



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Northampton Museums & Art Gallery Collections Development Policy

Equality Impact Assessment

The Council strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all both as a major employer and as a service provider.

The Access Policy has been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness and consistency for all.

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Version 2		
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Version 4		

Northampton Museums and Art Gallery Collections Development Policy

1. Relationship to other Plans and Policies and Guiding Principles

This policy supports the NMAG Forward plan and should be considered alongside the Access Policy, Care and Collections Policy, Documentation Policy and other NMAG plans and procedures.

Vision: To be a focus for Northampton's arts, heritage and culture and the international centre of excellence for shoe heritage, valued and enjoyed by all.

Mission: Using our collections, knowledge and expertise, we engage people with Northampton's rich history, culture, art and our world class shoe collection.

Overarching guiding principles

- The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 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.
- Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 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. Spectrum is the UK collections management standard developed by the Collections Trust. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 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.
- The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

2. Background: The History of the Collections

NMAG has a long history and a range of diverse collections, many driven by the passions and the ambitions of the founders of the Museum in 1865. The founders aimed 'to illustrate the history and products of the county' but also, through their actions, to bring the curiosity of the wider world to Northampton. The collections developed erratically in the early days, and were influenced by collecting fashions, the interests of individuals and the particular landscape and people of Northampton and shire. Now the collections reflect NMAG's regional status with a national and international industry represented in the shoe collection.

The early Museum committee were interested in random curios, some of which survive in the collections today. Curiosity is still an important driver for NMAG today.

More focussed collecting was driven by the archaeology and geology of the landscape disciplines that were developing in this period led by Sir Henry Dryden. Through Councillor Hensman, and the artist TL Shoosmith there was a local interest in developing an art collection that would both inspire and reflect local artists driven by local pride. Acquisitions of Egyptian archaeology and geology from Lord Northampton's collection helped to widen the breadth of the collections. This was significantly enhanced with further donations and the purchase of Beeby Thompson's exceptionally well recorded local fossil collection. Interest in numismatics of the county and the world was driven by initial founders with Cowper donating Roman coins from Duston in 1898. An early 20th century curator, Mr George, working with two local collectors, Shoosmith and Manfield, had a strong interest in ceramics thus creating a significant British and Oriental decorative art collection. The late 19th and early 20th century saw the growth of the ethnographic collections as local people donated curios and objects. In the mid-late 20th century the art collections continued to develop particularly in relation to Italian art through auction purchases led by the curator Mr Terry. From the 1960s, driven by the growth of the town, significant archaeology collections developed. The late 20th century saw a focus on social history with the development of collections reflecting everyday life. This collection continues to grow significantly, including costume with a donation in the 1960s of a large Victorian collection. The Regimental and Yeomanry collections have a long history of their own but were acquired by the council in the 1990s under trust agreements. The most significant collection held at NMAG is the shoe collection which is unique in terms of place and Northampton's role in shoe industry worldwide. This was the significant vision of the museum founders encouraged by Manfield and the creation of a collection of research footwear now used by the footwear industry across the world. The history of the collections reflect a vision to bring collections to Northampton and to use collections to bring Northampton to the world.

Some of the collection has been acquired with external funding support including Heritage Lottery Fund, V&A purchase grant, Contemporary Art Society, Art Fund, ACE, PRISM, and Friends of Northampton Museum.

3. Overview of Current Collections

Past collecting was focussed on specific and defined typological areas. As the collections have grown they have become more complex and as result our collection definitions have become far more fluid and the significance of our collections is focussed around how they interrelate and support each other.

Shoe Collection

The shoe collection is one of the largest collections of shoes and shoe heritage in the world with over 60,000 objects and is designated as being of national and international importance by Arts Council England. Its strengths lie in its scope and range with particular emphasis on shoemaking post 1858 when the occupation was industrialised. It includes 15,000 shoes and shoe accessories worn by all genders and ages of people from all strata of society from working to upper class and from rural to urban. It also covers world footwear, and the history of making (shoe tools and machinery) and retailing around shoes, shoe and shoe care. An archive of journals, photographs and design material and artworks and trinkets reflecting shoe themes complete the collection. Stories within the collection support identity and cultural association which is an area for development. The concealed shoes and the concealed shoe index and index of shoemakers support the collection.

Social History

This is a unique collection reflecting the history and development of Northampton and the surrounding rural county. The collection covers material from the 1600 to the present day. Much of the material supports stories connected with a 'sense of local place' in particular highlighting what it was like to live and work in the county from 1800-1950. This includes some material relating to surrounding towns and also the rural hinterland reflecting an earlier collecting policy when NMAG acted as a county collection. The Lace collection covers the county and surrounding region of Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire. Early collecting is poorly provenanced with a typological focus. Later collecting acknowledges historical value and local associations. Objects and photographs represent local industry, retail, architecture, domestic life and social activity. The categories of material held are wide and diverse but include objects from large furniture and machinery to small toys and badges, photographs and negatives, ephemera, oral histories and films.

Historically there has not been a focus on creating a specific APM collection however objects have been acquired that relate to Abington across the other collections. There are approx.100 objects with such a link and these include objects that link to the families that lived here, and items linked to Pritchard and the mental asylum.

Numismatics

An extensive and comprehensive collection of coins, tokens, checks and commemorative medals representing Northampton, Northamptonshire and the wider world. The collection includes examples of most currency types expected in Britain from the period of the Roman invasion until the twentieth century plus examples from prehistory. The collection also supports our understanding of local history through the Northampton mint and local tokens and coins found beneath the ground in the town and hinterland. There is also a reasonably large collection of coinage and commemorative medals with national and international significance representing a

wide range of historic world currencies. The collection contains a number of local hoards.

Archaeology

This collection reflects the development of Northampton and the surrounding hinterland with material from excavations and material found by individuals dating from 1840 to the present day. The collection covers most archaeological periods from prehistory to the twentieth century and therefore forms a good cohesive representative collection with a particular strength in relation to the medieval period, reflecting the era when Northampton was most important as a town. The bulk of the excavated material is from 1960-1980 when there was substantial excavation activity in Northampton due to the growth of the town and the rise in 'modern and developer led archaeology'. There are a few recent excavations but currently large archives from 2010 onwards tend to remain with Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). There is a substantial stone archaeological collection.

Costume

The collection includes costume and accessories associated with male, female and children's dress covering both day and night wear. The strength of the collection lies in the typological scope and range with a significant proportion of the costume associated with local people, companies and organisations. The collection dates from 1560 until 2012 but most objects pre-date 1960. A focus on 1800-1970 women's' costume reflects the interest of past curators and donors. Much of the collection does not have strong provenance and is collected as a typological example.

Military

The collection consists of two collections, the Northamptonshire Regiment and the Northamptonshire Yeomanry collection covering the period 1741 until 1971 and following supporting organisations including the Anglian Regiment. The Council acts as sole trustee for both collections. The Northamptonshire Regimental collection consists of both physical objects and documentary archives and the Northamptonshire Yeomanry collection consists of physical objects only whilst the archive is currently owned by the Northamptonshire Yeomanry Association Benefit Fund (NYABF) and held by the Record Office. Both collections are supported by a library of reference books. The Regiment and Yeomanry were deployed across the world and some of the collection objects reflect this including souvenirs and gifts.

Fine Art

The artwork covers the period from the 15th century to the present day. Aside from the Italian collection and some European/American artists, the collection is wholly British. The collection includes oil, works on paper, artist prints, sculpture, and mixed media and includes genre scenes, still life, landscapes, history paintings, portraits, abstract art and preparatory works. The collection contains representation of key names in national and international art up until 1970s and reflects the development of British Art. The Italian collections includes Renaissance and baroque artworks by less well-known masters. The collection has good representation of Town and County presidents and other local artists from the 1800 onwards.

Decorative Art

This collection is defined by hand crafted and manufactured decorative objects that are also functional. Objects include ceramics in various forms, glass in various forms, furniture including chairs, occasional tables and chests, cast metal decorative objects, carved bone, stone and ivory ornamental objects. The collection currently covers both Western European and Eastern artefacts. The collection ranges from valuable pieces to throw-away pieces that were fashionable at the time of production or anniversary souvenirs. The British factory ceramics are comprehensive but this does not apply to the oriental ceramics. The ceramic collection, forms the core of the decorative art collection and numbers some 2,500 pieces. Most of the collection is non-local, however, there are a number of pieces dating from the 1890s to the 1920s where excavated examples from Northampton have been accessioned into this collection. The collection was developed through a number of bequests and has been supported by the friends in recent years.

Geology

The collection consists of approximately 41,915 specimens including 500 rocks, 38915 fossils and 2500 minerals. This includes 100 type, figured and cited specimens including ammonite material. The collection is made up of specimens and Victorian geological cabinets and is supported by books and notebooks from the collectors (specifically Beeby Thompson currently held at the Local Studies Library). About 75% specimens are from Northamptonshire Jurassic sites. The other 25% relates to a range of geological material of British and foreign provenance. The collection was developed through a number of local collectors.

Ethnography

The collection consists of approximately 524 objects and was acquired by the museum mainly by donation between the late 19th century and the late 20th century. The objects come from a wide geographical spread including Asia, Oceania, and Africa, North and South America and a few pieces from distinct ethnic groups within Europe. This is not a complete typological collection and has a wide diversity in terms of the object styles and use. The ethnographic material held at Northampton Museum was acquired by the museum mainly through donation between the late 19th century and the mid-20th century and by the 1980s was a closed collection. In the 1990s it underwent rationalisation. There are links to the social history collections and the history of the museum.

Natural History

NMAG has a small collection of natural history specimens. The collection was acquired in the 1890s to furnish Abington Park Museum in a period when this type of collection was very fashionable. The collection includes material from 1800 to 1900. The majority of the collection was disposed of in the early 2000s. The collection now include a few mounted specimens including those shot by local people, a mollusca collection of approximately 3,200 items, and a small collections of birds' eggs.

Egyptology

A small Ancient Egyptian collection consisting of approximately 250 items from prehistory to the Ptolemaic period. Much of the collection was acquired by Lord Northampton alongside other donors.

Education

NMAG holds a collection of items used for on-site handling, outreach sessions and loan boxes in the delivery of formal learning programmes for schools, other formal education groups, Further Education and Higher Education. In broad terms the objects fall into the following collecting areas; shoes, archaeology, art, ethnography, social history, and military. Some are accessioned whilst others have handling numbers.

4. Themes and Priorities for Future Collecting

4.1 General Principles of Collecting

NMAG will take an active approach to collecting as follows:

Active and co-collecting:

- Working with identified communities/individuals we will collect objects to support public programming including exhibitions and events.
- Working with identified communities/individuals we will collect objects to support projects led by outreach, learning, curatorial and other areas of NMAG.
- Working with identified communities/individuals we will collect to fill the gaps identified in the collections, in particular contemporary collecting.
- Develop co-collecting activity with organisations and community groups to ensure our collections are relevant to our communities. This could include community panels or partnership projects.
- Co-collecting with other museums to ensure that objects of relevance to more than one organisation can be accessed widely and resources regarding storage/display can be shared.
- Create and commission artworks for specific collection areas.
- Future collecting will be influenced by unitary boundary changes and NMAG will actively collect in these areas to ensure that the collections are representative of place and people.
- As the biggest museum in the county and with such diverse collections NMAG will renew its focus with a county wide collecting approach to illustrate the history and products of the county.
- Where appropriate within collecting areas we will develop digital collections both audio and visual.
- Collecting around specific APM activity including weddings and commercial hire as part of APM archive.

- Collecting around marketing and NMAG events and exhibitions as part of NMAG archive.
- Archive of museum general activity including collections/curatorial, public programming, commercial (weddings), facilities, visitor services.
- Working with identified communities to ensure that our collections are representative of female, gender, disabled people and **LGBTQIA** histories.
- Collecting supporting material including letters/emails.
- Collecting to represent our audience segmentation groups. Our audiences need to be represented by and see themselves in NMAG.

Reactive collecting

- Where unsolicited donations support the gaps in collections and areas of collecting noted in this policy.

4.2. Specific Collection principles

The following principles and priorities apply to specific named collections.

Shoes

Our aim is to develop NMAG as an international 'centre of excellence' for shoes and shoe related material. As a Designated collection it is the foremost collection of its type and consequently we will collect to ensure that is both comprehensive in scope and worldwide in coverage whilst maintaining a focus on British and Western European footwear. Shoe machinery tends to be similar across the world we will focus on collecting Midlands's machinery. Particular gaps are in areas pre 1800 (including pre-history) and world footwear pre-1900. We are particularly interested in objects that support the following themes:

- Material relating to the retail trade (specifically shoe shops and advertising).
- Examples of men, women and children's high fashion and bespoke footwear from 1800 to the present day (designers, fashion brands and the high street) and associated owner/wearer/maker stories.
- Companies/makers not represented in the collection.
- Shoes worn by notable persons such as the footwear of public figures, celebrities or people who have been present at, or associated with, key historical events.
- World footwear particularly in relation to the continents of Australia and South America.
- Design catalogues from under-represented companies.
- Archive relating to the making and selling of shoes including fashion forecasting.
- Concealed shoes and concealed shoe index.

- Shoes representing identity and western sub-cultures with specific wearers' stories.
- World footwear representing cultural identity, rites of passage, religious belief with specific wearers' stories from across the world.
- Shoes representing gender-neutral fashion with specific wearers' stories.
- Shoes representing global interactions with specific industrial stories from across the world.
- Collections relating to specific collectors including oral histories.
- Updates to the trainer collection including oral histories.
- Shoes for work associated with under-represented professions and associated stories.
- Shoes for school associated with personal stories.
- Shoes for war after 1945 with personal stories.
- Shoes for entertainment late 20th early 21st century with personal stories.
- Shoes for sport including those worn by sports personalities including personal stories.
- Shoes for animals and associated personal stories.
- Shoes that are customised and associated personal stories.
- Contemporary shoes made of new contemporary materials.
- Northampton made shoes and other materials from under-represented factories and personal stories of the wearers'.
- Material associated with sizing and measuring late 20th and early 21st centuries.
- Shoe shop furniture and advertising.
- Trade union material.
- Shoe company branding.
- Modern production/making equipment in particular trainers. When collecting tools and machinery we only collect items with a provenance. While we need to continue collecting machines made after 1940, there is no space at present to store them.

We will not collect material that would be better kept in the area where it was made or used e.g. items relating to a local person of significance in their own locality unless we consider the item to be a key example of the national picture of the industry.

Social History

We will ensure that our collection is relevant to the people of Northampton Borough and its diverse communities. The collection needs to reflect the relationship between the town of Northampton and the surrounding hinterland. The collection is not

comprehensive in later 20th and early 21st century material. We are particularly interested in objects that support the following themes:

- Transport objects (canals, railways, trams in particular)
- Sport related objects (Cricket, football and rugby)
- Health and well-being
- First and Second World War home-front material
- The gaol-block building that houses the Museum
- Suffragette and women's/gender history related objects
- Formula One and motor industry engineering
- Town growth and development post 1960
- Political movements and protests including the civil war, Brexit
- Key significant events such as the great fire, swing riots
- Northampton social events e.g. Balloon festival, carnival, music festivals
- Religion – all religions represented in Northampton
- Diversity of Northampton communities
- Identified contemporary issues affecting Northampton e.g. homelessness
- Key individuals from Northampton, with a focus on women, who have had an impact both locally and beyond.
- Supporting key social history focussed exhibitions including We Are Northampton, Music.
- Northampton town building development post 1960 including 21st century regeneration of the town including Greyfriars
- University of Northampton
- Unitary changes in 21st century
- Technology and use in Northamptonians work and leisure
- Contemporary Northampton businesses including Avon, Carlsberg
- Gaps in Northamptonshire toy industry
- Music industry in the town
- Objects representing local communities that make up Northampton

We will ensure that our collection supports the stories of APM, the people that have lived and worked there and its distinct identity including its diverse communities. The collection is defined by the borders of Abington parish and include the house building, park/estate and urban areas. The date range will cover the earliest occupation by people to the present day but with a focus on late 20th and early 21st

century Abington. We are particularly interested in objects that support the following themes:

- Key individuals from Abington who have had an impact both locally and beyond.
- Families and individuals who have lived at APM
- Businesses from Abington
- Use of the park including work (business/industry), live and play
- Health and well-being including the park and the asylum
- Photos of the use of the building and the park
- Ephemera relating to the use of the building and the park
- Art relating to the use of the building and the park
- Religious groups
- Diverse communities based in Abington

Numismatics

The numismatics and archaeological collections are closely aligned and material will be fluid across both collections. The collection needs to reflect the relationship between the town of Northampton and the surrounding hinterland. The collection is weaker in areas of Iron Age, Viking and early Saxon periods. Commemorative local medals from late 20th and early 21st century are also weak. We are particularly interested in objects that support the following themes:

- Coin hoards (which will be collected in their entirety) and significant individual finds
- Medals relating to West Northants and Northampton not already represented
- Tokens and checks relating to West Northants and Northampton not already represented
- Medieval coins with a relationship to Northampton including Northampton mint
- Archaeological coins may be collected from the wider county if there is no other place of deposit

Archaeology

Priority will be given to excavated material that contributes new information on the people living in the Northampton area from earliest hominids to the present day. The acceptance of formally excavated material within the Borough of Northampton will be the main way in which NMAG adds to its archaeological collection together with occasional finds resulting from individual metal detecting and field walking including the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Future collecting is limited by capacity to collect physically and digitally and ensure that collections are accessible and available for use and engagement. There are opportunities to enhance/develop the quality of the collection, in particular working with Museum Of London Archaeology who hold

archive from our collecting area after 2000 due to lack of space including good quality excavations to fill geographic and chronological gaps. As the largest museum in the county where appropriate we will work with the PAS scheme to ensure that significant objects found by individuals in Northamptonshire and perhaps classed as treasure remain in public ownership. The collection is weaker in areas of pre-history, specifically Bronze Age and collecting will be prioritised in this area. The collection is strong in medieval history but we will continue to acquire objects in this area that enhance to story of Northampton as a medieval centre of importance. We are interested in opportunities to work with local community groups to excavate, collect and work on existing specific collections of specific sites such as Hunsbury, Castle etc.

Costume

We will ensure that our collection is relevant to the people of Northampton Borough and its diverse communities. The collection also needs to reflect the relationship between the town of Northampton and the surrounding hinterland. Due to the lack of recent collecting after 1950 the collection is not comprehensive in later 20th and early 21st century. We are particularly interested in objects that will:

- Represent our diverse communities
- Relate to specific individuals or have associated stories.
- Represent male costume
- Complement the shoe collection. To this effect we will collect garments that will complement shoes from outside the Borough of Northampton
- Represent working life in Northampton

Military

We will continue to collect material from across the UK and beyond that represents the Northamptonshire Yeomanry and the Northamptonshire Regiment. We will also focus on collecting county material that tells the wider story of the interaction between the county and the Regiment. The collection is lacking in pre Second Boer war material, post-war Second World War material, and material relating to the national service period 1950-1970 and antecedent regiments. Themes: We are particularly interested in objects that will:

- Tell biographical stories of individual soldiers and their families
- Depict individual soldiers including photographs and portrait artworks
- Illustrate uniforms, especially battle dress
- Represent National Service material
- Represent recollections through oral histories including family histories
- Show the military on film (digital)
- Represent the relationship between the military and Northampton civilian life
- Represent military during First and Second World Wars

- Represent sport and marching bands in military life
- Represent cavalry and horse material
- Represent Yeomanry use of armoured vehicles and cavalry/horses
- Represent the end of the Yeomanry and Regiment

Art: Fine Art: Although a good collection, there are a number of gaps to improve its comprehensiveness. We will continue to collect material from across the UK and beyond filling gaps in terms of a representation of British and International Art. We will also continue to collect local artists and artworks depicting Northampton, Northamptonshire and local people. We will continue collecting Baroque and Italian art. We are particularly interested in the following themes where they fill gaps in the collection:

- Renaissance and Baroque Italian works
- Portraits from contemporary artists representing local people
- Portraits representing key figures from Northampton and 17th and 18th century local portraits
- Sculptural pieces representing genre art and still-life
- Genre works representing Northampton life
- Pre-18th century landscape works and contemporary Northampton landscapes
- Artist prints 1990-present
- Fine art photography
- Current local artists and up-coming young artists
- Late 20th and early 21st century British and International Artists
- Early modern art and art post 1970
- Local artists not already represented in our collection
- 17th and 18th century British portraiture
- Dutch and Northern European painting 1500-1800
- The sculpture collection is currently small and would benefit from additions. This includes larger works, non-figurative/portrait, abstract, still-life, genre pieces and sculpture in non-traditional mediums.
- Art by female artists and/or is representative of female, gender and LGBTQIA histories.

Decorative Art

The collection as a whole is wide and varied and future collecting needs to be more focussed to enhance the strengths of the collection on British ceramics and Chinese Oriental ceramics. We will continue to collect material from across the UK that is defined as decorative art. We will also add UK studio artist works to the collection including Northamptonshire artists. The collection is lacking in 20th and 21st century

studio artist ceramics and 17th-19th century Plymouth wares. We are particularly interested in the following themes where they fill gaps in the collection:

- Studio pottery from contemporary artists. Examples will be acquired from the following or similar artists Bernard Leach, Michael Cardew, Lucie Rie, Hans Coper, Alison Britton, Ruth Duckworth, and Jill Crowley.
- Studio pottery from local Northamptonshire artists
- Plymouth porcelain
- Oriental ceramics that fill significant gaps
- Factory or studio Glassware not represented in the collection
- Local souvenir or other social historical ceramics
- Studio pottery by female artists and/or is representative of female, gender and LGBTQIA histories.

Geology

This is a closed collection and there are no plans for any further collecting of geological specimens however there is a need to collect material relating to the history of key collectors including Lord Northampton, Beeby Thompson, Walter Drawbridge Crick, and Thomas Jesson.

Ethnography

This is a closed collection and there are no plans for any further collecting.

Natural History

This is a closed collection and there are no plans for any further collecting.

Egyptology

This is a closed collection and there are no plans for any further collecting.

Learning

The very nature of handling collections is that wear and tear will eventually lead to damage and disintegration of the objects. Where possible education and learning collections will be sourced from the collection. In some cases this may not be possible due to the fragile nature of the collections or possible hazards. In this case objects will be sought by donation or purchase. Collecting will be guided by the National Curriculum, Higher Education and FE and the needs of pupils and learners. Specific areas for collecting are shoes, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, toys from all periods.

5. Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and disposal

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.

5.1 General priorities

NMAG has a significant number of diverse collections which were collected over a long period of time and we will from time to time review the significance of these collections at NMAG ensuring that they support our vision and mission and of appropriate quality. The unitary process will also affect collecting areas with an expansion to the West and South Northamptonshire and we will need to ensure that the collections are fit for purpose to serve the people in these areas.

NMAG has limited availability of suitable storage and seeks to dispose of items that are no longer relevant. Rationalisation will form part of this process to ensure better storage practice.

NMAG has developed a new exhibitions and events programme and interpretation plan that will inform public programming and collections use and a new access policy will address collections access and this will influence rationalisation.

As a 21st century public museum it is important to ensure that the collections are fit for purpose and we will review collections in this context. Taking this into account ethical rationalisation will be an area of activity post opening of the NMAG site in spring 2020. During this rationalisation process any disposals will be undertaken in accordance with the procedures set out in section 13 and following the Museum Association code of ethics.

We will be mindful of objects of relatively low significance that require considerable storage space. We will also dispose for legal, safety care or conservation reasons including spoliation, radiation, infestation, repatriation.

5.2 Specific priorities

Decorative Art

The Decorative Art Collection is extremely diverse in nature and much of it has not been displayed for several decades. The definition of this collection is vague (for example it includes archaeology, social history, sculpture and ethnographical objects) and this needs further work to define its core purpose. In recent years the definition of Decorative Art Collections in museums has undergone further academic research and this current thinking should be brought to bear on this collection. We would like to review this collection, with appropriate specialist advice, in order to ensure that it is relevant and appropriate to the future of the museum.

Social history and costume

We will be reviewing the significance of our Social History and Costume Collections in the light of the redefined purpose of the Museum and the changing needs of our communities. Typological collecting in the past has meant that the social history collection has a large number of items which do not support our current collecting priorities. Many of the items have no recorded provenance. These items are mainly low value items, with no connection to the history of the Northampton. This process will run alongside an identified need for active contemporary collecting.

Archaeology

We will be reviewing the significance of our Archaeological collections in the light of the redefined purpose of the museum and the changing needs of our communities and the county development of the Archaeological Resource Centre by Northamptonshire County Council. All opportunities and risks will be considered regarding this.

Ethnography and Geology

We will be reviewing the significance of our Ethnographical and Geological collections with the support from specialist advisers in the light of the redefined purpose of the museum and the changing needs of our communities as a complement to our contemporary collecting.

Military Collections

We will review if the Regimental paper archive should be better stored at Northamptonshire Record Office.

Fine Art

We will be reviewing loose frames that relate to works in the collection but are now no longer used for conservation and public programming reasons. These will be reviewed in terms of the historical importance with the rationale to dispose of frames of little importance, where work has been reframed or doesn't require a frame or a frame has been damaged beyond repair.

6. Legal and Ethical Framework for Acquisition and Disposal of Items

NMAG 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

NMAG 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 museums:

- Museum of Leathercraft (specifically leather industry in Northampton and relationship to the shoe collection)
- Kettering Museum and Art Gallery (local artists, shoe industry and local history objects)
- Leicestershire Museums Service (art and shoe industry)
- Canons Ashby (Sir Henry Dryden)
- Corby Heritage Centre (local artists, shoe industry and geology)

- Daventry Town Council Museum (archaeology, social history, shoe industry)
- Leicester City Museums (art, shoe industry)
- Milton Keynes Museum (archaeology, social history, shoe industry and geology including Deanshanger)
- Bedford Museum (art, shoe industry)
- Royal East Anglian Regiment Museum (Anglian Regiment)
- Rugby Museum & Art Gallery (art, shoe industry)
- Rushden Museum (archaeology, social history, shoe industry)
- Wellingborough Museum (archaeology, social history, shoe industry)
- Northamptonshire Record Office
- Northamptonshire Local Studies Library
- Sulgrave Manor (Washington)
- The Canal Museum, Stoke Bruere (social history)
- Towcester Museum (shoe industry, archaeology and local history objects)
- Desborough Heritage Centre (archaeology, social history, shoe industry)
- Rothwell Heritage Centre (archaeology, social history, shoe industry)
- Oundle Museum (archaeology, social history, shoe industry)
- Kelmarsh Hall

In keeping with our role as the lead museum for footwear, we aim to benefit other museums by collecting as widely as possible and ensuring that the collection is accessible to the wider museum community and their audiences. Where we believe there may be a shared interest in objects we will consult with the appropriate local museum. We will also ensure that our collecting complements the following museums:

- Museum of Leathercraft
- The V & A
- The Science Museum
- The University Arts London (including the Cordwainer Collection)
- Museum of Fashion, Bath
- Clarks Museum
- Norwich Museum Service
- Bata Shoe Museum, Canada
- Dutch Shoe & Leather Museum
- SONS Museum, Belgium

NMAG has an agreement with the Museum of Leathercraft Trust (MOL) to care for its collection. The MOL is now set-up as an independent Trust but if necessary NMAG would manage MOL collecting according to this policy.

8. Archival holdings

NMAG holds the following archives:

- Shoe collection paper archive
- History of the Museum paper archive
- Paper documentation associated with archaeological archive
- Northamptonshire Regimental paper archive

As NMAG 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 (3rd edition, 2002).

9. Acquisition

The policy for agreeing acquisitions

All possible acquisitions whether gift or purchase are proposed at monthly acquisitions panels where the merits of acquisition are discussed with guidance from this policy. Those objects accepted at panel are formerly recorded and Spectrum procedures followed and transfer of title sought. Records of this process are maintained. The authority for acceptance into the collection is devolved from the Governing body. As part of projects community collecting panels or co-collecting through partnerships or community groups may be set up but all authorisation and acceptance is through monthly collecting panels.

Used or un-used objects may be acquired from individuals and companies and organisations. Archaeological objects may be acquired through excavation or as a result of individual finds (including through the Portable Antiquities Scheme). Objects are generally gifted with purchases made in exceptional circumstances due to limited resources.

NMAG 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).

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

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 has a separate Human Remains policy.

11. Biological and Geological material

NMAG will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any biological or geological 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

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.

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

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

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. 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

All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal.

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.

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.

When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, and exchange or as a last resort – destruction.

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.

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.

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.

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).

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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).

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

If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

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.

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.

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.

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.