

SALTFORD HERITAGE CENTRE COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2017-2022

Name of governing body: Salford Environment Group (hereinafter referred to as SEG).

Approved by SEG's Executive Committee Officers: 14th November 2016.

Policy review procedure: This collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: March 2022.

Summary:

Salford Heritage Centre has been created as a community facility to display and provide information on Salford's social, cultural, archaeological, and natural history. It shall hold a chosen collection of objects, fine art, photographs, postcards, maps, printed and audio-visual material pertaining to the history of Salford with the objective of making these available for members of the public to see at specially organised events and visits. With limited space, the selection and choice of display items whether loaned or owned by Salford Environment Group/the Heritage Centre will be subject to prior selection by SEG's History Project under the terms of the Heritage Centre's collections development policy. Although the Heritage Centre aims to follow the Museum Association code of ethics and associated guidance (such as SPECTRUM) it is not an accredited museum.

1. Introduction:

1.1 Salford Heritage Centre's statement of purpose is:

To be a community enhancing heritage centre that, through the preservation and promotion of history, cherishes the importance of leaving legacies towards a shared future.

The Heritage Centre shall hold a collection of objects, photographs, printed and audio-visual material pertaining to the history of the North Somerset parish of Salford and the surrounding area.

2. Policy:

2.1 The Heritage Centre's collection of objects shall be kept small as both storage and display space is limited. Except in exceptional circumstances, objects of high pecuniary value, for example in excess of £100, shall not be curated by the Heritage Centre but may be loaned and displayed for short term purposes at special events organised by SEG.

2.2 SEG will ensure that both acquisition (including loans) and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

2.3 By definition, the Heritage Centre 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, SEG, therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons shall be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the Heritage Centre's collection.

2.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

2.5 The Heritage Centre recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will inspire the confidence of the public and other interested parties.

2.6 The Heritage Centre will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by loan, purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the Heritage Centre can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

2.7 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal of items owned by the Heritage Centre will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, SEG 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 Heritage Centre's established core collection

2.8 Any object loaned to the Heritage Centre shall not be disposed of without the prior permission of the owner of that object and in most circumstances shall be returned to the owner unless an alternative arrangement has been agreed with the owner (see also section 13 below).

3. History and overview of the collections

3.1 The Heritage Centre was established during 2016/17 as a joint SEG/Parochial Church Council initiative as a direct consequence of SEG's History of Saltford project that was launched in 2015. Those objects curated by the Heritage Centre as loaned objects remain the property of the person loaning those objects.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 The Heritage Centre shall collect items of direct historical interest to the village of Saltford and its immediate surroundings that help illustrate and portray Saltford's social and cultural history.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 Disposal is not a priority for this policy period but any disposals deemed necessary by SEG 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 Heritage Centre recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics (published at www.museumsassociation.org) when considering acquisition and disposal.

7. Archival holdings

7.1 The Heritage Centre may hold photographs, books, and other printed materials relevant to the history of Saltford where sufficient storage space allows and subject to taking over ownership of those printed items. Except in exceptional circumstances it will not accept loans of printed items.

8. Acquisition

8.1 The Heritage Centre 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).

8.2 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 Heritage Centre 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.

9. Human remains

9.1 The Heritage Centre does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

10 Biological and geological material

10.1 The Heritage Centre will not acquire any biological material. So far as geological material is concerned, the Heritage Centre 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.

11 Archaeological material

11.1 The Heritage Centre 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).

12 Exceptions

12.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the Heritage Centre is acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin and/or acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

12.2 In these cases the Heritage Centre 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 Heritage Centre will document when these exceptions occur.

13 Disposal procedures

13.1 Any disposals will be undertaken taking account of expert advice and guidance from organisations such as B&NES Council and/or taking account of relevant national advice such as the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

13.2 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.

13.3 When disposal of a Heritage Centre object is being considered, the Heritage Centre 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.

13.4 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.

13.5 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 Heritage Centre'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 Heritage Centre will also be sought.

13.6 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 Heritage Centre acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of one person from the Heritage Centre management team acting alone.

13.7 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 an accredited museum likely to be interested in its acquisition.

13.8 If the material is not acquired by any accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the local community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material.

13.9 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 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 Heritage Centre may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

13.10 Any monies received by the Heritage Centre 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.

13.11 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.

13.12 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.

13.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the Heritage Centre will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with an 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.

Disposal by destruction

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

13.15 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.

13.16 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.

13.17 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 or appropriate.

13.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of SEG. 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.

Salford Environment Group
www.salfordenvironmentgroup.org.uk

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