

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 03 July 2026

Report Title

York and Lancaster Regimental Museum Collections Management Policy 2026-2029

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)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report sets out the updated Collections Management Policy for the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum. 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.

Recommendations

1. The Service Director, Culture, Sport and Tourism approve the revised York and Lancaster Regimental Museum 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 York and Lancaster Regimental Museum 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 York and Lancaster Regimental Museum 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, accountability and gives 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 York and Lancaster Regimental Collection. As part of the accreditation process the service must demonstrate appropriate policies and procedures to support the care of collections.
- 1.5 The York and Lancaster Regimental Museum (which is the owner of the collection) was established in 1985 following the transfer of the collection from the Headquarters of the York and Lancaster Regiment at Endcliffe Hall, Sheffield, to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's Museums Service. The York and Lancaster Regimental Museum charity was formally established in November 2001, when the collection of the York and Lancaster Regimental was transferred from the Regimental Association Trust. The collection had previously been on long-term loan from the Regimental Association Trust. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is the sole trustee of the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum and therefore the custodian of its collection.
- 1.6 The York and Lancaster Regimental Museum collection holds more than 3,900 objects and 11,000 photographs, archives and ephemera which are managed by the Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage service. The majority of the collection focuses on the York & Lancaster Regiment from its inception in 1881 to disbandment in 1968. Material from these periods covers the Boer War and the First and Second World Wars. The recruitment for the regiment included Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham.

1.7 Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage also manage Clifton Park Museum, Boston Castle and five heritage sites. It is also responsible for the statutory Rotherham Archives and Local Studies, which is accredited by The National Archives.

1.8 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 May 2023 and is due for renewal in May 2026. This policy will only be approved for a period of three 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:

- Items relating to the period prior to 1881 and post Second World War period, especially National Service.
- The York and Lancaster Regimental Museum will not acquire objects simply as assets. Items will only be collected if they can tell a story particularly of individuals who served with the Regiment, or that will complement or fill a gap in the existing collections and knowledge.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Do Nothing – The current Collections Management Policy is up for renewal May 2026. To do nothing would risk the recent awarded Museum Accreditation which is dependent on showing progress against the identified areas for improvement.
- 3.2 Adopt the Collections Management Policy – The reviewed policy appropriately reflects the current mission and values of the York and Lancaster Regimental Collection. 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, Northern Military Museum Network, 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 Consultation with the community and stakeholders will continue throughout the lifetime of the policy. This will enable the service to determine the long-

term focus of the collection and ensure it continues to be relevant and engaging for communities.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Collections Management Policy is due for renewal on 31st May 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. There is no dedicated budget for managing the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum.
- 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 York and Lancaster Regimental Collection is accessible to the public through a gallery at Clifton Park Museum and an annual events programme associated with Remembrance Sunday. The archive collection is accessible through the Archives and Local Studies Search room.
- 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 York and Lancaster Regimental Museum of which Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is the sole trustee.

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 York and Lancaster Regimental Collection on behalf of the York and Lancaster Regimental Museum charity. 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.

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