

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION
January 2017**

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Graham Brown
Portfolio Holder for Commissioning and Procurement**

SUBJECT: Brecknock Museum Collections Development Policy

REPORT FOR: Information

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 One of the fundamental purpose of Brecknock Museum is to acquire and preserve objects as a permanent collection for the general benefit and enjoyment of the people of the county. The Collections Development Policy sets out the principles that will provide Brecknock Museum with a framework for responsible and ethical acquisition and disposal of collections. The policy applies to material which the museum owns and has accessioned into its collection, or intends to own and accession into its collection.
- 1.2 Museum Accreditation is a UK wide scheme which sets standards for museum management, collection care and public service. Museums seeking accreditation must have an approved policy for developing collections.
- 1.3 A formally approved Collections Development Policy is a requirement of the Accreditation Scheme for Museums in the United Kingdom. It is a statement of intent, reflects the purpose of the service and provides the basis for the development of the collections. Its revision over time is a reflection that the service is evolving and adapting to changing circumstances.
- 1.4 The policy must include:
- the statement of purpose
 - an overview of current collections
 - themes and priorities for future collecting
 - themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal
 - information about the legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Brecknock Museum

Collections Development Policy (Appendix 1). This replaces and updates the Brecknock Museum Collections Development Policy approved in 2014.

3.0 One Powys Plan

3.1 The Museum Service directly contributes to a number of the One Powys Plan outcomes:

- Stronger communities: Bringing people together in Powys so they feel that they matter and belong in their community.
- Community Safety: For communities in Powys to be protected from crime and disorder and to feel safe and secure in the place that they live
- Education: All pupils in Powys are supported to achieve their full potential including those with additional learning needs
- Training & jobs for young people: More young people in Powys would be either in full-time education, gainful employment or employment related training within the county
- Long term conditions: Citizens with long term conditions are supported and empowered to manage their condition and live fulfilled lives
- Older people: Older people will be supported to maintain fulfilled lives within stronger communities
- Healthy lifestyles: Powys citizens will be encouraged to lead active and healthier lives
- Mental health & wellbeing: Powys citizens will lead fuller and longer lives, be resilient, have good health and be more able to fully participate and contribute to their communities

4.0 Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, BPU)

4.1 **Property:** Strategic Property will provide the required support in cases of sale to ensure best value is achieved

4.2 **Legal:** No comment to make

4.3 **Finance:** Have noted the contents of this report

5.0 Corporate Communications

5.1 No proactive communications action required

6.0 Statutory Officers

6.1 Section 151 Officer: The Strategic Director Resources (S151 Officer) notes the comments made by Finance

6.2 Monitoring Officer: No comment to make

7.0 Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Collections Development Policy for Brecknock Museum is approved.	<p>To ensure the management and development of Brecknock Museum's collections, in accordance with the Museums Accreditation Scheme.</p> <p>A formally approved Collections Development Policy is a requirement of the Accreditation Scheme for Museums in the United Kingdom.</p> <p>This replaces and updates the Brecknock Museum Collections Development Policy approved in 2014.</p>

Relevant Policy (ies):	-
Within Policy:	Y
Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	-
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Catherine Richards
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	immediately

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Catherine Richards			Catherine.richards@powys.gov.uk



Accreditation

Collections development policy
Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery



Name of museum: Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery

Name of governing body: Powys County Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: January 2017

Policy review procedure:

The collections development 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: Nov 2021

***MALD: Museums Archives and Libraries Division* will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.**

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

1.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:

To preserve and present the material culture of Brecknockshire and to stimulate a good understanding of its communities for the benefit of residents and visitors.

The aims of the museum are:

- To collect, care for and promote the material culture of Brecknockshire.**
- To provide a centre for the presentation and interpretation of this material culture.**
- To stimulate and develop interest, especially among local individuals, groups and schools, in the heritage of Brecknockshire.**
- To support and improve the tourism development of the area.**

1.2. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3. By definition, the museum 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's collection.

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

1.5. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the

Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

1.6. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

1.7 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 museum's established core collection**

2. History of the collections

The Museum has been located at the heart of Brecon since its foundation in 1928 by the Brecknock Society and is one of the longest established regional museums in Wales. It was governed by the Society until the 1950s, when it was transferred to Breconshire County Council's control. Its original premises were a former English Congregational chapel (1830s) but, following the reorganisation of local government in 1974, the Museum and its collections moved to their current home - the former Shire Hall, where new floors were inserted to house them. The Museum has subsequently been managed and operated by Powys County Council.

The Museum's main purpose is to preserve, document, interpret, exhibit and collect material evidence and associated information on the natural and cultural evolution of the Brecknockshire region of Powys, Wales, for the benefit of the people of Brecknock, Powys, Wales and the world.

The collections are wide ranging and continue to expand. Physical and intellectual access has improved over recent years, however, some storage spaces are not currently accessible for all and current workspaces are not serviced by a lift, therefore

restricting access and requiring material to be carried up and down stairs in order to view.

3. An overview of current collections

Brecknock Museum has the following collections:

- 1) Archaeological finds from the Palaeolithic to the post-medieval period Brecknockshire. In particular, Roman finds from Brecon Gaer and early medieval material from Llangors.
- 2) Social History objects from the 17th to 20th centuries, associated with the history of Brecknockshire.
The collection relates to the following subjects:
 - a) Social and cultural history
 - b) Agriculture and industry history
 - c) Transport
 - d) Furniture
- 3) Natural history objects, collected during the late 19th and early 20th centuries:
 - a) Collection of local moths and butterflies (collected between the 1830s-50s)
 - b) Collection of birds' eggs (collected c. 1900)
 - c) Collection of Victorian and later taxidermy
- 4) Geological collection of rocks, minerals and fossils from Brecknockshire.
- 5) Historic and Contemporary art of Brecknockshire people and/or the environment, or works produced by people from Brecknockshire:
 - a) Sculptures
 - b) Watercolours
 - c) Acrylics
 - d) Oils
 - e) Prints and engravings
 - f) Photographs

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The aim of the Collections Development Policy is to continue the development of a comprehensive collection of artefacts, photographs and ephemera relating to the history and heritage of Brecknockshire.

Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery will continue to actively collect material in the following areas:

- 1) The archaeology of Brecknockshire
- 2) The history of Brecknockshire with special emphasis on the following aspects: social and cultural history; agriculture and industry; transport and furniture.

3) While the museum will not actively seek to collect natural history specimens; the museum will in conjunction with other bodies promote the natural heritage of Brecknockshire with particular reference to the conservation and preservation of the natural environment, its flora and fauna.

4) The museum will only collect geological material, found locally, and identified as improving the current collections. The museum 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 natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country.

5) The contemporary art and historic art of Brecknockshire

6) The museum will not actively collect ethnographical material, unless such material has a natural connection with Brecknockshire.

At all times the future acquisition of any artefacts will be governed by the museum's ability to care for the artefact in terms of conservation, documentation and storage.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 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.

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.

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

6.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The 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.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

- Judges Lodging, Presteigne
- Amgueddfa Cymru: National Museum Wales
- The Regimental Museum of the Royal Welsh (Brecon)

8 Archival holdings

As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom.

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

For all objects which fit the Museums collecting policy and will not have significant financial impact upon the Museum service, a decision will be made by the Senior Curator. For any item which might have a significant financial impact or does not marry with the collecting policy, but still has grounds for accepting/acquiring a decision will be escalated to Senior Managers and Portfolio holder for the Museum service.

9.2 The museum 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).

9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10 Human remains

10.1 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum 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 The museum 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.

For all archaeological material found in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

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 the museum is:

- **acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin**
- **acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin**

In these cases the 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.

14 Spoliation

14.1 The museum will use the statement of principles ‘Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II

period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The following statements must also be included, if relevant to the museum:

- 15.1 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 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.**

For all human remains in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

- 15.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.**

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.**
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum 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 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.

- 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 museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, 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 museum 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 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 MALD: Museums Archives Libraries Division.**

- 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 the museum 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.
- 16.13.1** In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2** If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 16.13.3** If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4** Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of

this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 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 museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.**