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Winchester City Council

Collections Development Policy 2025 – 2030

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Names of Museums

This policy directs collections development of the Winchester City Council Museum collections. It guides and realises the charitable purpose and strategic ambitions of the following Accredited Museums:

- City Museum in Winchester
- Westgate Museum in Winchester

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 and plans of the organisation

1.1 The organisation's statement of purpose is:

Our mission is to deliver and support excellent and sustainable creative programming, arts, heritage and museum experiences that inspire everyone and celebrate the unique places where they live and visit

1.2 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency. The Board of Trustees is responsible for governance of collections development and management, ensuring that Hampshire Cultural Trust acts as the responsible custodian of the collections in its care, in line with Museum Accreditation standards, the Museum Association's Code of Ethics and the collections loan agreements with Winchester City Council. The Board is advised by the Collections Management and Research Committee - a dedicated sub-group of Trustees and senior management staff who review policies and their implementation and make recommendations for improvement.

1.3 The organisation 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 collections.

1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5 The organisation recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to the 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 organisation 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 organisation can acquire a valid title to the item in question on behalf of the owners.

1.7 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below 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
- extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
- the item under consideration lies outside the organisation's established core collection

2. History of the Collections

2.1 Winchester City Museum is the oldest in Hampshire, founded privately in 1847 and transferred to the City Corporation in 1851 under the provisions of the Museums Act. In accordance with the museum philosophy of the age, and their own taste and special interests, successive curators acquired and disposed of material, moulding the content and extent of the collections in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Material from the whole of Hampshire, and indeed from further afield, was collected, largely as gifts from wealthy benefactors.

2.2 Since 1947, collections development focused more closely on local history and archaeological material. This coincided with the start of systematic archaeological investigation both in the city and in the surrounding rural area. These two elements form the core of the collections today, the archaeology and numismatic collections are of national, and in some respects international, importance.

- 2.3 Following the establishment of the county-wide museums service in 1962, collecting has largely been restricted to the area within the boundaries of Winchester District. Photographic archives formerly held by the City Library were transferred to the City Museum at that time.
- 2.4 Some of the early material collected by Winchester City Museum has been relocated by gift or exchange to more appropriate museums: for example, in 2008, the geology collection was passed to Hampshire County Council Museums Service.
- 2.5 In November 2014, Hampshire Cultural Trust (HCT) was founded and signed agreements with both Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council to manage the museum collections on their behalf. Ownership of the collections was retained by each council respectively.
- 2.6 HCT is an independent charity that provides the professional expertise and experience to develop the collections on behalf of the councils. Both councils are represented at Board level and have approved a scheme of delegation with regards to the development of their collections that is reflected in this policy.

3. An overview of current collections

- 3.1 Hampshire Cultural Trust manages the Winchester City Council Museum collections and the Hampshire County Council Museum collections jointly. Both collections remain independent and distinguishable within the documentation, and with unique sets of accession numbers to identify them.
- 3.2 For public benefit, there are opportunities for the two collections to complement each other in displays or events. Where this is the case, location and movement controls ensure that provenance remains clear.
- 3.3 The collections are used in two principal ways: for display and for research. The local / social history and art collections, of which an estimated 40% are on display contribute most of our museum displays.

- 3.4 Archaeology and Photography also feature in our displays in Winchester, but the bulk of these collections are centrally stored and valued as research and reference resources. Only an estimated 10% of these are on permanent display.
- 3.5 Objects that are not on display are kept in storage where they are cared for and managed so that they can continue to provide public benefit either for future displays or research.
- 3.6 **Winchester Archaeology & Numismatics:** The collection comprises material and records recovered as the result of research excavations, rescue archaeology, and now the planning process. Winchester City Council is designated as the appropriate recipient body for archaeological archives from developer-led archaeological investigations in the Winchester district area. From the city itself comes the largest urban archaeological collection arising from systematic excavation outside London, and as such is arguably of international significance. The collection includes a significant numismatic collection ranging from pre-Roman to post-medieval coins from the area including the largest collection of Winchester mint coins in Europe. In addition, the collection includes limited World Archaeology and World Cultures collections formed in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Among the many significant elements of this collections are:

- Exceptional individual objects such as the Winchester Moot Horn, the Winchester Reliquary and examples of the Winchester Art style of the 10th century
- Historic and modern excavations within the city centre, such as the Brook Street sites, Wolvesey Palace and the cathedral, tracing nearly 2,000 years of urban development
- Northern, eastern and western city Roman cemeteries with over 2,000 graves in total, including Osborne School (formerly Lankhills)
- Hyde Abbey, in Winchester's northern suburb, and St Mary's Abbey in Abbey View Gardens
- Anglo-Saxon cemeteries at Worthy Park, Winnall and Old Dairy Cottage site
- Bronze Age burials and urns from Oliver's Battery

3.7 **Winchester Local History & Topographical Art:** This collection includes objects and fine art illustrating the character and development of the city and district from the post-medieval period to the present day. The fine art, like photography, is topographic in nature although some objects are of local or regional artistic value as well. Particular strengths of the existing collections are in material manufactured by local firms or craftspeople, objects relating to local retailers and industries, and material relating to civic and social history and institutions. This collection includes material given by civic groups such as visiting twin town representatives and the city's weights and measures.

Significant elements include:

- A range of everyday items sold or produced in the city and district in the late 19th and early 20th century chronicling a former way of life, including for example the stock of Foster's tobacconist
- Drawings and paintings of Winchester through the ages including a comprehensive collection of works by C B Phillips sketching the streets and buildings of the city
- Items associated with prominent people associated with Winchester, for example the cyclist F D Frost, or the Marchioness of Winchester
- Gifts to the city, not least the oil painting of 'King Charles II' by Sir Peter Lely, dated 1680 and John Opie's 'Lady Elizabeth Woodville pleading for her children before Edward IV'

3.8 **Winchester Photographs:** This is the largest collection of historical photographic material of Winchester and district. The collection consists mainly of photographs from 1870 to the present day, but also includes some cine film, and video and audio tape.

Significant elements include:

- The complete set of Mayoral portraits from 1848 to the present day
- The Hampshire Chronicle glass plate negative collection representing the 1950s to 1970s

- The work of local photographers tracing modern development such as William Savage (late 19th century), W.T. Green (Edwardian period) and Heathcote Wride 1930s-1950s

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

- 4.1 The aim is to enhance the quality of the collections overall, making them more relevant for the people of Winchester. Decisions will be guided by a commitment to respect the legacy of the past, meet the needs of the present day, and passes on the inheritance to the next generation in good order.
- 4.2 Items and their associated information will be collected under the three basic disciplines described above: Archaeology, Local History & Topographical Art, and Photographs. Priority will be given to objects that have a strong connection to the district of Winchester.
- 4.3 When deciding whether to accession an object, the collections development panel will make a recommendation based on whether they consider the object can make a positive contribution to the collections based on three principles:
- **Relevance**
A direct connection with the district of Winchester and/or one of its historic residents;
 - **Public Benefit**
Potential to reveal new insights, challenge misconceptions, grow local pride, spark a ‘wow’ moment, and/or serve as inspiration for creativity or research
 - **Strategic Fit**
Further enhances nationally significant collections; is an immediate priority for programming; facilitates community co-curation; or addresses underrepresentation of communities within the collections

- 4.4 Objects that meet all three criteria will be added to the collections through accessioning. By exception, objects that fall short of this test may still be considered for accessioning where they can replace an accessioned items as the better example of its kind.
- 4.5 Alongside an assessment of quality, the collections development panel will review the risk factors associated with accessioning the object before making their recommendation. This includes a review of:
- Physical condition and cost to consolidate, store and preserve in perpetuity, both financial and in terms of energy cost
 - Provenance, evidence of authenticity and reputational impact
 - Legal implications and ownership including any conditions associated with accessioning
 - Presence of hazardous material that may affect access
- 4.6 Objects may be acquired as gifts or bequests, purchased or collected through fieldwork. There should be no conflict of interest during the acquisition process. No person or organisation with any possibility of financial or personal gain should be involved in the decision-making process. Where a conflict of interest might arise, public interest should always prevail, and a written declaration be made and kept on record by Hampshire Cultural Trust on behalf of Winchester City Council.
- 4.7 This policy refers solely to the development of the accessioned museum collections. Other types of objects such as handling and learning resources are managed to maximise public benefit. Upon accepting an offer of a historic object, we will always ensure that we make clear into which collection the object is being transferred.
- 4.8 There is a presumption against acquiring original manuscript archival material (with the exception of some archaeological archives or those documents that are pertinent to the collections we hold) on behalf of Winchester City Council, unless it is a condition of a gift or purchase that a collection including original manuscript archival material should not be separated. In the best interest of the public, original manuscript archival material will be

directed to Hampshire Archives and Local Studies, if the material is thought to fall within their collecting policies.

- 4.9 Original film and sound archives will not be acquired for the museum collections but is directed to the Wessex Film and Sound Archive.
- 4.10 When acquiring significant collections of photographs on behalf of Winchester City Council, Hampshire Cultural Trust will do so in consultation with Hampshire Archives and Local Studies.
- 4.11 Loans will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances as research or special exhibition loans and will be for a specified period. Permanent loans will not be accepted.
- 4.12 Hampshire Cultural Trust will only accept bequests on behalf of Winchester City Council that meet the criteria of the collecting policy. Bequests may be partly or wholly declined, and any unwanted items will be declined in writing to avoid Hampshire Cultural Trust or Winchester City Council becoming the legal owners by default.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 Hampshire Cultural Trust and Winchester City Council recognise 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 Curatorially-led collections review will recommend objects for disposal that:
 - Meet the criteria set out by the Museums Association for dynamic disposal due to the risk factors involved; and/or

- Do not meet the test for being both relevant and of public benefit as outlined above
- 5.4 For the duration of the policy, the priorities for review and rationalisation are:
- Objects containing hazardous substances
 - Bulk archaeology

6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal

- 6.1 Hampshire Cultural Trust and Winchester City Council recognise their 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 Hampshire Cultural Trust and Winchester City Council will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. They 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 museums:
- Bishop Waltham Museum
 - English Heritage (in relation to The Grange Northington, Bishop's Waltham Palace and Wolvesey Palace)
 - Hampshire County Council Collections
 - Hampshire Archives and Local Studies, Winchester (maps)
 - National Trust (Hinton Ampner)
 - Royal Hampshire Regimental Museum

- Winchester Cathedral
- Winchester College
- Winchester Excavation Committee

8. Archival holdings

8.1 As Hampshire Cultural Trust holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera on behalf of Winchester City Council, it will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

9. Acquisition

9.1 Any decision to accession an item into the Winchester City Council Museum collections must be based on the criteria set out in the policy above. Any changes to the collections development policy must be approved by the membership of Hampshire Cultural Trust.

9.2 Ownership of an accessioned object will transfer into the ownership of Winchester City Council, and its management will become the responsibility of Hampshire Cultural Trust. All acquisitions are governed by the loan agreement with Winchester City Council.

9.3 An Acquisitions Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees, or a delegated sub-committee, of Hampshire Cultural Trust at least once a year.

9.4 Accessioning will operate as follows:

- When an object is considered for acquisition, an initial assessment is made by the Collections Development Manager as to whether the object meets the three criteria for acquisition. They will also conduct a risk assessment. Where appropriate, the Collections Development Manager will seek external expertise and stakeholder consultation to inform their assessment.

- If the initial assessment shows there is sufficient ground to consider acquisition, the Collections Development Manager convenes a collections development panel and shares the available information with its members. The panel will consist of no less than three and no more than five members of experienced staff or relevant stakeholders. Each will independently vote on whether to recommend the object for acquisition. All members must have read this policy and any associated supporting strategy before casting their vote.
- Based on a simple majority, the collections development panel will present its decision to recommend objects for acquisition to the appropriate authority for decision.

9.5 The decision to accession an object is delegated based on risk:

- Minimal Risk (including values up to £500) – HCT Executive
- Low Risk (including values up to £1,000) – HCT Leadership Team
- Medium Risk (including values up to £10,000) – Collections Committee (Board sub-committee)
- High Risk (valued over £10,000, or deemed to have significant impact on resourcing, storage or reputation, or has special conditions attached) – Board of Trustees with written confirmation from Winchester City Council in line with the collections loan agreement, paragraph 4.5

9.6 Hampshire Cultural Trust will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen on behalf of Winchester City Council unless Winchester City Council or the responsible officer is satisfied that it can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

9.7 Hampshire Cultural Trust 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).

9.8 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 1 November 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the organisation 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 As Hampshire Cultural Trust 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.

11. Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, Hampshire Cultural Trust 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 Hampshire Cultural Trust 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 Hampshire Cultural Trust, on behalf of Winchester City Council 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, Hampshire Cultural Trust 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 organisation will document when these exceptions occur.

14. Spoliation

14.1 The organisation 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 governing body, acting on the advice of the organisation's professional staff may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of

origin. The organisation 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 collections in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.

16. Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal.
- 16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account. Ownership of accessioned object rests with Winchester City Council. All disposals are governed by the loan agreements with the council.
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, HCT will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort – destruction.
- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the 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 organisation will also be sought.

- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the organisation acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the organisation may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with Spectrum procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that Hampshire Cultural Trust 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.
- 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.
 - 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.
 - 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).
 - Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum 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

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