



Registered Charity: 311307

## **Wisbech & Fenland Museum**

### **Collections Development Policy**

**Originator:** Robert Bell,  
Curator

**Last Revised:** September 2015

**Review due:** November 2029

Wisbech & Fenland Museum is committed to reviewing this policy every five years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or within the organisation.

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

**Approved by:** Board of Directors, Wisbech & Fenland Museum

**Date of meeting:** 10 December 2024

**Signed on behalf of the Board:** S. McGregor, Chairman

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

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

The Mission of Wisbech & Fenland Museum is:

The Museum's collections are rich, eclectic, encyclopaedic, and unrivalled. They contain precious and remarkable objects - of great significance locally, national and internationally - which tell the history of Wisbech and of the World.

*Our mission is to develop, to care for, and to interpret those collections for current and future generations, to stimulate curiosity and wonder, and to make them accessible to everyone everywhere so they can discover and connect with their history and heritage."*

- 1.2** The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.3** By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- 1.4** Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5** The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6** The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.7** In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can

be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:

- the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
- the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
- the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored
- extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
- the item under consideration lies outside the museum's established core collection

## **2. History of the collections**

The Museum was founded in 1835 by 31 members of the local community who formed the Museum Society. The 'collecting policy' of the founding members was the flora, fauna and antiquities of the Nene Catchment Area (North Cambridgeshire, South Holland, Lincolnshire) and West Norfolk. This policy became more relaxed and the Museum began accepting material from around the world which have collected by travellers, missionaries, colonists and servants of the Empire.

Notable collectors included Samuel Smith who donated his documentary photographs of Wisbech and the bronze age Wisbech Scabbard (1847). In 1856 the Museum acquired the ethnographical collection of Dr William Stanger this included artefacts obtained by him on the Niger Expedition (1841) and from the time he was Governor General in the Natal Province. In the late 1860s, following a journey to Egypt, Alexander Peckover offered to the Museum his collection of Egyptian antiquities. A strong connection remained between the Museum and the Peckover family who, in addition to significant financial support, made frequent donations of geology, books (including a fine collection of atlases), antiquities, archaeology, paintings, decorative arts, maps, and archives.

In 1847 the Museum Society amalgamated with the Wisbech Literary Society and opened its doors to the public as a Museum and Library. There are approximately 12,000 volumes in the Library which comprises the collection of the Literary Society and the Library of Chauncy Hare Townshend. The Library operated throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a lending library to members and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century access was for research only. The Museum acts as the Diocesan Record Office for 27 parishes and has a substantial archive. The Museum holds (on deposit since 1880s) the Wisbech Town Library which had been established by the Corporation of Wisbech in 1653.

In 1868 the Museum received the bequest of the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend. This large bequest of several hundred items of fine and decorative arts included amongst them a Sevres breakfast service (allegedly belonging to Napoleon and taken from the field at Waterloo) and a chess set once owned by Louis XIV; a library of over 6,000 volumes, antiquities and geology specimens. His manuscript collection includes the original manuscripts of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* and *The Monk* by Matthew Lewis.

In 1870 Mrs Mary Dickinson presented to the Museum the 'Clarkson Chest'. This is the chest that was used by the celebrated anti slavery campaigner Thomas Clarkson. The chest contains natural products such as woods, seeds, gums, cotton and manufactured items e.g. textiles, leather work etc. that he obtained from, among others, sailors who had been engaged in the slave trade in West Africa and which he used as evidence against slavery.

Throughout 1930/40s the Museum received a substantial collection of oil paintings, Staffordshire figures and other ceramics from John Lewis Kirk. The gift of Staffordshire was a welcome addition to an earlier donation of similar material from William Smith. On a more parochial note, in the 1970s, the Museum received the fittings and packaging of the village shop and Post Office at Elm.

A rationalisation of the taxidermy collection was undertaken by the then Curator, L.A. Curtis Edwards, in the 1920s/30s which saw many specimens which were in very poor condition disposed of. A further rationalisation was undertaken in 2010 when a number of the ornithology 'habitat groups' were taken off display and sadly over the years had deteriorated beyond reasonable and practical conservation. On the advice of Dr Tony Irwin Castle Museum, Norfolk these items were disposed, for purposes of research, and de-accessioned accordingly.

### **3. An overview of current collections**

The current collection comprises over 50,000 objects, 12,000 books and a substantial archive collection. Over 45,000 objects and books have been recorded on MODES – the Museum's Collection Information System

#### **Collections overview**

Wisbech & Fenland Museum began with the formation of the Wisbech Museum Society in 1835 and its collections are housed in one of the oldest purpose-built museums in the country. The Museum opened its doors on the present site in 1847. Its collections reflect the enthusiasms and interests of the Museum Society's members during the nineteenth century and include geology; zoology; archaeology (Near East, Classical and local); fine and applied art; paintings; local history; personalia (notably relating to Thomas Clarkson and the Anti-slavery Movement) and extensive and important photographic collections.

Wisbech & Fenland Museum also houses an important library (comprising of the libraries of the Wisbech Literary Society and the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend) with literary archives (including the manuscript of Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*). There is a third library - the 17th century Wisbech Town Library -

which is held on deposit. The Museum holds a substantial archive collection both in its own right and also deposited material from local churches, parish councils and local organisations such as the W.I..

The key aims of the Museum are to build on the existing collection with particular reference to Wisbech, its environs and any particular association with the town (e.g. Thomas Clarkson was born in Wisbech). All of the collections are relevant to the Museum's 'statement of purpose'. However, since the Museum's inception, many local museums have been created (e.g. Chatteris Museum, March & District Museum, Whittlesey Museum, Denny Farmland Museum) and aspects of the collection (e.g. farming and drainage tools etc.) are replicated. If an item in our collection is more relevant to one of these museums we consider a transfer as appropriate.

### **Digital formats**

The Museum does not have a policy to collect in digital format. However, the Museum holds copies of some parts of the collection in a digital format. This has been achieved when the funding has been available. These include oil paintings, *Great Expectations*, John Peck Diaries, photographs and selected historical maps.

### **Social History**

The Museum has good collections of 19th and early 20th century domestic life, material relating to schooling, children's toys and games, early 20th century shop material including a reconstructed former Post Office (Mrs Pooley's Shop) interior (including fixtures, fittings and packaging c. 1960) from Elm village, local crafts and trades.

### **Fine and Decorative Arts**

The Museum holds collections of British and European ceramics, with quality collections of Staffordshire figures from John Lewis Kirk (1861 – 1941) and William Smith (1813-1891); English pottery and porcelain, with a variety of examples of Chelsea, Worcester, Derby, Rockingham, Leeds, Swansea, Lowestoft, Wedgwood, Liverpool, Coalport, Davenport; glass ware; wood and stone carvings and of furniture, mainly 19th century upholstered pieces.

The original Museum and Library furniture is also of note and includes one of Napoleon's campaign chairs. The core of the Museum's fine and decorative art collections comes from the Townshend bequest. Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend (1798-1868) bequeathed a large part of his collections to the South Kensington Museum, now the Victoria and Albert, and the remainder to Wisbech and Fenland Museum. It arrived at the Museum in two large covered wagons and included paintings, statues and busts of historical figures, ceramics, including Napoleon's Sevres breakfast service captured from the camp equipage after the Battle of Waterloo, 1815, and glass ware.

### **Paintings**

The collection of paintings comprises several interesting portrait pictures, a full-length life-size picture of *Napoleon I. in his Coronation Robes*, after Baron Gerard ; a portrait of the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend, as a young man; a portrait of Secretary Thurlow, the member of parliament for Wisbech (the only member ever sent from the town) ; and paintings by Stanhope Forbes, Clarkson Stanfield,. Amongst the paintings are general works illustrating local farming activity such woad gathering and work at a woad mill. The Museums oil painting collection, as well sculptures, are listed on the Art UK website and new additions to the collection can be added to the site.

## **Photography**

The Museum has a significant collection of photographs in a variety of formats and includes several important collections of 19th century images, mainly of local and East Anglian people, buildings, street scenes, activities, events etc but some from further afield., notably the William Ellis collection of 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs of Madagascar. Samuel Smith, who was a member of the Museum Society, made a fine series of calotype photographs of Wisbech in the 1850's and 1860's.

More recent acquisitions include nearly 3,500 negatives produced by Herbert Coates for his topographical postcard business (c1920-1960); and around 10,000 negatives produced Margaret George which, along with her wonderfully annotated albums, give a fascinating record of Fenland village life from the 1910s to the 1950s.

## **Natural Science**

The Museum holds 18th and 19th century herbaria collections, including the Skrimshire collection of mosses; the Elgood collection of 20,000 Lepidoptera; William Esam collection of 20,000 coleoptera.

The British ornithology, the collection of birds is nearly complete; the collection of fen-birds is particularly rich. There is a small selection of taxidermy mounts of local collected mammals.

A Collection of mainly British fossils approx. 30,000 specimens with much of quality especially fossil fish and minerals. There are named collections from C Moore; C Rutler; J E Weatherhead; S Smith; G A Mantell; W Stanger; the British Natural History Society; C Townshend; W Peckover; W E Winks; J W Bodges; H M Lee.

## **Personalia – Thomas Clarkson**

Personalia relating to Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), a pioneer in the fight against slavery and a contemporary of William Wilberforce, including his celebrated travelling chest that he used when campaigning and the objects (inc important early examples of West African textiles and other commercial goods and natural products such e.g.

seeds and gums) he collected as part of his work for the parliamentary enquiry into slavery during the 1790's.

## **Ethnography**

Rev. William Ellis gave some important ethnological material to the Museum collected during his work as a missionary. During the 1850's and 60's he took a series of glass plate negatives of scenes in Madagascar, which are now believed to be the earliest photographic images known of the country. Ellis was a missionary in the South Seas and the Sandwich Islands from 1816 to 1825, and later in Madagascar. Among the items from his collections still surviving today are several lengths of bark cloth from Tahiti and the Sandwich Islands.

Dr. William Stanger, who was born at Tydd Gote, near Wisbech, was a medical doctor who joined the ill-fated Niger Expedition of 1841 exploring the Niger River. He later went on to become Surveyor General of Natal. The bulk of his collection was purchased for the Museum in 1856 and includes numerous items from both Niger and Natal.

## **Archaeology**

Multi-period finds from the Fenland area, including flints; polished stone artefacts; pre-historic ceramics; Bronze Age metalwork hoards; an important La Tene scabbard chape; Romano-British ceramics and small finds, including a Roman coin hoard from Emneth; Anglo-Saxon ceramics; Viking material; medieval ceramics and small finds.

Foreign archaeological material includes 19th century collections of Egyptology and Classical archaeology.

## **Ancient Egyptian Collection**

The museum holds approximately 200 ancient Egyptian objects which are part of the Archaeology collection. Classes of objects represented in the collection include: amulets; metal objects (bronzes); canopic jars; ceramics; coffins (fragment); faience figures; faience vessels; jewellery; lamp; animal remains (mummies); human remains (mummies); food/plant material; papyri; pottery; 'Ptah-Sokar-Osiris' figure; scarabs/sealings; ushabtis; stelae (stone); stone figures; textiles; tools/weapons; wall painting; wooden figures.

The collection also includes a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs and prints of Egypt as well as letters and journals detailing members of the Peckover family's travels in Egypt. Objects are known to have come from the following locations in Egypt (with the name of the excavator/sponsor and year of excavation given where possible): Abydos (Petrie); Asyut; Esna; Koptos; Thebes; Valley of the Kings (Belzoni, 1817, tomb of Seti I).

## **Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon antiquities**

Among these are some large mosaic tiles from a pavement in a farm at Crew Yard, Stonea, and also fragments of other pavements; some querns or hand-mills, one of which, of large size, from Earith, near Wisbech, is formed of a conglomerate known as “plum-pudding stone,” There also some good examples of pottery, including the ordinary forms and materials of cinerary urns, and specimens of Samian, Durobrivian, Salopian, and other wares.

Anglo-Saxon antiquities include some good swords and daggers of considerable interest. One of these is shown in one of our engravings, and is of remarkable form. It is of iron, 20 inches in length of very thick and massive character, and has never been intended for sharpening on its edges. Another (Saxon), found in the bed of the River Nene, at Raven’s Willow, in the parish of Stanground, is of the usual form; as is also another, 23 inches long, from Newport Pagnell; there is also a good form of iron dagger from Earith, and an excellent bronze blade 14 inches long, from Popenhoe Manor House. Also notable are a small bronze statuette, one of the Roman *penates*, found at Lincoln, and other interesting ancient and modern bronzes from various localities including two brooches which good examples of the Anglo-Saxon period

### **4. Themes and priorities for future collecting**

Future collecting will concentrate on artefacts and records with a strong association to Wisbech and its environs. Acquisitions will also be considered if there is a credible link to an existing collection or artefact which increases knowledge and improves interpretation.

### **5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal**

#### **5.1 The museum does not intend to dispose of collections during the period covered by this policy.**

The Museum has no intention of disposing of collections in the near future. As said above and where appropriate we may transfer selected items to other local museums. We do not have the resources to carry out a rationalisation project and consequently it is not a priority. Disposals will only be undertaken for legal, safety or care and conservation reasons (for example, spoliation, radiation, infestation, repatriation).

### **6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items**

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



## **7. Collecting policies of other museums**

**7.1** The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

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

The Fenland Museum Group (Fenland 5) came into being as an collaborative cluster in the late 1990s and comprises Chatteris Museum, March & District Museum, Octavia Hill Birthplace House, Whittlesey Museum and Wisbech & Fenland Museum.

## **8. Archival holdings**

The archival collections held by the Museum are of very considerable historical importance. Notables are the records of the Museum itself from 1835 and of the Wisbech Literary Society from 1781.

The Museum is a Diocesan Record for the Deanery of Wisbech and Lynn Marshland and holds on deposit extensive parish records from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century for twenty-eight parishes of north Cambridgeshire and west Norfolk. Another significant group of records is the manorial records of Wisbech Barton, Gedney Abbott & Pawlett in Lincolnshire, and several manors in Norfolk: some of the manorial records date from as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The Museum also holds local government collections and acts as the Borough Archive for the town of Wisbech whose records start in 1379 with Guild of the Holy Trinity; the records of several local parish councils are also held by the Museum.

As one might expect, the collections relating to Wisbech itself are diverse and form an important resource for local history; amongst these are records of Wisbech charities, National schools, General Cemetery, turnpike and non-conformist churches.

There are local diaries and family papers, notably the diaries of John Peck and Jeremiah Jackson; plus papers of the Peckover family of Wisbech. There is a large collection of deeds and maps. The latter includes maps from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards and covers the Ordnance Survey, tithes, inclosures, drainage, estates and transport.

Finally, one cannot omit to mention the printed books of the Townshend, Wisbech Literary Society and Wisbech Town libraries, which contain many exceptional items, illustrate book collecting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and serve to support research into aspects of the archival collections.

*There cannot be any doubt as to the exceptional interest and importance of the archival and printed collections held by the Museum.*

(Extract from report on Archival holdings carried out by East of England Regional Archive Council (2103) – full version of report available)

## **9. Acquisition**

### **9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:**

All significant potential acquisitions are reviewed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors and the Curator and reported to the Board at their (bi-monthly) meetings. Where necessary (eg there's a large quantity of material, offer by purchase or conservation issues) the decision to accept will be considered by the Board.

If there is a time constraint (e.g. auction) then Chairman and Treasurer are consulted.

### **9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).**

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

## **10. Human remains**

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

## **11. Biological and geological material**

- 11.1** So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

## **12 Archaeological material**

- 12.1** The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 12.2** In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

## **13. Exceptions**

- 13.1** Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:
- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
  - acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

## **14 Spoliation**

- 14.1** The museum will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

## **15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains**

**15.1** The 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. Disposal procedures**

**16.1** All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

**16.2** The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

**16.3** When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

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

**16.5** The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

**16.6** A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

- 16.7** Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8** If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9** The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10** Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.
- 16.11** The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12** Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

### ***Disposal by exchange***

- 16.13** The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to

accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

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

### ***Disposal by destruction***

- 16.14** If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15** It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16** Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.17** Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.18** The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.