
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	21 January 2025
Report By:	Ruth Binks Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUC/04/2025/SC
Contact Officer:	Sarah Christie Cultural Services Manager	Contact No:	
Subject:	Watt Institution Collections Development Policy		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to present to Committee for approval the Watt Institution's updated Collections Development Policy.
- 1.3 This policy combines the previous McLean Museum Collections Development Policy and the Inverclyde Archives Acquisition and Disposal policy into one document, applicable across the Watt Institution. The policy is essential for the purpose of Museum and/or Archive Accreditation and forms part of a suite of policies and associated procedures which support accountable collections management.
- 1.4 The policy supports Council officers with responsibility for collections management in a museum or archive setting when making decisions that shape the historic collections held in trust by the Council. It provides a set of principles that guide acquisitions, collections rationalisation, loans, collections care and access.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is recommended to
- note the contents of this report; and
 - approve the Collections Development Policy in Appendix 1

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Watt Institution comprises the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; the James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives. It is the main museum in the Inverclyde area and houses Inverclyde Council's municipal collections. These collections extend to museum objects; historic books; and archival materials.
- 3.2 The McLean Museum – as part of the Watt Institution – holds Accredited Museum status. As part of the Accreditation process, the museum is required to have in place a Collections Development policy to support the accountable management of the historic collections held in trust for the people of Inverclyde.
- 3.3 The James Watt Library and Inverclyde Archives are also housed within the Watt Institution. Both hold historic collections relating to the local history of the Inverclyde area, encompassing books; other published material; municipal records; photographs; ephemera; etc. Inverclyde Archives have expressed interest in the achieving Archive Accreditation – this process similarly requires a Collections Development policy to be in place.
- 3.4 The Collections Development policy currently in place for the McLean Museum is subject to five-year review. This updated Collections Development policy encompassing all historic collections housed in the Watt Institution supersedes the previous 2021 policy. It describes the scope of the combined collections (McLean Museum and Art Gallery; James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives), and the Watt Institution's acquisition priorities. The policy also defines the circumstances under which ethical disposal from the collections may be allowed, and the criteria for this.
- 3.5 Approval of the Watt Institution Collections Development Policy is required in support of both the McLean Museum and Art Gallery's Accredited Museum status and Inverclyde Archive's pending submission for Archive Accreditation. The Policy – attached as Appendix 1 – reflects sector best practice guidance.
- 3.6 Combining all historic collections held by the Watt Institution under one policy supports coherent and accountable collections management, consistent decision making, and improved service delivery.
- 3.7 Accredited Museum status recognises achievement of professional standards and supports the Watt Institution to access external funding to the benefit of the McLean Museum and Art Gallery and associated collections.

The Archives Accreditation scheme defines good practice and agreed standards for archive services across the UK, and will support the development of Inverclyde Archives.
- 3.8 The Collections Development policy provides an overview of the Council's existing collections. It acknowledges work ongoing within the Watt Institution to audit the museum collections to inform acquisitions priorities going forward; and outlines themes and priorities for future development across both the James Watt Library and Inverclyde Archive collections.
- 3.9 The policy describes the circumstances under which disposal of collection objects may take place, and the procedures to be followed.
- 3.10 The policy outlines guiding principles for the collection of objects, and other factors that could impact on any decision to collect. Such factors include the collecting policies of other museums and/or organisations collecting in related fields; transfer of ownership; etc.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that by combining the existing McLean Museum Collections Development policy and Inverclyde Archives Acquisition and Disposal policy into one policy document greater coherence will be achieved across the management of all historic collections held at the Watt Institution. A combined policy will support improved service delivery going forward through recognition of thematic links across all collections; underpinned by holistic and pragmatic decision-making.
- 4.2 It is further proposed that this combined policy will better support the operation of the Watt Institution as a single venue incorporating the McLean Museum and James Watt Library, alongside Inverclyde Archives. By establishing a joined-up approach to Collections Development opportunities for increased access to the historic collections held in trust by Inverclyde Council will be created.
- 4.3 It is proposed that Committee approve the renamed Watt Institution Collections Development Policy, reflecting the combined historic collections held at the Watt Institution. The format of this policy document has also been updated to reflect the Council's recently revised standard policy template.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Legal/Risk

Should approval not be granted, there is a risk that the McLean Museum and Art Gallery may lose its Accredited Museum status, which carries the following associated risks:

- a direct negative financial impact on the delivery of museum services due to exclusion from external funding streams (specifically Museums Galleries Scotland; and National Lottery Heritage Fund).
- potential for reputational damage to Inverclyde Council

5.3 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqlA is required.
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqlA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqlA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children’s rights.

5.4 **Environmental/Sustainability**

N/A

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.5 **Data Protection**

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 This policy has been prepared in discussion with colleagues at the Watt Institution; it meets the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Scheme and utilises peer-reviewed resources available via the Collections Trust to ensure its content meets nationally agreed standards of good practice.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 [Museums Association Code of Ethics for Museums 2015](#)

Organisational Development, Human Resources and Performance

Collections Development Policy: Watt Institution

Version No 2.0

Produced by:

Inverclyde Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LX

2024

Inverclyde Council is an Equal Opportunities employer

This document can be made available in other languages, large print, and audio format upon request.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility		
Policy Title	Corporate Group	Service
Collections Development Policy	CCER	Cultural Services

Change History		
Version	Date	Comments
2.0	2/12/24	Policy amended to encompass all Watt Institution collections (McLean Museum, Inverclyde Archives & James Watt Library), using updated policy template.

Distribution
Education & Communities Committee; Director of Education and Communities; Head of Service Communities, Culture and Education Resources; Cultural Services Manager; Watt Institution Team Leader; Coordinator; and officers.

Policy Review		
Updating Frequency	Next Review Date	Responsible Officer
5 years	November 2026	Cultural Services Manager

Policy Review and Approval			
Name	Action	Date	Communication

CONTENTS

Document control		Page
1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	Executive summary	
1.2	Background	
1.3	Strategic context	
1.4	Links to legislation	
1.5	Aim	
2.0	Scope	2
3.0	Policy Content	
3.1	Intent and principles	5
3.2	History of the collections	7
3.3	An overview of current collections	8
3.4	Themes and priorities for future collecting	9
3.5	Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal	10
3.6	Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items	11
3.7	Collecting policies of other organisations	12
3.8	Acquisition	12
3.9	Human remains	13
3.10	Biological and geological material	13
3.11	Archaeological material	13
3.12	Exceptions	13
3.13	Spoliation	14
3.14	The repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains	14
3.15	Disposal procedures	14
3.16	Disposal by exchange	15
4.0	Roles and Responsibilities	16
4.1	Chief Executive	
4.2	Directors	
4.3	Heads of Service	
4.4	Service Managers	
4.5	Officers	
5.0	Implementation	16
5.1	Training	
5.2	Communication of the policy	
6.0	Risk	17
6.1	Legislative risk	

6.2	Wider risk	
7.0	Equalities	17
7.1	Consultation and Engagement	
7.2	Equality Impact Assessment	

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy supports the accountable management of all historic collections held by Inverclyde Council for the benefit of the people of Inverclyde, and in the care of the Watt Institution.

The Collections Development policy describes the scope of the Council's museum and archive collections and its acquisition priorities. It also defines the circumstances under which ethical disposal from the museum collections may be allowed, and the criteria for this, in line with the Museums Association Disposal Toolkit and Code of Ethics 2015 (review commenced 2023; outcome pending). The policy also describes the disposal procedure to be followed in instances where archive material is not required for permanent retention.

The McLean Museum, as part of the Watt Institution, holds Accredited Museum Status. Accreditation is the UK sector standard for museums and galleries, and is administered in Scotland by Museum Galleries Scotland (MGS) (the sector body for museums).

As part of the Accreditation process, the museum is required to have in place a Collections Development policy. The Collections Development policy is typically subject to a five year review, in line with the Accreditation cycle. This policy – now encompassing the James Watt Library and Inverclyde Archives – supersedes the Collections Development policy 2021.

The Scottish Council on Archives administers the Archive Accreditation in Scotland scheme. Inverclyde Archives has expressed interest in achieving Archive Accreditation. Pending an assessment review timeline to follow, this policy will form part of any future submission to Archive Accreditation.

Key changes since the last policy review include:

- an update of the policy document in line with Inverclyde Council's standard policy template
- inclusion of collections relating to the James Watt Library and Inverclyde archives

1.2 BACKGROUND

The previous Collections Development policy was approved by Committee in 2021 and was included in the McLean Museum and Art Gallery's most recent Accreditation submission. This version has been updated to encompass all elements of the Watt Institution and associated collections, ie. McLean Museum; James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives.

The Collections Development policy takes cognisance of sector standards, and includes as its key component parts:

- the Watt Institution's 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 acquiring and disposing of items
- timeline for review

A written Collections Development policy provides curatorial guidance when determining the appropriateness of materials for acquisition or disposal, and establishes clear boundaries for collections-based activities.

This policy is further supported by the Watt Institution's Documentation policy and Access policy.

1.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This policy supports the Council in the delivery of the Council Plan 2023/28 in relation to the following outcomes:

- High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money

1.4 LINKS TO LEGISLATION

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.

1.5 AIM

This policy aims to provide a context for future collecting and/or collections rationalisation across the Watt Institution.

2 SCOPE

This policy supports Council officers with responsibility for collections management in a museum or archive setting when making decisions that shape the historic collections held in trust by the Council. It provides a set of principles that guide acquisitions, collections rationalisation, loans, collections care and access.

A Collections Development policy is essential for the purpose of Museum and/or Archive Accreditation, and forms part of a suite of policies and associated procedures that support accountable collections management.

3 POLICY CONTENT

3.1 Intent and principles

3.1.1 The Watt Institution's statement of purpose is:

The Watt Institution – encompassing the McLean Museum and Art Gallery; James Watt Library; and Inverclyde Archives – exists to enhance and enrich the learning, leisure and cultural experiences of the people who live, work and visit in Inverclyde.

- 3.1.2 By definition, the McLean 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.
- 3.1.3 Inverclyde Archives is the Institutional Repository for Inverclyde Council and has a collection which spans approximately 400 years of local history relating to the villages of Kilmacolm, Inverkip, Quarrier's Village and Wemyss Bay and the former historic Burghs of Greenock, Gourock and Port Glasgow and those relating to Inverclyde after local government re-organisation and boundary changes.
- 3.1.4 Under the 'Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011', the Council is empowered to make proper arrangements for the preservation and management of any records which have been transferred to them, created or acquired by them in the exercise of any of their functions or otherwise placed in their custody by way of donation, purchase, or loan.
- 3.1.5 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal across the Watt Institution are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 3.1.6 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.1.7 The Institution recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its museum 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.
- 3.1.8 The Institution will ensure that Inverclyde Archives follows best practice as specified in the 'Local Authority Archives Collecting Policies Guidelines', produced by the Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group in June 2016.
- 3.1.9 The Institution 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 Institution can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 3.1.10 Before acquiring materials as part of Inverclyde Archives, the Institution requires that all records be neither current nor semi-current. Inverclyde Council's current and semi-current records will remain under the management of the Council, however the Archivist will liaise with the Information Governance Officer during the lifespan of the record(s) to ensure that records can be appraised and transferred to the custody of Inverclyde Archives in accordance with the 'Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011', where appropriate.
- 3.1.11 Acquisitions to Inverclyde Archives must be unique. Copies or surrogates may only be accepted if the original material is no longer available or to fill gaps in the collection.

3.1.12 In exceptional cases, disposal from the museum collection 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;
- Prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken;
- The item under consideration lies outside of the museum's established core collection

3.1.13 Similarly, the Institution will not sell any archival material except in the case of it not relating to Inverclyde when received as part of a larger purchase. In this instance, material may be offered for sale to a more appropriate repository or organisation. Any proceeds from the sale will be used to care for the archive collection or to fund the purchase of archive acquisitions.

3.1.14 The Watt Institution will only hold items worthy of permanent retention within the Inverclyde Archive. The Archive - by agreement with the depositor - may dispose of by return or destruction, any material not required for permanent preservation, or transfer material to a more appropriate repository.

3.2 History of the collections

McLean Museum and Art Gallery

3.2.1 The collections within the McLean Museum & Art Gallery grew out of the work of the Greenock Philosophical Society during the early years of the nineteenth century and as such are redolent of both the academic and scientific interests of the time, and the history and development of museums. An addition to the earlier Watt Library, The McLean Museum & Art Gallery itself opened its doors to the public in 1876. Since the 1970s the local authority has managed the site and in 2019 following extensive structural renovations to the whole site, upon reopening the original name of the building was restored and it is now known as the Watt Institution.

3.2.2 The collections which have developed over the years represent both a unique record of Inverclyde and the broader national heritage embodying some of the most important themes, events, industries and experiences that have helped shape modern Scotland. The preservation of this collection is therefore of great importance not simply for the people of Inverclyde but also for the nation as a whole.

Inverclyde Archives and the James Watt Library

3.2.3 Inverclyde Archives and the James Watt Library comprises the stock of the former Watt Memorial Library; a private Subscription Library that was taken over by the

Greenock Corporation in 1974, along with the collection of Greenock Public Libraries. Other bequests and deposits have subsequently been added to these collections.

3.2.4 Since local government reorganisation, the collection has developed to reflect the current Inverclyde boundaries which include the settlements of Port Glasgow, Greenock, Gourock, Kilmacolm, Inverkip, Weymss Bay and Quarrier's Village.

3.2.5 Due to past changes in boundaries and scope of other local authorities, some relevant local records may be held by other organisations:

- National Records of Scotland
- National Library of Scotland
- Glasgow City Archives (formerly Strathclyde Regional Council)
- Renfrewshire Libraries (formerly Renfrew County)
- NHSGCC (formerly Argyll and Clyde Health Board)
- The University of Glasgow Archives and Special Collections
- Scottish Business Archive
- Moving Image Archive
- Scottish Catholic Archives
- Scottish Jewish Archives

3.3 An overview of current collections

3.3.1 The museums extensive collections encompass Archaeology & Numismatics, the Fine, Decorative & Applied Arts, the Natural Sciences, World Culture and Social History.

3.3.2 The Archaeology & Numismatics Collection reflects a wide range of interests outside of Inverclyde. The most significant part of the collection consists of artefacts from Ancient Egypt. These were donated in the late nineteenth / early twentieth centuries as a result of activities undertaken by the Egypt Exploration Fund who were supported financially by the museum and the town of Greenock.

3.3.3 The extensive Fine Art Collection encompasses a range of works by Scottish, British, European and American artists dating from the eighteenth century onwards including an extensive number of works by most of the significant Scottish artists working between 1750 and 1950. The Decorative and Applied Art Collections reflect strong Inverclyde connections with artefacts made by the Clyde Pottery of Greenock and Greenock Provincial Silver pieces. The Clyde Pottery Collection at the McLean Museum is the world's largest collection of ceramics from this pottery, many of the artefacts being donated by the pottery itself.

3.3.4 The Natural Science Collections is one of the key founding collections within the museum and encompasses Taxidermy, Oology, Palaeontology, Geology, Entomology and Herbarium. The collection which was proactively acquired reflects the considerable importance attached to collecting in this field during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

3.3.5 The World Cultures Collection contains artefacts from all over the world and has been an important part of the museum since its foundation. The collection grew as a

result of the Inverclyde's importance as a seaport and its involvement in maritime and trading activities. Artefacts from Asia, Africa and Oceania are particularly well represented.

- 3.3.6 The Social History Collection reflects the diversity of Inverclyde's industrial and social history. Collections relating to James Watt and shipbuilding are of note.

3.4 Themes and priorities for future collecting

- 3.4.1 The Watt Institution aspires to develop its museum collection so that it remains relevant and fulfils the mission statement and purpose of the Institution. The Institution also aspires to preserve the collection for future generations through proper stewardship and by adherence to recognised standards and best professional practice.
- 3.4.2 During the period of this policy the Institution is undertaking both a major overhaul of its museum galleries and its interpretive offer, and a full collection audit. For this reason, no major decisions around the themes and priorities for future museum collecting will be undertaken prior to the completion of this work and an assessment of the outcomes and their implications.
- 3.4.3 The Institution, through Inverclyde Archives, will aim to collect, manage and preserve unique archival material relating to the areas administered by Inverclyde Council which record and reflect the history, culture and development of the local community and area.

Inverclyde Archives will acquire records and materials in different formats; handwritten, typed, printed, or electronic. Original or unique maps, plans, photographs, bound volumes, media (such as slides, cassettes, film reels, DVDs) and other ephemera will be collected. Digital material such as photographs, documents, audio or video will also be collected and 3D artefacts will be accepted if they have a special relationship with an associated collection.

The collection will include, but is not limited to:

- Records of Inverclyde Council, its predecessor authorities and historical burgh records including Council minutes, financial records, Council reports, police records, education records, log books, minutes and registers.
- Records of former churches not held by other central bodies (e.g. Church of Scotland), nonconformist churches and other denominations within Inverclyde.
- Records of businesses, charities, organisations, clubs and societies, communities, families and individuals relevant to the history of Inverclyde.
- Records of other local authorities and/or public bodies serving areas within Inverclyde, whilst respecting the collection policies of neighbouring authorities
- Records of local or regional bodies based in or active in Inverclyde and for which there is no other suitable repository. Such archives will be received if they are at risk of destruction.
- digital surrogates or copies of material held in other repositories to fill gaps in the collection to allow for access to this material locally.

- records to add to the collection such as by obtaining oral histories and written testimonies in order to fill gaps in the collection.

3.4.4 The Institution, through the James Watt Library, will collect published sources of relevant local material in any format that is not covered by the scope of Inverclyde Archives.

The collection will include, but is not limited to:

- New and previously published works including books, leaflets and pamphlets, including out of print material which relates to Inverclyde.
- Printed maps; historical or current, including ordnance survey.
- Commercial recordings in any format relating to the local area or with local content.
- CD-ROMs; sources may include family history sources; census returns; census indexes; trade directories; maps and printed books.
- Facsimiles and photocopies of sources of relevance and local interest deposited in other repositories will be acquired.
- Microfilm and microfiche including census returns and parish registers.
- Local newspapers on microfilm and in hard copy. An ongoing programme of microfilming current newspapers will continue.
- Biographical and autobiographical sources in the form of books, pamphlets and articles relating to local authors and prominent individuals within Inverclyde. It will also acquire a representative collection of published works by local authors.
- Printed ephemera including, but not limited to, guidebooks, timetables, event publications, programmes, election material and posters

3.4.5 Inverclyde Archives and the James Watt Library will not aim to represent any particular historical, political, religious or other view point in its acquisition of records, but to reflect as objectively as possible all aspects of Inverclyde's past and present.

3.5 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

3.5.1 The Institution 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 usable, well-managed collection. 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.

3.5.2 Rationalisation reviews will also include all other aspects of the collections, especially the storage, management capacity and conservation requirements of the collections.

3.5.3 A collections audit is currently underway, thus no major decisions around rationalisation or disposal will be undertaken prior to the completion of this work and an assessment of the outcomes and their implications.

3.6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

- 3.6.1 The Institution recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal to/from its museum collections.
- 3.6.2 As the sector body for Archives in Scotland, the Scottish Archive Council will be approached in the first instance where advice is sought in the acquisition and/or disposal to/from Inverclyde Archives.

3.7 Collecting policies of other organisations

- 3.7.1 The Institution will take account of the collecting policies of other museums, archives 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.

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

Castle House Museum, Dunoon
Renfrewshire Museums Service
Glasgow Museums Service
North Ayrshire Museums Service

- 3.7.2 In the event of a dispute of the most appropriate archival repository, the matter shall be referred to the Chair of ASLAWG (Archivists of Scottish Local Authorities Working Group), SCA (Scottish Council on Archives) or the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (NRS).

3.8 Acquisition

- 3.8.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is: the Watt Institution Co-ordinator is authorised to acquire items on behalf of the museum. Where the item is of significant value, scale or bears a cost in acquiring it, or imposes costs in terms of storage or transportation, then the agreement of the Service Manager is required.
- 3.8.2 The Institution will not acquire any object or specimen for the museum collection 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).
- 3.8.3 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, 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

3.9 Human remains

Where the Institution holds, or intends to acquire, human remains from any period, it will follow the guidelines in the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011

3.10 Biological and geological material

So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the Institution 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.

3.11 Archaeological material

- 3.11.1 The Institution 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
- 3.11.2 In Scotland, under the laws of bona vacantia including Treasure Trove, the Crown has title to all ownerless objects including antiquities, although such material as human remains and environmental samples are not covered by the law of bona vacantia. Scottish material of chance finds and excavation assemblages are offered to museums through the Treasure Trove process and cannot therefore be legally acquired by means other than by allocation to the McLean Museum & Art Gallery by the Crown. However, where the Crown has chosen to forego its title to a portable antiquity or excavation assemblage, a curator or other responsible person acting on behalf of Inverclyde Council, can establish that valid title to the item in question has been acquired by ensuring that a certificate of 'No Claim' has been issued on behalf of the Crown.

3.12 Exceptions

- 3.12.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the Institution 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
- 3.12.2 In these cases the Institution 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 Institution will document when these exceptions occur.

3.13 Spoliation

The Institution 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.

3.14 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 3.14.1 The Institution's governing body, acting on the advice of professional museum staff, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by MGS in 2011), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum staff will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis; within the museum's legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 3.15.5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 3.14.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in Scotland will follow the guidelines in the 'Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Scottish Museums' issued by Museums Galleries Scotland in 2011.

3.15 Disposal procedures

- 3.15.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal.
- 3.15.2 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.
- 3.15.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the Institution 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.
- 3.15.4 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.
- 3.15.5 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.

- 3.15.6 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.
- 3.15.7 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.
- 3.15.8 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).
- 3.15.9 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.
- 3.15.10 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 Museums Galleries Scotland.
- 3.15.11 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.
- 3.15.12 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.

3.16 Disposal by exchange

- 3.16.1 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange

- 3.16.2 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 3.16.3 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.
- 3.16.4 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.
- 3.16.5 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.
- 3.16.6 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.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 ELECTED MEMBERS

Elected Members should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in procedures relating to disposal from historic collections.

4.2 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in procedures relating to disposal from historic collections.

4.3 DIRECTORS

Directors should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in procedures relating to disposal from historic collections.

4.4 HEADS OF SERVICE

Heads of Service should be aware of the requirements of this policy, particularly with regards the role of the governing body in procedures relating to disposal from historic collections.

4.5. SERVICE MANAGERS

The Service Manager has overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this Collections Development Policy.

4.6 OFFICERS

Officers should be aware of the requirements of this policy and meet these in operational service delivery.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 TRAINING

Specific training on the content of this policy is not required.

5.2 COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy will be available publically via the Council website.

6 RISK

6.1 LEGISLATIVE RISK

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.

6.2 WIDER RISKS

Without this policy the McLean Museum and Art Gallery, as part of the wider Watt Institution, would fail to meet the Mueum Accreditation Standard. This in turn could expose the Council to wider financial and reputational risks.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

This policy meets the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Scheme and utilises peer-reviewed resources available via the Collections Trust to ensure its content meets nationally agreed standards of good practice.

This policy will be further reviewed in line with the requirements of the Archive Accreditation scheme, and as per the policy review schedule specified.

7.2 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no evidence to indicate that this policy could affect employees differently or less favourably, on the grounds of their Protected Characteristics.