



MUSEUM

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation Scheme for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom

Collections Management Policy

**Clifton Park Museum
Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**

Name of museum:

Clifton Park Museum

Name of governing body:

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

Policy review procedure:

The Collections Management Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review:

22 January 2029

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections management policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

1. **General Overview**

- 1.1 Rotherham Museums Arts and Heritage ('the Service') is managed by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and sits within the Creative Programming & Engagement service of the Culture, Sport and Tourism team, which is part of the wider Regeneration and Environment Directorate.
- 1.2 This Collections Management Policy brings together the previous Collections Development, Collections Care and Conservation, and Documentation Policies for the museum collections in the care of Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage service.

2. **Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation**

- 2.1 This policy has been written in accordance with statement of purpose of Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage. The mission of the service is to '*Spark imagination, curiosity, and roots through the celebration of Rotherham's people, stories, spaces and collections.*' This mission is underpinned by five values: generosity, quality, inclusivity, wonder and resilience. The vision for the Service is the democratisation of Rotherham's collections, stories and spaces in partnership with its dynamic and diverse communities.
- 2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Service's plans relevant to its implementation including the Collections Management Plan, the Collections Documentation Procedural Manual and the Emergency Plans.
- 2.2 In developing this policy, the Service has taken into account Spectrum 5.1 documentation procedures, Arts Council England How to meet the Standard, Arts Council England Accreditation Standard 2018, Benchmarks, CoSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, 2002), Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Museums Association Code of Ethics.

3. **History of the collections**

- 3.1 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage manage Clifton Park Museum and Boston Castle, as well as five heritage sites across the Borough: Keppel's Column, Catcliffe Glass Cone, Rockingham Waterloo Kiln, Payne Mausoleum and Walker Mausoleum. It also manages Rotherham Archives and Local Studies and the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum on behalf of the sole trustee, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 3.2 Core to our service are an estimated 76,000 objects which have been collected since Clifton Park Museum opened to the public in July 1893. 4,000 of these belong to the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum. Park Museum was originally the home of the Walker family (an important local family of iron founders), who built Clifton House (as it was then) in 1784. The Corporations Parks Committee administered the museum through the first Curator, Mr H Moore. The displays were put together under the supervision of Mr Key from the Victoria and Albert Museum. The collections on display during the nineteenth century were mainly loans from other museums, local gentry or nobility, and local societies. Many of these loans have since been donated or accessioned into the permanent collections. Many local societies and individuals also gifted items to the museum.
- 3.3 In the 1920s, the collections were developed under the leadership of Ethert Brand as Honorary Curator, to include objects from all over the world. The museum purchased

Brand's personal collection of geological and natural history specimens and ceramics after his death in 1938. During the 1930s, 40s and 50s, the museum was curated by Borough Librarian, Frederick Boardman Assisted by Miss Dorothy Greene. Dorothy Greene assumed the role of Honorary Keeper of Roman Antiquities. Greene was a keen archaeologist and developed the collections along these lines. She worked with the Rotherham Archaeology Society amongst others, as well as on her own excavations; notably the Templeborough Roman settlement for which Rotherham is well known. Much of the collection developed in this interest-based way. In the 1970s, the first full time professional curatorial staff were employed by the museum, and the collections were developed to concentrate on local interest.

3.4 Key Acquisitions and Disposals

The collections have experienced frequent store relocations – having moved storage facilities ten times since 1993.

- In 2007, the museum collections were badly affected by a flood at the collections store, and many items were either disposed of or conserved depending upon their condition.
- Poor conditions at more recent storage facilities resulted in the rationalisation and disposal of around 400 objects.
- Since 2011, around 1000 objects have been disposed.

3.5 In 2011, the museum service merged with Rotherham Archives and Local Studies to form Heritage Services and in 2019, with a renewed focus on the museums, collections and public spaces in our care, we became Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage. The service is now committed to enabling greater community voice and influence.

4. Collections Development Policy

- 4.1 The Service 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, (Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage), 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.
- 4.2 The governing body (Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage) will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 4.3 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage 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 consider limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 4.4 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift or bequest, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the service can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

- 4.5 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.
- 4.6 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museums Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.
- 4.7 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

5. **Acquisition - Themes and priorities for future collecting**

- 5.1 Additions to the permanent collections will be primarily of provenanced material made, used or associated with people, places or activities within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough, which do not constitute duplicates of existing material.
- 5.2 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage will not acquire objects simply as assets. All objects will need to have a long-term purpose and use. Where possible, objects should be contextualised through documentation, oral history and photographs to fully interpret them.
- 5.1 Over time it is anticipated that the Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Service may play a more active role in the documentation and management of Public Art collections. A position statement will be developed in collaboration with other local authority departments and external stakeholders as an addendum to this policy as work progresses in exploring Rotherham's approach to Public Art.
- 5.3 The collecting priorities for each collection are as below:

Archaeology

- The collecting area 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. Emphasis will be placed on non-flint material of the pre-Roman period.
- Any chance finds offered to the Museum will be referred to the local Finds Liaison Officer for recording under the Portable Antiquities Scheme, if not already reported.
- Archaeological archives will only be accepted in line with the conditions set out in The Renaissance Yorkshire Archaeological Archive Deposition Policy.
- The service is not required to act as a repository for Archaeological archives.

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.
- Works produced by Rotherham artists or of Rotherham scenes, especially those produced within the last 50 years.
- Commissioned works by contemporary artists and/or works associated with Rotherham.

- Ceramics or glass pieces produced at local works which are not fully represented in the collections, such as items manufactured or referencing manufacture at local sites such as Catcliffe Glass Cone and Waterloo Kiln, etc.

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 palaeoentomological 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

Priority will be given to:

- Provenanced material relating to the last 100 years which is not duplicated in existing collections.
- Material that 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.
- Complete outfits of all periods with associated information, such as occupational costume.
- Material relating to Rotherham Militia and locally raised units apart from the York and Lancaster Regiment.
- Material relating to manufacturing industries, trades and crafts carried out within the borough, especially domestic cast ironwork and other metal work.

World Cultures

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

6. Acquisition - Archival holdings

- 6.1 Archival material of relevance to the museum collections will be passed to Rotherham Archives & Local Studies within Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage and cross referenced via the sharing and documentation of relevant accession numbers, for ease of use.

7. Acquisition

The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

- 7.1 Potential acquisitions are assessed by the Collections and Exhibitions Team against this policy and considered at a regular review panel, led by the Museums, Arts and Heritage Manager. It is intended that the priorities for future collection will be more heavily informed by Rotherham communities in the coming years.
- 7.2 The service will not acquire any object unless it is satisfied that it 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.
- 7.3 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 1st 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.
- 7.4 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the service 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.
- 7.5 The service 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.
- 7.6 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).
- 7.7 The service 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.

8. **Exceptions**

- 9.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the service 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
- 9.2 In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

10 **Rationalisation**

- 10.1 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 It is currently expected that the themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal will focus on a known quantity of object anomalies. This has been prompted by the resolution of ongoing backlog issues which have highlighted objects with unknown provenance. These objects are to be reviewed due to their lack of Spectrum compliant inventory information. The service aims to conduct a formal review process, in which to identify the specific themes and priorities for rationalisation of these objects. Such a review should aim to identify themes for rationalisation and disposal in consultation with local communities.
- 10.4 The service currently aims to rationalise the collections by disposing of duplicate material and items of a non-Rotherham provenance that are deemed to have no display, educational or research value, by at least two members of the Collections and Exhibitions Team. The service also holds a large amount of non-locally provenanced objects that do not fit within this current policy. The service will also dispose of items that are in an unacceptable condition, where it is economically unjustifiable to conserve them.

11 Disposal

- 11.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 11.2 The governing body (Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage Service) will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 11.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the service 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.
- 11.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or as a last resort - destruction.
- 11.5 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.
- 11.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, 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.

- 11.7 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.
- 11.8 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).
- 11.9 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.
- 11.10 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.
- 11.11 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.
- 11.12 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.
- 11.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.
- 11.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 11.15 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.

- 11.16 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.
- 11.17 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.
- 11.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.
- 11.19 The museum takes no responsibility for any items left by the owner at the museum or external stores unless arranged beforehand. Any items left at the museum without prior arrangement or authorisation in writing from a staff member, will be retained as lost property and disposed of after three weeks.

12 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 12.1 The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 10.1-18 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 12.2 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.
- 12.3 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'.

13 Acquisition - Collecting policies of other museums

- 13.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.
- 13.2 Specific reference is made to the following museums/organisations:

Rotherham Archives & Local Studies
The York & Lancaster Regimental Museum
Sheffield Museums Trust
Danum Gallery, Library and Museum
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Museums & Galleries
MAGNA

Local History Societies within Rotherham Metropolitan Borough
Rotherham Biological Records Centre
Cresswell Heritage Trust
Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust

- 13.3 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage may from time to time seek to acquire items jointly with other services, which are also managed by Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Services: Rotherham Archives & Local Studies and The York & Lancaster Regimental Collection.

14 Care and Conservation Policy

14.1 Collections Care – Preventative Conservation

- 14.2 Rotherham Museum, Arts and Heritage Service is committed to achieving the highest standards of collections care within the limits of its resources.
- 14.3 The Collections and Exhibitions Team is responsible for all day-to-day aspects of preventative conservation. This includes collecting data, monitoring the environment, calibration and taking mitigating actions.
- 14.4 The Collections and Exhibitions Manager is responsible for agreeing how, when and where preventative conservation will occur within the Museum, Arts and Heritage Service, and for setting limits for temperature/relative humidity/light.
- 14.5 Data collected from the monitoring of temperature, Relative Humidity, light/Ultraviolet and pests will be analysed on a quarterly basis by the Collections and Exhibitions Officers. A report (including any issues and recommendations) will be produced and submitted to the Collections and Exhibitions Manager. The Collections and Exhibitions Manager will discuss issues and recommendations with the Museum, Arts and Heritage Manager (and any other relevant members of the Museums, Arts, and Heritage Service) and will agree any actions to be taken to mitigate the issues.
- 14.6 All data collected as part of environmental and pest monitoring will be kept for at least 10 years. Earlier data will be reviewed and deleted/ disposed or retained as determined is necessary. Raw data is stored electronically. Reports are stored electronically and a hard copy is also retained.
- 14.7 Materials used to construct cases will be evaluated and only items which do not emit gaseous pollutants will be used e.g. zero formaldehyde MDF (ZMDF) or acid-free tissue/card. Within the limits of our resources, we will replace all unsuitable packaging with conservation grade acid-free packaging.

15 Environmental Awareness

- 15.1 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage is aware of its responsibilities related to the environment and climate change.
- 15.2 The Service will take account of the expected collection lifetime and the energy demand arising from the conditions needed to achieve this. In undertaking this, the Service will take

account of the sensitivity, significance and use of individual collection items.

- 15.3 The Service will ensure that the collections are kept in the most appropriate conditions, and wherever possible we will reduce the amount of energy used in caring for the collections.

15. Collections Care – Remedial Conservation

- 15.1 Rotherham Museum, Arts and Heritage Services is committed to achieving the highest standards of remedial conservation and restoration within the limits of our resources. Remedial conservation is the treatment of museum objects to halt existing damage (e.g. the freezing of textiles to halt an infestation of clothes moth). Restoration is the treatment of museum objects to repair existing damage (e.g. putting a broken sculpture back together and filling-in any missing pieces).
- 15.2 Items will be selected for remedial conservation and/or restoration according to the Services priorities as set out in the Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Business Plan. The Collections Management Plan sets out details of priorities for collections care and conservation.
- 15.3 For minor interventive work (such as basic cleaning, packing or treatment for pests), appropriately trained members of the Museums, Arts and Heritage Service staff and volunteers can undertake this work. It is the responsibility of the Collections and Exhibitions Manager to ensure anyone undertaking such work on the collections receives appropriate training.
- 15.4 Where interventive conservation falls outside of the competence of the Service's staff or volunteers, and resources allow, then the Service will contract an ICON Conservation Registered conservator to undertake the work. All work undertaken by any external conservator will be overseen by the Collections and Exhibitions Manager.
- 15.5 All interventive treatments must be agreed by the Museums, Arts and Heritage Manager prior to treatment starting. The only exception to this is where delaying treatment might cause further damage to the item itself or other items within the collection. This would normally only be in the instance of a significant infestation or for health & safety considerations.
- 15.6 For any interventive conservation, appropriate ethical concerns will be considered. This will include whether or not it is ethical to conserve the item at all, and if so, how far it is ethical to conserve it. These questions will be considered by the Collections and Exhibitions Team in consultation with the external conservator.
- 15.7 Conservation Treatment Records are requested for every item undergoing interventive conservation. These records are input on the Collections Management System (Axiell Collections). A paper copy is also retained within the relevant Object History File.

16. The Buildings

- 16.1 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Service recognises that the maintenance of its buildings is fundamental to the preservation of both the buildings and collections and endeavours to ensure that the buildings are maintained in a suitable condition. The

museum's collection is stored and displayed in the following buildings. The body responsible for the upkeep of the buildings is listed.

Building	Used for	Owner	Upkeep carried out by
Clifton Park Museum	Museum Display Museum Storage Archive Storage	RMBC	RMBC Asset Management Services overseen by Museum, Arts and Heritage Service
External store	Museum Storage Archive Storage	RMBC	RMBC Asset Management Services, overseen by Collections and Exhibitions Manager, Museum, Arts and Heritage Service
Boston Castle	Museum Display	RMBC	RMBC Asset Management Services, overseen by Museum, Arts and Heritage Service

- 16.1 A Service Level Agreement between Asset Management Service and Museums, Arts and Heritage Service is in place regarding the upkeep of all buildings where collections are stored or displayed. Within Museum, Arts and Heritage Services, the Museum, Arts and Heritage Manager is responsible for these agreements.
- 16.2 Museum, Arts and Heritage Services carries out regular inspections of all buildings (or relevant part of buildings) it uses and notifies the RMBC Asset Management Services about any remedial or maintenance work required.

17. Collections Documentation Policy

17.1 Documentation Standards

- 17.2 Museum collections will be documented to Spectrum standards as issued by the Collections Trust. Documentation procedures (including all primary and secondary procedures) are included in the Collections Management Manual followed by staff. All primary Spectrum procedures (Object Entry, Acquisition & Accessioning, Cataloguing, Inventory, Location & Movement Control, Object Exit, Loans In (Borrowing Objects), Loans Out (Lending Objects), Documentation Planning) are completed to meet standards of museum accreditation.
- 17.3 Yearly reviews of at least all primary procedures should be scheduled and completed annually.
- 17.4 Museum collections will be catalogued with at least the minimum requirements set out in the Museums, Arts and Heritage Collections Documentation Manual.

18. Collection Information

- 18.1 Museums, Arts and Heritage make every attempt to gather suitable and sufficient information every item in its collection (including loans in). As a minimum, we will gather the following information prior to or upon acceptance of the object into the collection:
- Item name
 - Date (approximate if exact date is unknown)

- Manufacturer (if appropriate)
- Artist where applicable
- Donor or owner if the item is a loan
- Previous owners / users
- Provenance / Object story
- Copyright
- Material
- Condition
- Hazards
- Costs of collecting (including purchase price if relevant)
- Conservation or restoration details

18.1 Additional information will be added to the object record or object history file as it becomes available. This may include research, exhibition, publication, reproduction and usage information.

18.2 Museums, Arts and Heritage currently use the following documentation systems for its collections:

- Paper based including accession registers, entry forms and object history files.
- Online Collections Management System (Axiell Collections).

18.4 The Service maintains back-up copies of its Accession Registers. Back-up registers are stored in a separate location to the original register. The online Collections Management System (Axiell Collections) works on a cloud-based storage system.

19 Documentation Backlog

19.1 Museums, Arts and Heritage Service acknowledge a considerable documentation backlog of unprocessed entries and unnumbered items found during inventory – anomalies.

19.2 It is recognised that uncatalogued collections are a significant barrier to realising the aims and objectives of Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage.

19.3 The backlog will be managed with in line with the standards set out above and completed according to the Collections Management Plan. We aim to complete these activities within appropriate timescales, in accordance with the current Accreditation guidance.

20 Making Collections Information Available

20.1 Museums, Arts and Heritage will make information about the collections available through the following methods:

- Information provided alongside objects in exhibitions and displays
- Website
- Social media
- Enquiries
- Publications (where appropriate)
- Schools Session
- Events
- Talks and workshops
- Outreach

- The Museums Data Service

20.2 Museums, Arts and Heritage will make every effort to ensure that information made available about its collections is accurate and takes account of any legal and ethical considerations.

20.3 In providing information about the Service's collections, the Service will comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We will review requests for confidential data such as donor information, environmental information, valuations or site details on a case-by-case basis, and in accordance with the applicable legislation and any legal agreements or conditions of gift.

21 Collections Access Policy

21.1 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage recognises that there are many barriers to access at all levels but are committed to making all aspects of our activities as fully accessible as our resources allow, including access to buildings, collections, events, exhibitions and learning. Access extends to staff, volunteers and visitors.

21.2 The service will provide welcoming staff and learning opportunities for different audiences, different levels of ability and tailor our programmes to meet the needs of specific groups. We will promote all our activities and collections using accessible means of communication.

21.3 The service will follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines.

21.4 This policy has been written in line with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's (RMBC) Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Strategy 2022-2025 (based on the Equalities Act 2010) which states: *"The Council is committed to provide equal life opportunities for all our residents. We know that many things affect a person's ability to lead a fulfilling and happy life. This includes employment opportunities, good physical and mental health and access to educational opportunities."*

22. Our Commitment to Accessibility

22.1 Access is defined as something that is made possible when physical, cultural, social, sensory, intellectual, financial, emotional and attitudinal barriers are removed or reduced.

22.2 The Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage Access Statement set out the service aim to provide the widest possible access to its museums and services and enable audiences from all sections of the community to engage with and enjoy Rotherham's cultural heritage and historical assets. The service is committed to and believes that all people and sectors of the community have a fundamental right to engage with, use and enjoy the collections and services it provides.

22.3 The service will achieve this aim by:

- Delivering good quality and inclusive visitor experiences which inspire and provide enjoyment to visitors of all ages and abilities.
- Providing outstanding intergenerational learning experiences and opportunities for adults, families, children and young people.
- Engaging and inspiring diverse audiences with opportunities that encourage curiosity and spark imaginations.
- Utilising, interpreting and making the collections accessible both physically and digitally.

- 22.4 Collections development will ensure collections are fit for purpose, relevant and accessible to a wider audience. The service is committed to democratising its collections through the improvement of our cataloguing procedures and wider collections management practices. The visitor facilities at all of our venues and sites will be continuously reviewed to provide a welcoming and comfortable environment.
- 22.5 The Service is committed to using a variety of interpretative methods to exhibit the collections, enabling public access to the collections, buildings and sites, and associated information.

23. Collection Loans

23.1 Loan Collection out (lending objects)

- 23.1.2 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage actively encourage loans from its collections to widen access to our collections through exhibitions, research and learning. We will loan collection to Accredited Museums, Libraries and Archives, Educational Institutions and individuals for research and study. All borrowers will need to demonstrate that they are able to provide suitable facilities and appropriate conditions for the loan.
- 23.1.3 Request for loans are assessed by the Collections and Exhibitions Team and considered at regular review panel, led by the Museums, Arts and Heritage Manager.
- 23.1.4 The service will endeavour to cease long-term loans out by means of acquisition or return.
- 23.1.5 The maximum loan period for objects loaned out is five years.
- 23.1.6 The minimum loan period for objects loaned out is six months, ensuring that team capacity and collections access is balanced and manageable.

24. Loans Collection In (borrowing objects)

- 24.1 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage actively borrows objects from other Accredited Museums, Libraries and Archives, Educational Institutions, community groups, and individuals to enhance our exhibitions and public programme, and increase co-operation through exchange of material.
- 24.2 Suggested loans are assessed by the Collections and Exhibitions Team and considered at the bi-monthly Acquisitions and Disposals Panel, led by the Museums, Arts and Heritage Manager.
- 24.3 The service will not agree long-term loans in, resolving such cases by means of acquisition or return. Storage or holding of loans objects, either temporarily or permanently by the museum for the lender is not permitted.
- 24.4 The maximum loan period for objects loaned in is five years.
- 24.5 The minimum loan period for objects loaned in is six months, ensuring that team capacity and collections access is balanced and manageable.

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Appendix A: An overview of current collections

Due to a gradual reduction in the capacity of the collections team since the 1970s, our collections are now supported by professionals with generalist collections expertise.

Archaeology Summary

The archaeology collection consists of around 36,000 objects, of which approximately 30,000 are ceramic vessels or sherds. The collection has material ranging from the Palaeolithic period to the post-medieval period. This collection is largely uncatalogued, including around 90 boxes of archaeological material from Rotherham Archaeological Society. This collection also contains human remains.

- There is a particularly strong Roman collection, with thousands of finds from the Templeborough Fort and vicus excavations dating from the 1870s, 1916-17, 1940s, 1950s and 2000s. Some of the most notable pieces are the Roman grave markers (including one to a named female), intact ceramic vessels and the structural remains of the granary. From the same excavations, there are also examples of jewellery, building material, and evidence of glass and metal working. The Roman collections from Templeborough are supplemented by material found from other locations in Rotherham and from further afield, such as London and the Mediterranean. The collection also contains coins, including large Roman coin hoards from the Rotherham area. One of the best examples of a Roman coin is a golden Aureus of the Emperor Vespasian.
- There is also a good collection of Medieval and Post-Medieval material, mainly from major excavation sites within Rotherham Borough, with the majority made up of ceramic sherds. The best pieces include whole ceramic vessels from Green Lane Pottery in Rawmarsh, domestic and monastic items from Roche Abbey, and a good selection of Tudor floor tiles and brickwork from the College of Jesus.
- There is also a strong Prehistory collection from both Rotherham and from around the world, from the earliest Palaeolithic tools and bones from Cresswell Crags and Anston, to Bronze Age pots and flints from Canklow. There are two major collections of Prehistoric material: The Harold Copley Collection of nearly 1,000 items, mainly Neolithic and Bronze Age flints, found in the 1940s between Herringthorpe, Whiston and Canklow and The Gatty Collection of around 150 Palaeolithic to Bronze Age flints found in the Hooton Roberts area.
- The collection also contains a small, but excellent, collection of Early Medieval objects, including a small number of ornate Saxon and Viking gold and silver items, the Sagar Hoard of Saxon coins, and the excavation archive from Laughton-en-le-Morthen, which includes rare ceramic sherds and kiln material.

Fine and Applied Art Summary

The Fine and Applied Art collection consists of the previously named Decorative Arts and Fine Art collections. The collection now includes ceramics and glass -around 4,000 items. Around 15000 objects. are oil paintings, watercolours, drawings, and sculpture, and 1500 are prints.

The main focus of the ceramics collection is the Swinton/Brameld/Rockingham collection (usually referred to as the Rockingham collection). Rotherham holds one of the best public collections of Rockingham anywhere in the world. Items have been acquired by gift, purchase and bequest since the first item was given to the museum in 1908. The collection demonstrates

an excellent range of wares including a full dinner service, and examples of tea and dessert wares, many of which match the Rockingham Pattern Book. The Pattern Book is the second of four volumes produced to illustrate the designs used in the production of porcelain at the Swinton pottery site. It was acquired in 2007, with the aid of a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant and is part of the Rotherham Archives collection. Due to the size, significance and quality of the Rockingham collection, the service will work towards designation.

The collection includes:

- Utilitarian and decorative wares including potpourris, vases and figures.
- Examples of early Swinton/Brameld ware and early porcelain items such as the earliest known Rockingham teacup dating from 1826, when the factory was still experimenting with porcelain manufacture.
- Examples of items from the Royal Dessert Service of William IV, including one unfinished plate, and an unfinished plate from the Duchess of Cumberland's Dessert Service.
- The Rhinoceros Vase, which was produced in 1826, was at the time of its production the largest piece of porcelain to have been fired in one piece anywhere in the World. The vase, which stands at 1.15m high, was made as a demonstration piece for display at the factory showroom. It is richly decorated with painted scenes from Don Quixote, thought to be painted by John Wager Brameld.
- The Yorkshire Potteries collection and the General Ceramics Collection. The Yorkshire Potteries collection consists of around 300 items of ceramics made at Yorkshire potteries other than Swinton/Brameld/Rockingham. Included are items made at other Rotherham based potteries (such as Holmes Pottery, Rawmarsh Top Pottery and Kilnhurst Old Pottery) as well as from potteries further afield in Yorkshire (such as Leeds Pottery and Don Pottery, both with Swinton/Brameld/Rockingham connections).
- The General Ceramics collection includes pieces used locally and those used as reference samples for non-local factories to demonstrate the similarity to Rockingham or other Yorkshire potteries.
- Some glassware in the collection is thought to have been produced at the local Catcliffe Glass Works, although fully provenanced pieces are difficult to acquire. The service cares for the Catcliffe Glass Cone.
- Of the 1,100 or so drawings and watercolours, the most significant group is the George Wright watercolour collection of over 570 paintings produced by the local firm to demonstrate their cast iron works.
- 81 oil and watercolour paintings were donated by local benefactor Edward Nightingale in 1908 and 1913 (some had been on loan to the museum from 1893). He did this specifically *'to form the nucleus of a really good and instructive series of art productions, which a town of such importance as Rotherham should possess'*. Of this group are a number of artworks by high profile artists, including 'The Bay of Biscay' by Henry Redmore, 'Interior of a Church' by David Roberts, 'Mary Queen of Scots and David Rizzio' by John Rogers Herbert, and 'La Zingarella' attributed to Corregio. Nightingale's collection formed the start of the fine art collection.
- The fine art collection includes a number of oil paintings related to the Walker family, which fall broadly into three groups: those donated by Mrs Winifred Causton, descendent of the Walker family, including the large full length portraits of Joshua and Susannah Walker of Clifton House; those donated by Michael Walker, descendent of the Walker family, including a portrait of Susannah Walker in later life; those painted by Dame Ethel Walker, descendent of the Walker family, including her portrait and 'Decoration for an Ivory Room: Invocation to the Dance'.

- The portrait collection extends beyond the Walkers and includes 'Ann Verelst' (c.1771) by George Romney. Anne was the younger daughter of Josiah Wordsworth of Wadworth. She married Henry Verelst and lived at Aston Hall, near Rotherham. Other portraits include a pair by Jonathan Singleton Copley after David Morier; 'George II' and 'Frederick Prince Of Wales', both c.1800.
- The collection extends into those inspired by religious belief or mythology and allegory – including: The 'Adoration of the Shepherds', 'Diana, Returning from the Chase' by William Etty and 'The Adventure' by William Shackleton.
- The collection incorporates many townscapes, seascapes, landscapes and rural scenes, with both local and non-local subjects. Works are by a range of artists such as Henry Redmore, John Callow, George Chambers and William Brooker. The landscapes and townscapes include some paintings of national or international interest such as 'Landscape Study' by Henry Herbert La Thangue.
- The collection includes paintings with a local connection, such as featuring a local scene or sitter. Examples of this are the portrait of 'Thomas Newbould' (a local colliery manager) by David Jagger and the William Cowen painting 'View of Rotherham', which is complemented by seven other original works by Cowen in the collection.
- The Sculpture Collection holds around 100 objects, including three Charles Sargeant Jagger sculptures ('The Sentry', 'Torfrida' and 'Bacchanalian Scene'), a series of busts including one in Bronze of local English Channel swimmer Thomas Burgess and 'La Femme Africane' by Charles H Cordier. Also included within the collection is 'Puck on a Toadstool', by 19th Century American sculptor, Harriet Hosmer.

Fine Art objects are the most publicly accessible out of all the collections, due to their inclusion on Art UK. This work was funded in 2009 by the Public Catalogue Foundation.

Natural History Summary

The natural history, previously named natural sciences collection consists of around 21,000 specimens, around 6,000 of which are geological specimens, the remainder are zoology and botany.

- Perhaps the most well-known specimen in this collection is 'Marco' the European brown bear. Marco was created by local taxidermist Mr Teasdale and was acquired by purchase. He is very well loved by visitors as he used to form part of RMBC's School Loans Service.
- The largest individual specimen is that of 'Nelson' the Lion, a Cape Lion who was part of Jamrach's famous menagerie before being sold to London Zoo. As a taxidermy specimen, Nelson was part of the collection of Joseph Whitaker.
- The Whitaker collection of around 750 natural sciences specimens was donated to the museum in the 1970s. This collection includes excellent examples of bird and mammal taxidermy alongside shells and corals. Much of this collection is uncatalogued.
- The zoology collection contains around 2,400 taxidermy specimens including a good collection of study skins. Within the taxidermy collection are a group of around 150 mounted bird and mammal specimens produced by local taxidermist, Graham Teasdale.

- The collections include a large invertebrate collection, including an excellent collection of around 8,000 pinned Lepidoptera collected by Rotherham local C. E. Young.
- Most of the remaining invertebrate collection are voucher specimens of records held by RMBC's Biological Records Centre. A significant number of the voucher specimens were destroyed in the floods of 2007, but thousands remain. This collection requires further understanding.
- The geology collection is around 3000 objects. 500 of these are minerals and gemstones collected by Ethert Brand, 500 plant fossils were acquired from Hellaby, and around 100 rock core samples were acquired, mainly from Maltby Colliery.
- 19,091 Insects, 99% of these were acquired between 1974 and 1989 – after full-time Keeper of Natural History was employed in 1974. 58% were collected by and acquired from 6 individuals, 41% were acquired from Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery in 1978 (purchase of C.E. Young cabinet) and 1% were acquired from other individuals, such as William Ely – 26% of insect collection, Mrs M Crittenden & Mr D.W. Twigg – 10% of insect collection, Ms J.E. Addey & Ms P.G. Stenton – 4% of insect collection and Mr W.L. Barringer – 14% of insect collection.

Social & Industrial History Summary

The social and industrial history collections consist of around 9,000 items. The majority of the material relates to the personal lives of people who lived within Rotherham Borough. The collection is particularly strong in late Victorian domestic items, although these are often duplicated and not provenanced. There is a good collection of costume items, with ladies' clothes predominating, mainly from the Victorian period to the mid-20th century.

- A representative collection of around 1,600 items from the Beatson Clarke Glass Company which includes glass industry tools, finished products and some sample items where the process is also demonstrated. Around 80 items were acquired from the Guest & Chrimes Brassworks (a local company which invented the screw-down tap), including many of their early taps and water valves, constituting a particularly significant area of the collection.
- Iron and steel production are represented in this collection into the 20th century with a pair of serviette rings produced to mark the first casting from the first Kaldo produced steel in the UK. The Kaldo process was a revolutionary new way to produce steel invented in Europe and used for the first time in 1954. In the early 1960s, it was introduced to Parkgate Iron and Steel, making Rotherham the first place in England to use the new process.
- The collection includes a good number of timepieces, with an excellent group of locally made and/or retailed long case clocks, including examples made by Rotherham makers Abraham Taffinder and Cecelia Fletcher. These are complemented by a small but interesting collection of early pocket watches with six dating from the mid-1700s. Many of the long-case clocks were affected by the 2007 flood and historic inappropriate humidity levels. The clocks were involved in the 2019 Care of Collections Project which aimed to conserve such objects – this meant that the inner

workings, hoods and faces of the clocks were separated. They have consequently not been put back together.

- A recent discovery highlighted that a generous 214 objects were donated to the Social History collection by Rachel Formaintreux, the cousin of Ethel Walker. Around 200 objects were donated to the Social History collection, as well as some in other collections by Mr. Andrews.

World Cultures Summary

Little is known about the origins of this collection due to gaps in documentation. The whole collection was loaned to Leeds Museums for around 40 years until 2018 and was accessioned by them. As a result, the collection has not been accessioned into the Rotherham collection. The 2019 'Our World' Project aimed to research and rationalise the World Cultures collection to improve understanding of different cultures and traditions and develop a greater sense of belonging amongst local communities in Rotherham. An external researcher was appointed, and little provenance was discovered, meaning that the acquisition of these objects is currently largely unknown. We assume that the collection was put together mainly in the early 20th century and showed the general interest in cultures considered to be 'other', incorporating many cultures within the 20th century British Empire.

The collection consists of around 300 objects from around the World, including:

- Egyptian items including mummified animals, numerous scarabs and Beni Hasan pots. The collection also contains decorative Egyptian funerary items from sarcophagi, including masks. examples of prehistoric material from across the globe, including Palaeolithic material from Zimbabwe, flint tools from Europe and North America, and greenstone tools from New Zealand.
- Material possibly associated with the Zulu culture, including a shield and assegai, bead jewellery and a wooden headrest. objects possibly from Eastern Asia, such as Tibetan bronze temple figures and incense burners, carved Chinese peach stones, a fingernail protector, and an Indian articulated fish.
- The collection also contains examples of objects from Oceania, including the wooden Papua New Guinean paddle purported to have been collected by James Chalmers, the missionary explorer.