



Chain Bridge Forge Museum

Collections Development Policy

2019-2024

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1. Museum's Vision Statement

Chain Bride Forge Museum is a living museum, which offers exciting and relevant experiences that move, teach and inspire our increasingly diverse audiences

2. An overview of current collections

The Museum's collections include the Smithy itself, the forge, tools and associated materials and ephemera associated with the business from the mid 1700s until the late Twentieth Century. This collection of historic material that is core to the purpose of the museum includes many duplicates and near duplicates that have an important part to play in the presentation of the Smithy as it would have looked in the latter half of the Twentieth Century.

In addition to this core collection, the Museum also collects documents, photographs and other ephemera to illustrate the community of which the Smithy was a part and the world in which the Blacksmiths worked. In many cases this material will be copies of records in other people's ownership, but some original material has been acquired by the Museum.

The Museum has an oral history archive to preserve people's memories of the Forge when it was still a significant part of the local community.

The Museum also has a collection of blacksmith's tools and materials that are not associated with the Forge, but are used to demonstrate the blacksmith's craft to visitors.

3. Themes and priorities for future collecting

Chain Bridge Forge Museum continues to seek original material of all kinds associated with the history of the Forge, from the time when the building was first used as a Smithy (believed to be in the mid-1700s) until the closure of the business in 1989.

We will also collect material that relates to the community that the Smithy served, largely Spalding and some neighbouring villages. This collection will be largely archival and most material will be duplicates.

The Museum will also continue to build its oral history archive relating to the area around the Smithy during the Twentieth Century.

The Museum will also continue to maintain a collection of blacksmith's tools for demonstration purposes, together with examples of the blacksmith's craft. Typically this material will be modern, or without provenance: significant material will not be collected as part of this collection.

4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

Chain Bridge Forge Museum is a young institution and has not inherited a substantial historical collection. Although we hold some archival material together with some recently and tools and equipment required to operate the forge, the museum's collections consist almost entirely of the contents of the Forge when it ceased to operate as a business and which is therefore fundamental to our objective of maintain the Smithy as it was in its working life. There is therefore little scope or need for rationalisation or disposal at this time, although this assessment will be reviewed as the development of Chain Bridge Forge Museum progresses.

5. Limitations on collecting

Chain Bridge Forge Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

6. Collecting policies of other museums

Chain Bridge Forge 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. Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

- Ayscough Hall Museum
- The Museum of Lincolnshire Life
- Church Farm Museum
- Spalding Gentlemen Society
- Moulton Mill

7. Policy review procedure

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above. 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 existing collections.

8. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

9. Acquisition procedures

The policy for acquisition is as follows:

Any potential acquisition is recorded and this document is presented to the governing body for discussion, the actual object is not retained by the museum. The collection development policy is referred to for guidance – considering our collecting themes and our limitations for continued care and management of the existing and future collection. The governing body agree during the meeting whether the object meets with the collecting objective – should it be successful the object is accepted, an object entry form completed and the documentation processed followed for the induction of the object into the collections. Should the object be declined, suggestions on where the donor could consider contacting is shared and they are informed of the decision.

Note:

A) 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).

B) 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. Spoliation

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.

11. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

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 13a-13d, 13g and 13o/s below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

12. Human remains

The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

13. Biological and geological material

The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

14. Archaeological material

The museum will not acquire any 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

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 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.

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. Management of archives

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 (third edition, 2002).

17. Disposal procedures

17.1 Disposal preliminaries

The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.

By definition, the Museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.

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.

17.2 Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 13g-13o will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.

The Museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

17.3 The disposal decision-making process

Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, 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 the 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. External 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.

17.4 Responsibility for disposal decision-making

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 of the collection acting alone.

17.5 Use of proceeds of sale

Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied 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. The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

17.6 Disposal by gift or sale

Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. 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.

If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly 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 an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.

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.

17.7 Disposal by exchange

The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

17.8 Documenting disposal

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.