant collections in the following areas –

- Fine Art : British and foreign paintings, drawings and prints from the 16th century onwards, notably a major collection of 17th- and 19th- century Flemish, Dutch and Belgian works and English watercolours from the 18th century to the present day.
- Decorative Art : British and Continental European ceramics; British furniture and clocks, glass, metalwork and treen. In terms of date, these collections span a period from the 16th century to the present day, a particular strength being the late 18th- to early 19th-century, reflecting Cheltenham's history as a regency town.
- Oriental Art : Ceramics, costume, armour and artefacts relating mainly to China (including Chinese ceramics exported to India and the Middle East) and Japan from the 9th century to present day.
- Costume & Textiles : Women's, men's and children's main garments, underwear and accessories from the 17th century onwards, with a particular strength in women's 19th-century dress and a particular emphasis on items from Cheltenham shops and Anglo-Indian dress.
- The Arts & Crafts Movement : Books, ceramics, furniture, metalwork, paintings and textiles relating to the English Arts & Crafts Movement from the 1860s to the present day, with an associated collection of archives, designs and drawings. In 1998 this collection was Designated as being of national importance.
- Archaeology : Prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval archaeology from North Gloucestershire; Egyptian and Greco-Roman artefacts.
- Local History : Printed ephemera, photographs, postcards, topographical prints and objects relating to the history of Cheltenham, including over

3000 theatre playbills and material pertaining to the composer Gustav Holst and the Antarctic explorer Edward Wilson, and their families.

- Numismatics : British and foreign coins from the Roman Empire to the 21st century; British tokens, medals and military decorations from the 17th century onwards.
- Firearms and edged weapons : British and Continental European examples from the 18th to early 20th century.
- Natural Sciences : Geology, herbaria, eggs, shells and examples of taxidermy.
- Social History : objects relating to English domestic, personal and working life from the 17th century to the present day.
- Ethnography : Non-European domestic, military and ritual items, in particular from West Africa, the Middle East and the Indian sub-Continent.

Separate collections of material are maintained by the Museum Education & Outreach Service, for use with schools and other groups, and by the 'Museum Take-Away' Service, for loan to schools and other groups and individuals. These collections mainly comprise social and natural history specimens.

2a Criteria governing future collecting policy, including the subjects or themes for collecting

The museum will maintain all its present collections, and, where appropriate, enhance those collections by building on present strengths and filling gaps, by purchase, gift or bequest, as follows -

Fine Art

- i Develop the British and foreign schools collections from the 16th century onwards.
- ii Develop the collection of English watercolours, drawings and prints from the 18th century onwards.
- iii Acquire examples of the work of artists of all periods with a connection to the historic county of Gloucestershire, having due regard to the collecting policies of other Accredited museums.
- iv Acquire British art of the 20th and 21st century, particularly that which fills gaps in the existing collection and brings the collection up to date.
- v Acquire paintings and drawings showing views of Cheltenham from the 18th century to the present day.
- vi Acquire preparatory drawings and paintings for works already held in the collection.

Decorative Art

- i Ceramics : develop the collection of British ceramics from the 16th century to the present day, with particular reference to 19th- to 21st-century wares, and local ceramics.
- ii Furniture : develop the collection of British, including colonial, furniture and clocks from the 16th century to the present day, and local glassmakers (of 20th and 21st centuries).
- iii Glass : develop the collection of British and Continental European glass from the 17th century to the present day.
- iv Metalwork : develop the collection of British metalwork from the 16th century to the present day, with particular reference to the collection of pewter.
- v Treen : develop the collection of British treen from the 17th century to the present day.
- vi Dutch Decorative Arts : develop a collection of 17th- century Flemish and Dutch ceramics, furniture, glass, metalwork and textiles, to complement the paintings collection in this area.

Oriental Art

Develop the collections of Oriental work from the 9th century onwards, with particular reference to the China/India connection from the 14th to 20th century.

Costume and textiles

Develop the collection of 18th- to 21st-century costume and textiles, with a specific connection to Cheltenham people (including those living and working in the former British Empire), and to Cheltenham shops.

The Arts & Crafts Movement

- I Develop the collection of books, building arts, ceramics, furniture, metalwork, paintings and textiles relating to the English Arts & Crafts Movement from the 1860s to the 1940s. The emphasis will be on filling gaps in the collections, particularly work by Philip Webb, A. H. Mackmurdo and the Century Guild, May Morris, Alexander Fisher, W. Anning Bell, the Keswick School of Art, and the Newlyn School and other Homes Arts and Industries Associations.
- ii Develop the collection of archives, designs and drawings relating to the English Arts & Crafts Movement.
- iii Develop the collection to include comparative examples of Scottish, Irish, Continental European and North American work.

- iv Develop the collection of contemporary work in the Arts & Crafts spirit.

Archaeology

By agreement with the four other Gloucestershire museums that collect excavated material (Corinium Museum, Cirencester; Dean Heritage Museum; Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery and the Museum in the Park, Stroud), the museum will only acquire archaeological finds and archives from Cheltenham district (including Charlton Kings, Leckhampton & Up Hatherley, Prestbury and Swindon Village) and from the following civil parishes within Tewkesbury district -

Alderton	Snowshill
Ashchurch	Southam
	Stanton
Bishops Cleeve	Stanway
Boddington	Staverton
Buckland	Stoke Orchard
Deerhurst	Sudeley
Dumbleton	Teddington
Elmstone Hardwicke	Tewkesbury
Gotherington	Toddington
Hawling	Twyning
Leigh	Uckington
Up Hatherley	
Oxenton	Walton Cardiff
Prescott	Winchcombe
Shurdington	Woodmancote

Material of all periods, from prehistory to the Industrial Revolution, will be accepted into the collection.

New procedures for the transfer to the museum of archaeological archives resulting from developer-funded fieldwork were implemented in October 2001 and were revised in October 2006.

The museum will not collect non-local archaeological material, including Egyptian and Greco-Roman objects.

Local History

- i Develop the collection of topographical prints, photographs and postcards relating to Cheltenham from the late 18th century onwards.
- ii Develop the collection of 18th- to 21st- century printed ephemera and theatre playbills relating to Cheltenham, but not manuscript items, which are deposited by agreement at the Gloucestershire Record Office.
- iii Develop the collection of three-dimensional items relating to Cheltenham from the 17th century onwards.

- iv Develop the collection of material relating to notable inhabitants of Cheltenham from the 17th century onwards, and in particular Dr. Edward Wilson and his family in Cheltenham.

Numismatics

Develop the collection of tokens, medals and military decorations relating to Cheltenham and its inhabitants from the 17th century onwards.

Firearms and edged weapons

Acquire items that were manufactured in Cheltenham during the 19th and 20th century, or which are directly associated with its inhabitants from the 17th century onwards.

Natural Sciences

The existing collections will not be added to unless a Natural Sciences Curator is appointed, at which time this policy will be reviewed.

Social History

Only items, from the 17th-century onwards, with a proven connection to Cheltenham and its inhabitants will be acquired.

Ethnography

Develop the collections relating to Cheltenham's connections with the former British Empire, and in particular West Africa and the Indian sub-Continent, from the 18th to 21st century.

Museum Education & Outreach Service

All new material acquired is for use with schools and other groups, or for loan through the 'Museum Take-Away' Service, and reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum and/or the Service's work in the community. The material is obtained by purchasing items from outside sources, and by accepting donations from members of the public, expressly for educational use.

3 Period of time and/or geographical area to which collecting relates

The period of time and geographical areas from which the museum collects vary considerably according to the individual collection. In terms of period of time, this ranges from prehistoric archaeology to contemporary art and craft. In terms of geographical area, the Local History collection focuses on the present Cheltenham district, and the archaeology collection on Cheltenham and part of Tewkesbury district, while the Designated Arts & Crafts Movement

and Decorative Art collections have an England-wide remit. The Fine Art collection seeks to acquire items from Continental Europe as well as Britain, while by definition, the Oriental and Ethnography collections comprise material from much further afield.

An indication of the period of time and geographical area for collecting has been provided in the context of each individual collection in section 2, above.

4 Limitations on collecting

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as inadequate staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

5 Collecting policies of other museums

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 specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museums :

Other Registered or Accredited museums within Gloucestershire which collect material of local (i.e. Gloucestershire) origin. These are Corinium Museum, Cirencester; Dean Heritage Museum; Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery and Folk Museum; Jenner Museum, Berkeley; Museum in the Park, Stroud; Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum; Tewkesbury Borough Museum; Winchcombe Folk & Police Museum; Wotton-under-Edge Heritage Centre. The local agreement regarding the deposit of archaeological finds and archives is noted in section 2, above.

The Victoria & Albert Museum, the Crafts Study Centre at the University for the Creative Arts Gordon Russell Museum with regard to the Arts & Crafts Movement collection.

The Holst Birthplace Museum with regard to material relating to Gustav Holst and his family.

The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum collections with regard to material relating to Cheltenham's connections with the former British Empire.

6 Policy review procedure

The Acquisition and Disposal Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above.

The Regional MLA / Museum Galleries Scotland / NIMC / CyMAL or its successors will be notified of any changes to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

7 Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

8 Acquisition procedures

- a** 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.
- b** In particular, 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).
- c** 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.
- d** 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.
- e** The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (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. In England, Northern Ireland and Wales the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.
- f** Any exceptions to the above clauses 8a, 8b, 8c, or 8e will only be because the museum is either: acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or

acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded; or acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970. 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.

- g** As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the “Guidance for the care of human remains in museums” issued by DCMS in 2005.

9 Spoliation

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.

10 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the museum’s professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the “Guidance for the care of human remains in museums” issued by DCMS in 2005) , objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 12a-12d, 12g and 12s below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate. 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”.

11 Management of archives

As the museum holds / intends to acquire 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).

12 Disposal procedures

- a** The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency
- b** By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum’s collection.
- c** The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.

- d** 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.
- e** **When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 12g-12o will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.**

HERE CABINET NEEDS TO DECIDE on which paragraph to include under 12f – with reference to the Cabinet Report

[In 12f, please include one of the following two paragraphs]

- f** **In exceptional cases, the disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below in paragraphs 12g-12m and 12o will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:**
- **the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection,**
 - **the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit),**
 - **the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored.**

OR

- f** **The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons**
- g** Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, 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 the 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. External 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.
- h** 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 of the collection acting alone.
- i.** Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied 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 MLA.

- j** The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.
- k** Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. 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.
- l** If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly 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 an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- m** 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.
- n** The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Documenting disposal

- o** 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 de-accession and disposal.