

REPORT AUDIT TRAIL				
CONSULTATION				
Name/Position	Portfolio/Ward/ Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in para:
Councillor Lynda Marshall	Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Green Spaces	21/01/26	24/01/2026	I approve the updates to the Collections Management Policy.
<i>Andrew Bramidge</i>	Regeneration and Environment			
<i>Chloe Parker, Finance</i>	Finance and Customer Services	21/01/26	22/01/26	Implications included at 6.2
Michelle Scales, Legal Services	Legal Services	21/01/26	23/01/26	Implications included at 7.1
<i>Rebecca Price, Human Resources</i>		21/01/26	23/01/26	Implications included at 8.1
<i>Karen Middlebrook, Procurement</i>	Finance and Customer Services	21/01/26	26/01/26	Implications included at 6.2
Equalities	Assistant Chief Executive's Office			

REPORT APPROVAL TRACKING			
Equalities Your report will not be authorised for submission to Cabinet by your Strategic Director if you have not undertaken and included an initial equalities screening. All equalities analysis documents should be sent to Equality@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback prior to being included as appendices.	Initial Screening completed and included with report	09.01.26	16.01.26
	Full Assessment completed and included with report	09.01.26	16.01.26
Carbon Impact Assessments Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports. Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback prior to your report being sent to your Strategic Director for approval.	Carbon Impact Assessment completed and included with report.	09.01.26	15.01.26
Background information MANDATORY: Insert headings for a few main public documents you have used or referenced to write this report. This is a legal requirement. For Cabinet reports, insert hyperlinks . Do not list private documents.	Rotherham Cultural Strategy 2019-2026 Arts Council England Let's Create Strategy 2020-2030 Arts Council England Museums Accreditation Guidelines Museums Association Code of Ethics 2025 PAS 197:2009 Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management		
Appendices If appendices are essential to the understanding of the report, list titles here. Ensure that appendices have proper titles. List any appendices relevant to the decision being taken first with the Equality Analysis documents coming next and the Carbon Impact Assessment being listed as the last Appendix for all reports.	Appendix 1 Equality Screening and Analysis Part A & B Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment Appendix 3 Collections Management Policy 2026-2029		
Cabinet Member Approval You should retain an email confirming the Cabinet Member approval for your records. Strategic Directors should not authorise reports unless Cabinet Members have given sign off	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	
Report Authorised by Strategic Director	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	
Report Authorised for publication by Chief Executive	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	

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Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 28 January 2026

Report Title

Rotherham Museums Collections Management Policy for Clifton Park Museum

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Service Director Approving Submission of the Report

Polly Hamilton, Service Director, Culture, Sport & Tourism

Report Author(s)

Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement
01709 822056 or leanne.buchan@rotherham.gov.uk

Lisa Howarth, Museums, Arts & Heritage Manager
01709 289882 or lisa.howarth@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report sets out the updated Collections Management Policy for the Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Service. The Policy forms part of the key evidence base which enables the service to achieve Museums Accreditation from Arts Council England. The service recently achieved a Museum Accreditation renewal in December 2025, and the updated Collections Management Policy was a required area for development. Without Museum Accreditation, the Museums, Arts and Heritage Service cannot apply for further funding to the Arts Council of England (ACE) and will risk funding from the Arts Council of England National Portfolio Organisation programme, which represents an investment of £250,000 per year for the next two years.

Recommendations

1. The Assistant Director, Culture, Sport and Tourism approves the revised Collections Management Policy 2026-2029.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Museums, Arts & Heritage Equalities Screening Assessment Part A and B
- Appendix 2 Collections Management Policy Carbon Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Collections Management Policy 2026-2029

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Collections Management Policy

1. Background

- 1.1 This report outlines updates and amendments to the Collections Management Policy, which is a key document for the Museums Accreditation process via Arts Council England.
- 1.2 The Museums Accreditation scheme is the UK industry standard for museums and galleries and ensures museums are managing their collections, engaging with visitors and are governed appropriately. It is managed as a UK partnership between Arts Council England, the Welsh Government, Museums Galleries Scotland and the Northern Ireland Museums Council. It is a national benchmark for a well-managed museum, demonstrating professionalism and accountability, giving confidence to donors, partners, and supporters. Being Museums Accredited also opens up opportunities for museums, including funding opportunities, donations and new partnerships.
- 1.3 Full Museums Accreditation lasts for five years and the Museums, Arts & Heritage service was recently accredited on 1 December 2025. The award identified two areas for development including an up-to-date Collections Management Policy and progress towards meeting the minimum requirements of sector collections documentation inventory standards.
- 1.4 Museums Accreditation will also enable the Museum, Arts & Heritage service to secure future external funding through Arts Council England and other funders, for the Rotherham Collection and the wider service. Although relating to the collection the accreditation is applied to a specific venue where the collection can be displayed, in this case Clifton Park Museum. As part of the accreditation process the service must demonstrate appropriate policies and procedures to support the care of collections.
- 1.5 The Collections Management Policy aims to ensure that there is a well-managed collection for residents and visitors to enjoy which is representative and inclusive of its residents and can be accessed and enjoyed by people at all stages of their lives. The Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Collection enables the Museums, Arts & Heritage service to develop a range of activities and programmes from toddler clubs to dementia workshops which utilise the objects in the collection to inspire learning, share stories, build cohesion, develop civic pride and improve the mental health and wellbeing of residents from across the borough.
- 1.6 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage manage Clifton Park Museum, Boston Castle and five heritage sites. It is also responsible for the statutory Rotherham Archives and Local Studies and is caretaker of the York and Lancaster Regimental Collection on behalf of sole trustee, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 1.7 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage began a period of transformation in 2020 which led to being successful as an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation in 2023. This service transformation will continue over the next

three years as the service continues to demonstrate organisational resilience which will include applying for the next round of National Portfolio Organisation Investment.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Collections Management Policy

2.1.1 Guidance on Museums Accreditation states that the Collections Management Policy should clearly set out how the service will develop, document, and look after its museum collections. The Collections Management Policy was last approved in January 2023 and is due for renewal in January 2026. This policy will only be approved for a period of two years, to enable the service to undertake necessary community and sector consultation regarding future collecting priorities.

2.1.2 The Collections Management Policy has four main sections detailing:

- Collections Development – dictates how collections development activities (acquisition, rationalisation, deaccessioning, and disposal) link clearly to the service’s mission and meet ethical commitments and legal requirements.
- Collections Care and Conservation – outlines the duty of care and responsibilities towards the collection, ensuring the long-term preservation of objects.
- Collections Documentation - ensures that collections documentation activities provide useful and useable information, are linked to the service’s overarching mission and meet ethical commitments and legal requirements.
- Collection Loans – showing how the service manages collection loans in and out of the service, to ensure transparency, collection care and responsibility.
- Collections Access – detailing the service’s commitment to both short and long-term access and its actions to redress and mitigate barriers to this access.

2.1.3 The Collections Management Policy is intended to be delivered in conjunction with the following documents:

- Collections Management Plan – which sets out priorities, activities and resources required to implement the Collections Management Policy.
- Collections Management Procedures Manual – which includes the processes of managing collections effectively using UK collection management standards (known as ‘Spectrum’).
- Collections Emergency Plan for Clifton Park Museum and Bailey House – which sets out procedures for both museum and archive collections in the event of an emergency.

- Business Continuity Plan – which sets out the procedures required to implement in an emergency or disruption to normal working and outlines actions to secure and care for all assets, both during and after.
- Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Business Plan which sets out the service direction with clear aims and objectives.

2.1.4 The policy sets out key themes for the future development of the collection which include:

Archaeology

- This will include all land within the boundaries of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough. Priority will be given to artefact material and residues from processed samples dating from before the Palaeolithic period to after the Medieval period. Particular emphasis will be placed on non-flint material of the pre-Roman period.

Fine and Applied Art

- Priority will be given to wares produced by the potteries that manufactured within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough that enhance the current collections. Ceramics or glass pieces produced at local works which are not fully represented in the collections will be prioritised, such as items manufactured or referencing manufacture at local sites such as Catcliffe Glass Cone and Waterloo Kiln, etc.
- In addition to this, artworks produced by Rotherham artists or of Rotherham scenes, especially produced within the last 50 years; Commissioned works by contemporary artists and/or works associated with Rotherham will be prioritised.

Natural Sciences

- Priority will be given to Prepared specimens from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough.
- Vertebrates, especially older documented specimens if historic or by named local taxidermists or specimens from a Rotherham collector, but only where specimen source is known or assured.
- Palaeontology, with a focus on palaeontological specimens and palaeobotanical material, not represented in the collections.
- Advice will be sought in acquiring Geological specimens from sites of scientific interest where specific rock types or exposures are very scarce or better preserved in situ.

Social History and Industrial History

- Provenanced material relating to the last 100 years which is not duplicated in existing collections and reflects the changing nature of communities within the Rotherham Borough particularly during the 19th

and 20th centuries, through immigration and the collapse of heavy industry.

- Material and supporting information relating to the history of Clifton House and Park, including the Walker family and other former occupants.

World Cultures

- The World Cultures collection is closed and as such, no acquisitions will be made.

- 2.1.5 The recent Museum Accreditation Award identified omissions within the current policy which have been incorporated into the revised Collections Management Policy 2026-2029. These include:
- Clause 10.1: Human Remains – a clause is now incorporated which acknowledges that the service cares for human remains.
 - Clause 16.12: Disposal – a clause is now incorporated which dictates that the service keeps full records of all decisions on disposal adhering to Spectrum 5.1.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Do Nothing – The current Collections Management Policy is up for renewal January 2026. To do nothing would risk the recent awarded Museum Accreditation which is dependent on showing progress against the identified areas for improvement. Museum Accreditation is a requirement for NPO funding from Arts Council so would have a financial impact of £500,000 over the next two years.
- 3.2 Adopt the Collections Management Policy – The reviewed policy appropriately reflects the current mission and values of the Museums, Arts & Heritage service and its commitment to ensuring community voice and influence within its activities. It responds to and implements the recommendations from the recent Museum Accreditation panel and ensures that plans are in place for the safe and appropriate care of collections for future generations.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 In developing the revised Collections Management Policy, consultation has taken place with the Council's Equalities, Property and Facilities and Climate Change teams.

- 4.2 External consultation and benchmarking have been undertaken with Arts Council England, Museum Association, Museum Development North and other local authority museum services across South Yorkshire to ensure that the policy is in line with best practice.
- 4.3 Once adopted, further community consultation on the policy will begin through creative programmes linked to the temporary exhibition 'Collecting Rotherham' at Clifton Park Museum and will develop through the intended NHLF bid. This will ensure the future collecting priorities for the service are inclusive and have been co-produced with communities.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Collections Management Policy is due for renewal on 24th January 2026. Should this policy be approved, it will be adopted with immediate effect.
- 5.2 The Head of Creative Programming and Engagement and Museums, Arts & Heritage Manager will have overall accountability for the implementation of the policy and the supporting Collections Management Plan working closely with the Collections and Exhibitions team within the service.
- 5.3 As a requirement of the Museum Accreditation award in December, the service will need to be updated to the Accreditation Assessor by June 2026.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The costs associated with the compliance of the policy and accreditation will be contained within approved revenue budgets for the service. It is noted that this accreditation is required for the service to be eligible for Arts Council England grant funding.
- 6.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 7.2 The appropriate delegation is in place for this Officer Decision to be made, as set out within the body of the report the proposed amendments are deemed to be minor amendments.
- 7.3 As set out within the options, there is an expectation that the Council acts to progress any areas identified for improvement. The Museum Accreditation awarded greatly assists the Council in relation to funding, quality assurance, development and provides effective oversight in terms of accountability.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no HR implications as a result of this proposal.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 The Rotherham Collection forms the foundation for the outreach, engagement and learning activities across the Museums, Arts & Heritage service and forms the basis of all exhibitions and associated programmes at Clifton Park Museum. Without the Rotherham Collection these programmes would not offer the same level of high-quality experience which supports education and learning, health and wellbeing, community cohesion and civic pride in museums, schools, care homes and community settings.

9.2 During the Children's Capital of Culture festival year, the service has supported six traineeships across collections, exhibitions, archives, engagement and marketing. The learning from these programmes will inform future opportunities for young people to access the professions.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 An Equalities Impact Screening and Equalities Analysis has been completed for this programme and can be found at Appendix 1.

10.2 The Rotherham, Museums, Arts & Heritage Equalities Action Plan sets out priorities for the service to remain committed and accountable to becoming more inclusive and accessible.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment has been completed and can be found at Appendix 2.

11.2 The key implication for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change is related to the storage of the collection. The service is working towards moving the collection out of Bailey House and into a new storage facility.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no direct implications for partners as the policy relates only to those collections wholly owned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Inappropriate storage for museum collection: The service is working closely with Property and Facilities Management colleagues to move the collection out of Bailey House to an appropriate storage facility. The service will continue to rationalise and audit the collection to ensure the future of the collections in its care.

13.2 Lack of inclusion within and access to the collection:
 The Museums, Arts & Heritage Service acts as a custodian of the Rotherham Collection on behalf of the borough. Through its programme of exhibitions, events, and educational activities it will ensure that the collection is developed to become representative of communities from across the borough and that greater access for engagement with the collections is made available both within museum and community settings. The Equalities Action Plan contained at Appendix 2 provides mitigation for this risk.

13.3 Lack of sustainable funding model for the service:
 Through the adoption of the Collections Management Policy the service is enabled retain Museums Accreditation, and therefore additional grants from funders such as Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund.

14. Accountable Officers

Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement
 Lisa Howarth, Museums, Arts & Heritage Manager

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive		Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

Report Author: Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement
 01709 822056 or leanne.buchan@rotherham.gov.uk
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