

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
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**National Mining Museum Scotland
Collections Development Policy
2015**

Governing body: National Mining Museum Scotland Trust

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 14th December 2015

Date at which this policy is due for review: December 2020

Museums Galleries Scotland will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

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

1.1 The museum's statement of purpose is:

- To care for and collect Scotland's past, present and future Mining Heritage.
- To render our collections physically and intellectually accessible.
- To present coal mining in its international, social, technological, environmental, cultural and economic context.
- To promote the care and enjoyment of Scotland's industrial 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

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 1 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

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 Scottish Mining Museum Trust was established in 1984 and collecting began. The bulk of acquisitions were made during the 1980s and early 1990s as the mining industry declined and pits closed. Collecting at this stage was fairly indiscriminate as the priority was to ensure that objects were not lost, and to provide a service to those who were keen to preserve the heritage of the industry. The National Fund for Acquisitions funded transport of some larger items to the site, such as pneumatic props that came from the NCB training centre at Woolmet Colliery.

The core of the archival collection is the papers of the Lothian Coal Company, which was largely acquired from British Coal in 1988. It also includes NUM Scotland Area papers, and the archives of various individuals and organisations, particularly relating to the 1984-85 Miners' Strike. Staff from NMMS worked with the National Records of Scotland to preserve the archive of Scottish Coal on its liquidation in 2013. The majority of material went to NRS, but some was identified as more appropriately housed at NMMS.

In 2011, an MGS Recognition project consolidated the large object collections, bringing some items that remained at the Prestongrange site (formerly part of the Scottish Mining Museum) back to the Lady Victoria.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 2 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

In 2012 acquisitions from the University of Edinburgh, Pelamis Wave Power and Artemis Intelligent Power began NMMS's collecting of material to represent the alternative energy sector.

The whole collection continues to grow and work to rationalise some of the objects collected hastily in the early days continued. The majority of acquisitions are now small donations from people who had connections to the industry, although in recent years more significant acquisitions of large objects were made on the closure of Dalmellington Mining Museum in Ayrshire and Birkhill Fireclay Mine in West Lothian.

3. An overview of current collections

Totalling over 95,000 items, the Museum collections comprise over 13,000 objects, around 12,000 archival items, approximately 20,000 items in the library collection, over 20,000 slides and photographs, and around 30,000 maps and plans. The bulk of the material dates from the twentieth century, although there are a few earlier items such as early safety lamps, and part of the archive of the Lothian Coal Company. Ownership of many of the items in the collections of the National Mining Museum Scotland has been transferred by the Trust to the National Mining Museum Collection Trust, which is a separately constituted charitable trust (Scottish charity number SC029174) referred to in this document as the Collection Trust. The collections of the Collection Trust are managed by the Trust under the provisions of a management agreement between the two bodies.

The object collections comprise both the technical and social aspects of mining. The main themes covered are as follows:

- Colliery sinking and development equipment such as surveying, blasting and boring tools.
- Coal cutting equipment and roadway supports including shearers and wooden pit props, as well as hand tools such as picks and shovels.
- Underground communication units and maintenance, electrical, pumping, ventilation and lighting equipment.
- Haulage devices used to move men and materials to and from the coalface and on the surface, including locomotives, coal wagons and harness equipment worn by pit ponies.
- Instruments used for environmental, gas and coal testing, as well as safety and mines rescue equipment, including pieces of personal safety wear such as self-rescuers and lamps.
- Surface workers' tools used in engineering, maintenance, rope splicing and blacksmithing
- Mining memorabilia as well as union material such as banners.
- Domestic and leisure items from coal communities, such as household equipment, and items relating to miners' sports such as pigeon racing.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 3 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

- Artwork relating to the mining industry.

The library has significant holdings of books and periodicals representing a range of mining subjects including history, technology, geology, safety, published works of the National Coal Board, associated manufacturing industries, the National Union of Mineworkers, government reports and statistics as well as various mining journals.

The photographic collection comprises images of the majority of the twentieth century Scottish colliery pitheads, underground images showing men and machinery at work, important social events such as gala days, images of strikes, pictures of housing conditions, union leaders etc.

The archive collection includes the papers of the Lothian Coal Company from the late nineteenth, early twentieth centuries, minute books and papers of the National Union of Mineworkers, various colliery papers and miscellaneous certificates and individuals' papers. There is a large collection of maps and plans, much of it produced by the National Coal Board.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

Future collecting must be determined by the collections already held, the limited space available, the museum's ability to care for the items concerned and the funding available to purchase items for the collections. However, NMMS has a continued commitment to making the museum appeal to as broad a range of visitors as possible and ensuring that the collections convey the social and cultural aspects of mining as well as the technical and industrial ones. In order to remain relevant it must also broaden its collections to engage with current discussions about future energy sources.

NMMS collects pro-actively for particular projects, and has a good track record of working with mining communities to fill collection gaps.

NMMS is aware of potential sources of acquisitions funding, such as the National Fund for Acquisitions, and may draw on such sources when there is strong feeling that an available object should be purchased.

The collections of the museum are particularly strong for the years of the National Coal Board (between 1947 and the mid-1980s), with a bias toward material from Midlothian, due to the geographical nature of the museum. As a general rule duplicates should only be accepted where strong provenance or particular pertinence can be shown.

Recent projects have highlighted the limitations of collections of personal items and items relating to domestic life.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 4 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

The collecting priorities for the museum are as follows:

- Material representative of early Scottish mining.
- Material from geographically isolated - and therefore under represented – Scottish coal mining areas.
- Social and political items relating to mineworkers and their families.
- Items to illustrate modern day mining and opencast operations and items from mining areas out-with the Lothians.
- Items representative of the growing renewable energies sector.

Since the last revision of the Collections Development Policy (2012) good progress has been made in all of these areas.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 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. 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 Examples of curatorially motivated reasons for disposal may be as follow:

To remove from the collections any item which is too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any further use for the purposes of the museum or its users.

To improve the curatorial care of the collections by the disposal of duplicate or unprovenanced material of low intrinsic relevance to the collecting policy.

To transfer to the ownership of another Accredited museum any item which, by reason of changes in public, social or educational need, administrative responsibility, development priorities, or the establishment of a new registered museum, the Keeper advises the Trust would be more appropriately placed elsewhere.

5.4 NMMS will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons, and where income is generated by disposal, proceeds will be used to make new acquisitions that meet the museum's collecting priorities, or go directly towards the care of remaining collections.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 5 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

5.5 Disposal and rationalisation priorities for the museum are as follows:

- Material with no specific connection to Scottish mining or other energy industries in Scotland that is represented in other UK collections.
- Material that is duplicated within the collection for no purpose and consumes space and resources.
- Material that cannot be displayed or stored safely without posing risk to people or other collection items.

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):

National Museums Scotland
 Glasgow Museums
 National Museums of Science and Industry
 National Coal Mining Museum for England
 Big Pit: National Coal Museum
 Summerlee - The Museum of Scottish Industrial Life
 Fife Council Museums and Galleries

Other organisations with significant collections relating to the Scottish mining industry are identified on the Scottish Coal Collections website, and the policies and collections of these museums should be taken into consideration when making any significant acquisition.

8. Archival holdings

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

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 6 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

United Kingdom (third edition, 2002) and the National Strategy for Business Archives in Scotland (<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/archives/bacs/nationalstrategyforbusinessarchives/>, 2009).

The core of the archival holding is the Lothian Coal Company papers. In addition to these is a substantial volume of other archival material relating to the Scottish mining industry and particularly to the 1984-85 miners' strike. These have been donated by individuals and organisations throughout the Museum's history. The majority of these items have been catalogued on the AdLib database. However, in the absence of a qualified archivist, the acquisition of archives is not a priority and potential donors must be directed to more appropriate organisations – such as National Records of Scotland - where possible.

9. Acquisition

9.1. The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

Before making an acquisition or accepting a donation, a detailed search of the database is carried out to see whether the item in question is a duplicate of an existing object in the collection. The Keeper and the Assistant Curator will discuss whether the object(s) should be accessioned into the museum's permanent collection. They will assess the acquisition against the themes and priorities for collecting, detailed in section 5, as well as how the acquisition would sit with and complement existing collections, its condition and its care and preservation needs.

In some circumstances, a duplicate object or one that does not strictly fit within the remit of the Museum may be allocated to the Reserve or Handling collections. These are unaccessioned collections and objects are only assigned to them with the permission and understanding of the donor.

In the case of large acquisitions, particularly those which will be costly to acquire, store and care for, the Keeper will present the case to the CEO, Collection Trust and the National Mining Museum Scotland Trust for approval.

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 the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 7 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

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

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

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

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 8 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

- 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 Scottish Museums*’ issued by MGS in 2011), 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.

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.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 9 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

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 Museums Galleries Scotland.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 10 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

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.

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.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 11 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY	REF: NMMS POLICY NO. 15
---------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------

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.

TITLE:	COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY		
EDITED BY:	ELLIE SWINBANK		
DEPT.	CURATORIAL	PAGES	Page 12 of 12
DATE:	04-11-2015	REVIEW DATE	04-11-2020