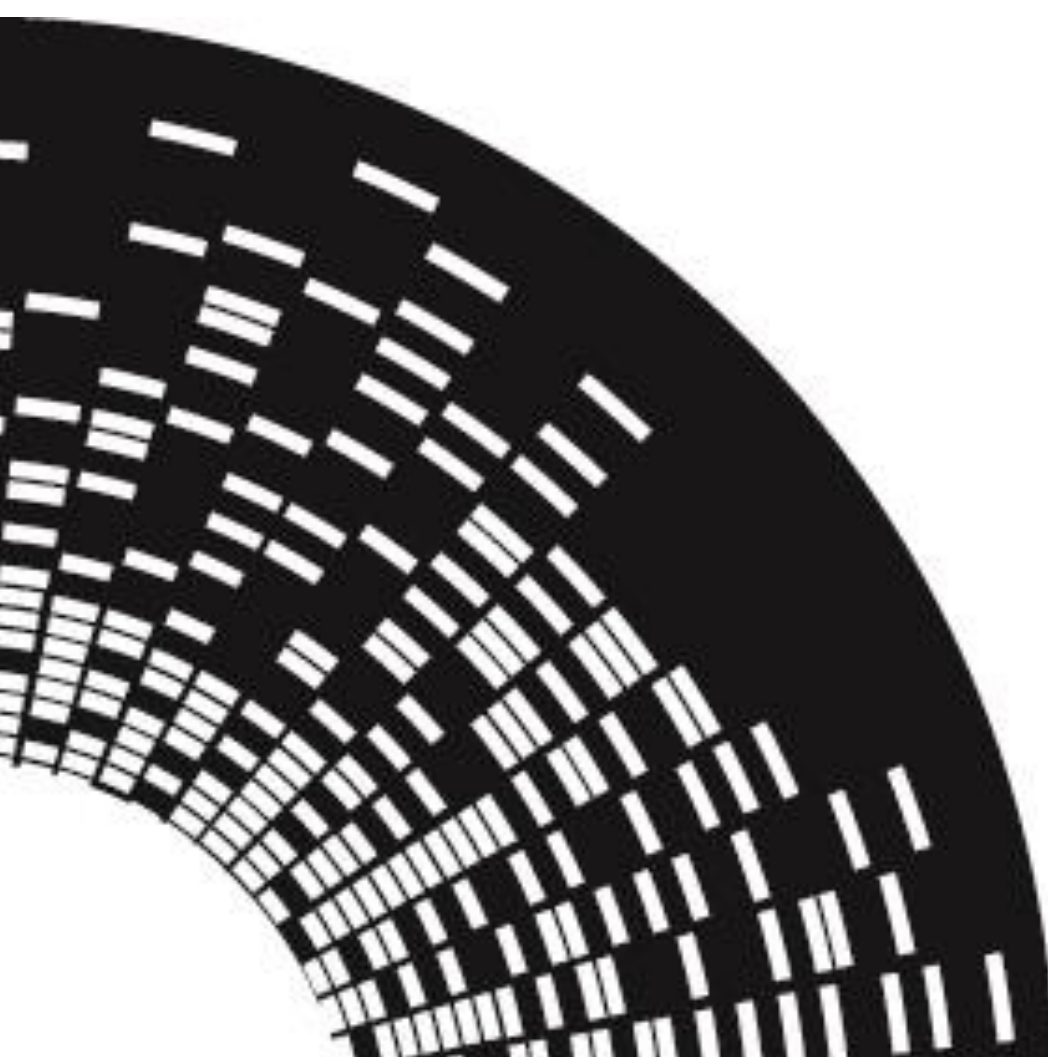




# Accreditation

## Collections Development Policy



**2017**

**Name of Museum:** National Civil War Centre - Newark Museum

**Name of Governing Body:** Newark and Sherwood District Council

**Date on which this Policy was Approved by Governing Body:**

**Policy Review Procedure:** The policy will be reviewed in two year cycles from ratification.

**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:** November 2019

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

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

**1.1 The museum's statement of purpose is:**

The National Civil War Centre - Newark Museum has a dual purpose. The National Civil War Centre will provide a national focus on the key events of the British Civil Wars of the 17th century and their consequences for the nation and the wider world. The Newark Museum aims to tell the story of the district of Newark and its residents.

Our vision is that the National Civil War Centre - Newark Museum will become fundamental to the identity of the nation and local residents by providing unique and inspiring cultural heritage experiences for visitors and the local community alike.

- 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**

There has been a museum in Newark since 1912. Between 1912 and 1974 the museum was run by Newark Borough Council. In 1974, as part of local government reorganisation, the museum came within the auspices of Newark District Council (now Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC)). In 1977 NSDC opened another museum, Millgate Museum.

Between 1977 and 1994 NSDC ran the two museums originally as separate entities and in 1994 the two sites, along with a newly opened Gilstrap Centre, formed the Museums and Heritage Service.

In December 2004 following a major review of the service and extensive consultation, Newark Museum was closed, leaving Millgate Museum and the Gilstrap Centre. Funding from Newark Museum was re-directed into the education and outreach programme.

In 2006 a new Resource Centre was opened, Millgate Museum was re-named Newark Millgate Museum and the museum service became known as Newark and Sherwood Museum Service.

In October 2012 the decision was taken to close and de-commission Newark Millgate to re-focus the museum service and divert resources towards opening a new museum.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015 the new museum opened with the title National Civil War Centre-Newark Museum. The primary focus of the National Civil War Centre-Newark Museum is on both permanent and temporary exhibitions telling the story of the British Civil Wars of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## **3. An Overview of Current Collections**

The museum collection comprises over 87,000 objects including archaeology, civil war items, archives, art, social history, costume, numismatics, natural science, photographs and local studies which are stored in the purpose built off site Resource Centre.

## **4. Themes and Priorities for Future Collecting**

The museum service is aiming to improve the quality and re-balance the nature of the collections as part of the new museum offer and the opening of the new museum.

The museum will proactively seek to collect nationally and internationally significant 17th Century and British Civil War artefacts, art and archives. In line with these aims the acquisitions fund has been increased and this element of the collections has expanded considerably.

## **5. Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and Disposal**

The museum service has undertaken several condition assessments of the collections as part of the de-commissioning and object movement process. A previous disposals programme was featured in the MLA *Collections for the Future* and referenced in *Museum Practice* as an example of best practice.

The museum service has looked very carefully at the natural history collections within its collections with a view to rationalising this element of the collection. Whilst recognising that these collections add a diversity to the collection as a whole and tell an interesting story, the museum have no long term plans to display them and they are seldom used for research. This is allied to the lack of curatorial expertise in this specific area and the fact that the majority of items fall outside our existing collections policy and geographical boundaries. The service recognises that elements of the collection, which are from our geographical area, will be retained.

Where disposal is being considered this will be carried out in accordance with the disposal procedures, outlined below. The Museum will also be guided by the latest Museums Association 'Disposal Toolkit', Spectrum and Ace and Museums Association guidelines on ethics.

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.

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**

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):**

National Army Museum  
Imperial War Museum  
Royal Armouries

## **8. Archival Holdings**

Description of Existing Archives Collection:

Manuscript material has been transferred, on permanent loan, to Nottinghamshire Archives. Printed material has been retained.

Examples of Parts of the Collection:

- Manuscript (now at Nottinghamshire Archives) -
- Medieval documents
- Settlement certificates
- 1811 Newark Census
- Printed material
- Civil War Tracts/books
- Volumes of Byron's poetry
- Maps/OS Maps
- Microfilm – Local Newspapers, Census

Criteria for Collecting Archives

The service will actively collect printed and handwritten material from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Printed material from all periods will continue to be collected. All 'associated information' connected to objects will be retained and kept in perpetuity.

## **9. Acquisition**

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

The museum acquires objects into the collections via, Gift, Transfer, Loan, Purchase or Bequest. SPECTRUM procedures are adhered to in the acquisition of objects into the collection.

In order to maintain objectivity and balance in the growth and diversity of the collections members of the management team, led by the Collections and Exhibitions Team, meet to discuss acquisitions and make the necessary decisions.

The Collections and Exhibitions Team have a designated budget for object purchases. This budget is reviewed as part of the budget setting process each year. Object purchases follow the procedure set out above.

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<sup>st</sup> 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 DCMS in 2005.

## **10. Human Remains**

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.

The museum service's collection includes human remains. The remains include both prehistoric and historic remains. The remains are skeletal (e.g., there are no mummies, shrunken heads etc.), and mostly derived from excavation. There are no artefacts made of human remains.

The collection of human remains is largely in storage with only two examples being on display. After considered debate the human remains on display are exhibited to show scientific processes and their display is dealt with in a sensitive manner.

The re-burial of human remains will be treated and discussed on a case-by-case basis. The means and cost of re-burial will be considered and the disposals policy will be followed.

## **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.
- 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**

- 15.1 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.

- 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 Arts Council England.
- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

#### **Disposal by Exchange**

- 16.12 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

#### **Disposal by Destruction**

- 16.13 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.14 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.
- 16.15 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.
- 16.16 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.
- 16.17 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.