



Accreditation Scheme for Museums
and Galleries in the United Kingdom

Interim Collections Development Policy 2025-2027



Name of museum:

The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum (hereafter referred to as 'The Wilson')

Name of governing body:

The Cheltenham Trust (hereafter referred to as the 'governing body' or 'TCT')

The collections are managed on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) by The Cheltenham Trust (TCT) in line with national standards and as part of a Service Level Agreement.

Cheltenham Borough Council (hereafter referred to as the 'custodian' or 'CBC')

The Wilson collections are public collections for which the council is the legal custodian and has the ultimate responsibility to approve deaccessioning recommendations proposed by the TCT.

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

April 2025

Policy review procedure:

Policy to be reviewed by The Wilson staff and escalated to The Cheltenham Trust Board and Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet for approval as part of the Management Agreement.

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Throughout 2025 and 2026 The Wilson is reinterpreting and redisplaying its museum collections galleries as part of the National Lottery Heritage Funded 'Cheltenham's BIG Museum Project'. This project includes a year-long public consultation which will form our understanding of the communities we serve and the objects and stories they connect with. Once the museum collections galleries reopen, the Wilson's Collections Development Policy will be reviewed and developed using the data collected from Cheltenham's BIG Museum Project.

Date at which this policy is due for review:

2027

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:

The Wilson aims to be a regional centre of excellence for all ages. It is friendly and curious in everything that it does and provides creative space for people to engage with Cheltenham's stories through exhibitions, displays, art, crafts, and events. We do this by caring for and interpreting our outstanding collections to support discovery, enjoyment and learning for all.

1.2 Cheltenham Borough Council and The Cheltenham Trust will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3 By definition, the Wilson has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. CBC and TCT 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 Wilson 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 Wilson 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 CBC and TCT will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

2

History of the collections

The **Baron de Ferrieres** started off the collections with a bequest of forty-three Dutch and Flemish paintings, along with £1,000 towards the cost of an art gallery to display them in. This was opened as Cheltenham Art Gallery in 1899.

The **fine art collection** has evolved since then to include many works by predominately British artists, particularly Gloucestershire based artists, and scenes of Gloucestershire feature strongly. The collection comprises both oil paintings and an extensive collection of works on paper which includes an important collection of original prints. Since the 1920s a significant collection of twentieth century work has been developed including works by artists such as Paul Nash, Stanley Spencer and Vanessa Bell.

Meanwhile, **Edward Thomas Wilson**, a local doctor (and father of the Antarctic explorer Edward Adrian Wilson) campaigned to add archaeology, natural history and objects of local interest to the collections, resulting in the opening of a museum section in 1907. The existing art gallery was renamed to accommodate this change to Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum.

The **Wilson Family Collection** evolved from both the founder, Edward Thomas Wilson giving flints and natural history specimens from the area, and his daughter in law, Oriana Wilson, donating the Antarctic material that belonged to her husband, Edward Adrian Wilson. Other family members have added to this, with large donations in 1995, and again in 2016 and 2018.

The **Natural Science Collections** hold an important geology collection of around 14,000 specimens, some as old as 600 million years, from the Cheltenham area. Its strength lies in Jurassic fossils and rocks, including some type specimens. The origins of the collection date to 1888 when Charles Peirson presented the town with a 'large collection of fossils', and after The Wilson opened in 1907 other collections such as Buckman, Gray, Wild and Mapp donated specimens. We even have minerals from the engineer, Robert Stephenson. There is also a small but significant collection of Antarctic rocks brought back from the Scott expeditions. There is also a collection of herbaria from Cheltenham, including the personal collections of ET and EA Wilson, shells, eggs and some examples of local Victorian taxidermy.



Social history has been key collecting areas since 1907 both by donation and purchase. The aim has been to capture the history of the town from its start as a Spa Town, through its development to the commercial town we have today. The collections include items illustrating the town's industries, shops, and households as well as education, religious and cultural backgrounds. They are made up of 3- dimensional objects, topographical prints, photographs, and printed ephemera including a collection of over 5000 theatre playbills: the largest in a provincial museum. The items relate both to Cheltenham and the adjacent rural areas.

Archaeology has also been integral to the collections since 1907, with some Cheltenham, but mainly North Cotswolds material. Since the 1970s, the parishes from which each of the counties' museum services collect have been clearly defined. Material from several parishes within Tewkesbury 3 Collections Development Policy 2019 District (which does not maintain a professional museum service) is collected by The Wilson. (See separate archaeology policy)

The **Numismatics Collection** is small but significant collection of local national and international coins and medals. The first item was a George III medal given in 1901, followed two years later by a collection of Roman coins. Since then, the collection has been added to as items have been donated. Two significant hoards were purchased in 1968 and 1997, the Willesley hoard of Romano British coins, and the Winchcombe Hoard of 251 late medieval coins.

The **World Cultures Collection** grew from the early 20th century, when Cheltenham became a popular retirement town for colonial administrators and military personnel. They brought with them their African and Indian artefacts, and these were gradually added to The Wilson collections. In 1923 The Wilson acquired on loan a large collection of Chinese ceramics ranging from the Yuan to the Qing dynasty from Gloucester-born Stanley Berkeley Smith. This was bequeathed in 1955, and the collection rationalised and then added to develop it for earlier dynasties and contemporary ceramics.

Designated in 1998, the **Arts and Crafts Movement Collection** started in the 1920s with the curator Daniel Herdman, recognising the significance of the material, and working with designers to exhibit and add their work to The Wilson collections. He also rescued many pieces, including the Gimson archive, from certain destruction. Since the 1970s the collection has been developed to give a national overview with work by William Morris, C.F.A. Voysey, M.H. Baillie Scott, Eric Gill and many others, and includes significant archival collections.



In 1990 a further development was made to the Designated Arts and Crafts Movement Collection with the acquisition of **The Emery Walker Library**, the best surviving intact library relating to the Private Press Movement. The library includes Emery Walker's own books, including a complete run of Kelmscott Press books, Doves Press, Ashendene Press letters, photographs and items relating to his career in printing as well as handwritten manuscripts by William and May Morris, and John Ruskin.

The Wilson holds a significant collection of other **decorative arts**, including English ceramics, metalwork, furniture, clocks and glass from the 18th to 20th century, with the earlier focus of collecting on the earlier period, but from the 1930s onwards collecting has also had a contemporary and local focus, particularly of Gloucestershire-based makers and companies. In 1976 a significant collection of 17th and 18th century pewter and treen was acquired from the estate of local antiques dealer and collector AH Isher. In 1989 19th and 20th pieces were acquired through the 1989 Summerfield bequest. The studio pottery collection has focused on the Winchcombe Pottery and the subsequent careers of associated potters. More recently work by contemporary makers that corresponds to other areas of the collections has been acquired, including Felicity Aylieff and Edmund de Waal.

The **textile collection** started in 1907, the bulk of the collection has been given to The Wilson and is primarily domestic, reflecting home life and pastimes. It is mainly 19th century and first half of the 20th century. The collection includes a small but significant collection of 19th century quilts and coverlets. Textiles by Arts and Crafts Movement designers were added to the Arts and Crafts Movement Collection from 1984 including Morris and Company (including May Morris), Selwyn Image, Walter Crane, Barron and Larcher, Theo Moorman Gordon Russell and others contributing to The Wilson's focus on this significant collection.

Gustav Holst Collection is held by Cheltenham Borough Council and is a highly significant archive of material relating to Gustav Holst and his family including autograph manuscripts, letters, photographs, scrapbooks, furniture and musical instruments. The bulk of the collection was donated to Cheltenham Borough Council in the years following Holst's death by his widow and daughter, particularly following 4 Collections Development Policy 2019 the opening of the Holst Birthplace Museum in 1974, in which Imogen Holst, Holst's daughter, was closely involved. The Holst Birthplace Trust, now a separate independent museum, holds this collection which is on loan from The Cheltenham Trust.



The **Costume Collection** started collecting costume in 1900, a year after the art gallery opened and 13 years before The Wilson opened as an extension of the then art gallery. Most of the collection has been given to The Wilson, with very few purchases. The collection reflects Cheltenham's history as a fashionable spa town, and its colonial past, in particular its connections with 19th century India. Some nationally significant examples have been given to The Wilson by families with these stories including the Whinyates family who lived in Cheltenham and India during the 19th century.

Prior to the Costume Museum opening in the early 1980s there was a focus on collecting in areas which were required to provide a comprehensive history of dress at The Wilson including menswear and dress from Cheltenham shops. The costume museum opened at the Pittville Pump Room in 1983 and closed in 1999. There is very little in the collection post 1980s.

The **Education and Handling Collection** grew from 1973 occasional loans were made to local schools, and the County Council contributed an annual small amount to enable county schools to participate. A new post of Museums Education Officer was created in around 1974, to establish an extensive school loans service. This collection has been continually developed since the 1970s with aspects relating to all collecting areas of the art gallery and museum and linking to the National Curriculum. From the early 2000s the collection broadened its reach to other users including universities, colleges, and residential care homes.

3

An overview of current collections

The Wilson holds for Cheltenham Borough Council significant core 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, sculpture from the 18th century to the present day and modern media from the 20th and 21st century. The collection is not a historical survey collection.

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.



Asian Art: Ceramics, costume, armour, and artefacts relating mainly to China (including Chinese ceramics exported to India and the Middle East), India and Japan from prehistory to the present day.

Costume: 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 Cheltenham's colonial past including women's early 19th century dress and men's uniform.

Textiles: Patchwork quilts from the early 19th century to the early 20th century; lace, mostly 19th century, and a mixture of machine, bobbin and needle laces; samplers ranging from mid-17th-century to the 18th–20th centuries and other hand and machine embroideries fans and accessories; Arts and Crafts Movement textiles; and textiles by Gloucestershire-based studio designer/makers.

The Arts and Crafts Movement: Books, ceramics, furniture, metalwork, woodwork, paintings, drawings and prints, jewellery, glass, plaster, textiles, and other decorative, fine, and building arts relating to the English Arts and Crafts Movement from the 1860s to the present day, the associated Private Press Movement, and with an associated collection of archives, designs, drawings, and personal records such as letters, diaries, photographs etc. In 1998 this collection was Designated as being of national importance.

Archaeology: Prehistoric, Romano-British, Saxon, and Medieval archaeology from Cheltenham and selected parishes of North Gloucestershire. There are a small number of Egyptian and Greco-Roman artefacts giving international context, but no further collecting of non-local archaeology is taking place in this area.

Social History: Printed ephemera, photographs, postcards, topographical prints, and objects relating to the history of Cheltenham, including over 5000 theatre playbills. The collection is particularly strong on the Regency period, the development of the town in the 19th century, important local industries such as H H Martyn, UCAL, and Andy's Candys and the slum clearances in the early 20th century. Also including objects relating to English domestic, personal, and working life from the 17th century to the present day. No active collecting is made in this collecting area unless it is from Cheltenham.

Gustav Holst: material pertaining to the composer and his family (majority on loan to Holst Birthplace Trust).

Wilson Family Collection: material (archival, art and artefacts) relating to the Antarctic explorer, Edward Adrian Wilson, his father Edward Thomas Wilson and Uncle Sir Charles Wilson and their families. Also, wider Antarctic material with a direct relationship to Wilson.

Numismatics: British and foreign coins from the Roman Empire to the 21st century; British tokens, medals, and military decorations from the 17th century onwards with a direct relationship to Cheltenham.

Firearms and edged weapons: A small collection of British and Continental European examples from the 18th to early 20th century; and a much larger collection of Asian and African weapons (see the World Cultures section). No active collecting is undertaken in this area unless in exceptional circumstances.

Natural Sciences: Geology, herbaria, eggs, shells, and examples of taxidermy. No active collecting is made in this collecting area unless it fits under another category e.g., Cheltenham Local History, or the Wilson Family Collection.

World Cultures: Non-European domestic, military, and ritual items, from West Africa, the Middle East, the Indian sub-Continent, and Australasia. No active collecting is made in this collecting area.

Education collections: Separate handling collections are maintained by The Wilson Learning Team, for use with schools and other groups, and by the 'Museum Take-Away' Service, for loan to schools, care homes and other organisations. These collections mainly comprise social, world cultures and natural history specimens and are used specifically to enhance learning and reminiscence opportunities. They are not part of the accessioned collections.

4

Themes and priorities for future collecting

The Wilson will maintain all its present collections and enhance them by building on present strengths and filling gaps, by purchase, gift, or bequest. No new collection areas will be embarked on, and in some areas, we will stop collecting except in exceptional circumstances.

4.1 Fine Art

4.1.1 Acquire representative 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.

4.1.2 Acquire British art of the 20th and 21st century, particularly that which fills gaps, including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised artists in the existing collection and brings the collection up to date.

4.1.3 Acquire paintings and drawings showing views of Cheltenham from the 18th century to the present day that fill gaps in the present collection.

4.1.4 Acquire paintings, watercolours, drawings, prints and other media by artists of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, which fill gaps in the present collection. Including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised artists as well as artists associated with the Cotswolds and artists associated with William Morris and the Kelmscott Press. Please see Documentation Plan for further detail.

4.2 Decorative Art

4.2.1 Ceramics: acquire British ceramics from the 16th century to the present day, which fill gaps in the existing collection. This includes better representation within the collection of previously marginalised ceramicists, as well as art pottery and studio pottery of the 19th- to 21st century, and work by local ceramics companies and ceramicists.

4.2.2 Furniture: acquire British furniture, including colonial, furniture, and clocks from the 16th century to the present day, which fill gaps in our collection and with reference to Cheltenham. Including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised furniture makers.

4.2.3 Glass: acquire British and Continental European glass from the 17th century to the present day, which fill gaps in our collections and with reference to Cheltenham. Including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised glassmakers as well as develop the collection of local glassmakers.

4.2.4 Metalwork: acquire British metalwork from the 16th century to the present day, including the pewter, which fill gaps in our collections and with reference to Cheltenham. Including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised metalworkers.

4.2.5 Treen: acquire British treen from the 17th century to the present day with reference to Cheltenham and which fill gaps in the collection.

4.3 Asian Art

The existing collection will not be added to except under exceptional circumstances.

4.4 Costume and textiles

4.4.1 Costume: only acquire significant examples pertinent to Cheltenham (people and shops).

4.4.2 Textiles: only acquire significant examples pertinent to our collections.

4.5 The Arts and Crafts Movement and Emery Walker Library

4.5.1 Acquire books, building arts, ceramics, furniture, metalwork, paintings, woodwork, jewellery, glass, plaster, textiles, archives, designs and drawings and personal records and other decorative arts, which fill gaps in the current collections relating to the English Arts and Crafts Movement from the 1860s to the 1940s. Including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised designers and Philip Webb, A. H. Mackmurdo and the Century Guild, May Morris, Alexander Fisher, Arthur Simpson, W. Anning Bell, the Keswick School of Art, and the Newlyn School and other Homes Arts and Industries Associations.

Acquire key works or representative examples by key designers related to the English Arts and Crafts Movement, and particularly the Cotswolds. Please see Documentation Plan for further detail.

4.5.2 Acquire 20th century and contemporary work in the Arts and Crafts spirit, particularly that which fills gaps, including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised artists in the existing collection and brings the collection up to date.

4.6 Archaeology

The Wilson signed up to the Gloucestershire Archaeological Archive Standards Policy last reviewed 2018, that is the current working document, used by all the Gloucestershire museums who accept archaeological deposition. The document sets out the process of decision making between the archaeological units and the five Gloucestershire museums that collect excavated material. ie The Wilson, Corinium Museum, Cirencester; Dean Heritage Museum; Gloucester City Museum & Art Gallery and The Museum in the Park, Stroud.

The Wilson accepts archaeological material collected from the parish and local councils of Cheltenham. This is a small but significant part of the collection. Since the 1990's The Wilson has also been accepting material from several parishes outside the Cheltenham area. The Wilson currently has a storage challenge following decades of non-selective accessioning which has meant that The Wilson is at capacity. To manage this storage challenge, the Wilson will no longer accept archaeological depositions from outside the Cheltenham area. It is worth noting that all archaeological repositories in Gloucestershire are at capacity, with many no longer accepting archaeological material.

While material from outside of Cheltenham is important for the archaeological record, the Wilson is focused on sharing the history and heritage of Cheltenham with its visitors. This approach enables The Wilson to increase access to its collection by displaying archaeological material from within the Cheltenham area. There remains the option to borrow any significant finds from outside the Cheltenham area if they are relevant to any temporary exhibitions.



Whilst, the Wilson will not accept archaeological depositions from outside the Cheltenham area, this does not preclude the Wilson from collecting specific archaeological finds.

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

4.7 Social History

4.7.1 Develop the collection of topographical prints, photographs and postcards relating to Cheltenham from the late 18th century onwards which fill gaps in the collection.

4.7.2 Develop the collection of 18th to 21st- century printed ephemera and theatre playbills relating to Cheltenham which fill gaps in the collection.

4.7.3 Develop the collection of three-dimensional items telling the history of Cheltenham from the 17th century onwards; particularly items relating to women's suffrage, GCHQ, gender issues, sport, and horseracing.

4.7.4 Develop the collection of material relating to inhabitants of Cheltenham from the 17th century onwards (prior to 17th century collecting moves into Archaeology), including better representation within the collection of previously marginalised inhabitants.

4.7.5 The existing collections will not be added to unless they specifically enhance a story about Cheltenham that we wish to tell.

4.8 Gustav Holst

As the Holst Birthplace Trust actively collects material relating to Gustav Holst and his family The Wilson will no longer collect material from this area.

4.9 Wilson Family Collection

Our focus is primarily on the Cheltenham Wilsons, with an emphasis on building the Cheltenham context, exploration, and their personal stories. Material illustrating the role of the Cheltenham women in the Wilson family would be an area of interest. Wider Antarctic material would not be added except in exceptional circumstances and only in full consultation with other institutions that collect such material e.g. The Discovery, Scott Polar, Natural History Museum etc.

4.10 Numismatics

The only additions to the collections for consideration would be tokens, medals and military decorations relating to Cheltenham and its inhabitants. No other material to be collected.

4.11 Firearms and edged weapons

The existing collections will not be added to unless under very exceptional circumstances e.g., an item relating to one of Cheltenham's key figures or manufacturers who is core to a story we wish to develop for display.

4.12 Natural Sciences

The existing collections will not be added to except under exceptional circumstances.

4.13 World Cultures

The existing collections will not be added except under exceptional circumstances.

4.14 Museum learning

Occasionally, new material is obtained by purchasing items from outside sources, and by accepting donations from members of the public, to develop the service so it remains relevant to the National Curriculum and learning offer at The Wilson.

5

Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 The Wilson 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 Items that are in poor condition, have no resonance with our key collections and stories, or are duplicates will be considered in the first instance. Areas proposed:
- 5.4 **Social History:**
 - Sewing machines (duplicate, unprovenanced, poor condition)
 - Agricultural equipment (duplicate non provenanced, not local, not relevant to local stories)
 - Large social history items (duplicate, unprovenanced, non-local poor condition)
 - Taxidermy (duplicate, unprovenanced, non-local poor condition)
 - Dolls (duplicate, unprovenanced, non-local poor condition)
 - Tram 21 (explore future options in the context of deaccessioning tram from the accessioned collection once a viable plan is in place)
- 5.5 **Uncollected loans and identifications:**
 - Material over 2 years old that has not been collected and we have no contact details for or have tried more than 3 times to contact the owner and is of low financial value.
- 5.6 **Costume and Textiles:**
 - Costumes and textiles in poor condition, duplicated in the collection and no local stories.
- 5.7 **Decorative Arts:**
 - Large decorative arts items (duplicate, unprovenanced, non-local, poor condition, not relating to the Designated Arts and Crafts Movement collection)

5.8 **Archaeology:**

Material collected prior to the organisation of collecting areas; especially material from the Forest of Dean that Dean Heritage Centre have on long term loan. eg Alfred's Cave material.

5.9 Material collected from Tewkesbury Borough Council collecting area.

5.10 Work with units to assess value of bulk material especially unstratified objects, bulk animal bone, slag etc. with a view to reduction and disposal of unnecessary bulk.

6

Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

6.1 The Wilson 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 Wilson 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):

Other accredited Gloucestershire museums holding similar collections (The local agreement regarding the deposit of archaeological finds and archives is noted in section 4, above).

Holst Birthplace Museum regarding material relating to Gustav Holst and his family.

The Gloucestershire Archives if archives are in question.

The Discovery, Scott Polar Research Institute, the Natural History Museum, and other appropriate museums for Antarctic material.

Other museums holding Arts and Crafts Movement collections within Britain including but not exclusively the Emery Walker Trust; Leicester Museums; V&A; Kelmscott Manor; Gordon Russell Design Museum; National Trust (ref. Stoneywell, Leicester in particular).

Fine Art - other galleries and museums with significant collections of Dutch 17th century painting; the Gloucestershire and Cotswold landscape and artists associated with the Arts and Crafts Movement collection including but not exclusively the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Court Barn, Leamington Spa Art Gallery and Museum.

8

Acquisition

8.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

An item that meets the above criteria but needs special care requiring long term resource implications will only be accepted with the additional agreement of the relevant museum staff; this decision may be referred to Cheltenham Borough Council for their approval.

An acquisition will only be accepted on the authorisation of the relevant collection curator, with the professional agreement of another curator from a different discipline.

In all cases a signed justification will be made and placed in the object history file/on Axiell.

8.2 The Wilson 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).

8.3 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.

9 Human remains

- 9.1 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.

10 Biological and geological material

- 10.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the Wilson 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.

11 Archaeological material

- 11.1 The Wilson 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.

- 11.2 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).

12

Exceptions

- 12.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the Wilson 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 Wilson 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 Wilson will document when these exceptions occur.

13

Spoliation

- 13.1 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.

14

The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 14.1 The Wilson'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 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 14.2 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'.

15 Disposal procedures

- 15.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal.
- 15.2 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.
- 15.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the Wilson 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.
- 15.4 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.
- 15.5 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.
- 15.6 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.

- 15.7 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.
- 15.8 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).
- 15.9 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.
- 15.10 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.

- 15.11 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.
- 15.12 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

- 15.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the Wilson will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 15.13.1 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 15.13.2 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 15.13.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 15.13.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 15.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 15.15 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.
- 15.16 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.
- 15.17 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.
- 15.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

