

## Collections Development Policy

**Name of museum:** Tamworth Castle

**Name of governing body:** Tamworth Borough Council

**Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:** ? July 2023

**Policy review procedure:** The 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:** ? June 2028

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.

### 1. Museum's statement of purpose

- 1.1 Tamworth Borough Council is the owner of the collections, and this Collections Development Policy must also be seen in the context of Tamworth Borough Council's own strategic priority 'Tamworth – celebrating our heritage, creating a better future'.
- 1.2 Tamworth Castle is a unique Scheduled Ancient Monument offering an inspiring, entertaining, and enjoyable learning experience for all our users.
- 1.3 Through the collection, preservation, interpretation and exhibition of the museum's collections and buildings, we strive to maximise access to, and understanding of, Tamworth's heritage.

### 2. History of the Collections

- 2.1 Tamworth Castle was purchased by Tamworth Corporation in 1897 without contents. The collections have been acquired since 1897 through gift, bequest and purchases.

### 3. Overview of Current Collections

- 3.1 There are ten core areas of the collections:
  - 3.1.1 Furniture **60**: The Museum holds a furniture collection from the Tudor, Jacobean, Georgian and Victorian periods. This area of the collection supports the presentation of the rooms within the castle.
  - 3.1.2 The Gibbs & Canning **object / architectural** collection **150** and **archive 55 lots of documents** and **385 photos**. The Museum holds the company business archives and terracotta samples from nationally and internationally renowned company Gibbs & Canning dating from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century, as well as a large number of the company's photos of their workshop samples.
  - 3.1.3 The George Skey collection **object 163, document archive 30** and **17 photos** The Museum holds a collection of locally produced ceramics and company archives from George Skey, later Doulton's, dating from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century.
  - 3.1.4 Coins **1200** and Medals **140** The Museum holds a collection of coins and medals including Saxon Tamworth mint coins and Roman coins.
  - 3.1.5 The Allsopp collection objects **232 known (potentially a lot more that were re-acquisitioned, and the provenance lost)** and archive **574 including books**.

- 3.1.6 The museum holds an eclectic collection of a private local collector with objects dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Combined this collection forms the main core of the social history, art, weapons and armour, curiosities, and book collections, as well as an archive.
- 3.1.7 Archaeology **295 lots / boxes**. The museum holds a collection of archaeological objects from within the vicinity of Tamworth including Tamworth Castle grounds and motte, the rivers Anker and Tame, town planning initiatives resulting in excavations in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's, and field walking. Published excavation reports are held within the archive, **particularly for the Saxon mill**.
- 3.1.8 Natural History collection **22 boxes**. The museum holds a small fossil and mineral collection from a local collector dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as a small 19<sup>th</sup> century mineral collection and 19<sup>th</sup> century botanical collection of Staffordshire / Warwickshire mosses and wildflowers both donated by Lady Emily Peel.
- 3.1.9 Industry **10 - 12** The museum holds a collection of local Tamworth business trade samples, and trade records in the archive dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries
- 3.1.10 Art collection **291 framed** and around **650 unframed**. The Museum holds a collection of works of art from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The collection includes oil paintings, watercolours, portraiture including historic owners of Tamworth Castle and notable people including Sir Robert Peel. Further works include landscapes of Tamworth by local artists as well as paintings of Tamworth Castle, and **7 sculptures** of local interest.
- 3.1.11 Handling Collection **150**: The museum holds a handling collection for the purpose of education and access. The handling collection has mostly been returned to the collections and is now largely replicas that are used for school workshops and are not part of the collections audit. The Education and Events Officer is responsible for the collection.

#### 4. Themes and Priorities for Future Collecting

- 4.1 Items offered to the museum within the time frame of this Policy will be considered on an individual basis, dependent on provenance, relevance and volume. Preference will always be given to items relating directly to Tamworth Castle, or its occupants throughout its history, and the development of Tamworth as a Saxon town. Items with an evident provenance to the town and Borough of Tamworth, key people and families, businesses, social and industrial history, the development, and extension of the Borough throughout all time periods. Items from local metal detecting declared Treasure Trove and of significance to Tamworth and its development through all time periods. The area of Tamworth includes some district boundaries and Civil Parishes.
- The museum does not intend to actively collect on all areas of the current collections within the time frame of this Collections Development Policy.

#### 5. Themes and Priorities for Rationalisation and Disposal

- 5.1 The museum will actively seek to rationalise its collections listed above within the time frame of this Collections Development Policy. The priority of rationalisation and disposal will include items already noted through the recent collections audit as being outside of the provenance and remit of the museum's collections, and its recent collecting policies. (See Care and Conservation Policy and Plan)
- 5.2 Priorities for disposal due to size and volume will include architectural salvage items  
These items are expected to be disposed of under the Clause 16 paragraphs 16.5, 16.6, and 16.7 of this Collections Development Policy. Responsible, curatorially motivated disposal takes place as part of a museum's long-term collections policy, to increase public benefit derived from museum collections<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Museums Association 'Disposals Toolkit' p. 5.

## 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's 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, to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.
- 7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s) in alphabetical order:
- Erasmus Darwin
  - Samuel Johnson Birthplace Trust
  - Staffordshire Archives & Heritage Service
  - Staffordshire Regiment Museum, Whittington Barracks
- 7.3 In relation to the development of Saxon collections and the Mercian Trail Partnership:
- Stoke-on-Trent Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG)
  - Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT)
- 7.4 In relation to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), local metal detector finds and possible treasure (i.e., the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).  
For Treasure Trove within the collecting area for Tamworth Castle, and the surrounding areas, the museum has partnered with Stoke-on-Trent Potteries Museum and Art Gallery (PMAG) to agree the most appropriate location for finds and PAS offers.

## 8. Archival Holdings

- 8.1 The Archive collection includes archives in hard copy and digital format, and includes material related to Tamworth industries and companies including records of local businesses, individuals, and families whose records have been deposited within the museum; as well as some local school records, in particular those of Tamworth's Queen Elizabeth I Mercian School, referenced in the original town Charters. The museum archive collection is at present considered to be part of its object collection.
- 8.2 The museum holds a limited number of 'public' records (e.g., birth /marriage /death certificates, for electoral records, census returns, etc.). Records previously held in Tamworth Borough Council archive are being forwarded to the museum in the absence of Council building storage.
- 8.3 As the museum holds / intends to acquire archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body (Tamworth Borough Council) acting on the advice of the Collections Officer and Castle Museum Manager will be guided by the **Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002)**. See Collections Care and Conservation Policy and Plan.

## 9. Acquisitions

- 9.1 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by Tamworth Borough Council, the governing body of the museum itself, acting on curatorial advice from the Castle Collections and Archives Officer and Castle Museum Manager, and having regard to the interests of other museums.

- 9.2 The museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body (Tamworth Borough Council), or the Castle Collections and Archives Officer and Castle Museum Manager are satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 9.3 In particular 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).
- 9.4 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 (Tamworth Borough Council) 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**.
- 9.4 Objects are not accepted on long term loan, other than in exceptional circumstances, for example as key items for display in the Saxon Gallery; as part of a temporary display or as part of archival deposits. Refer to the Loan-In Policy for further guidance.

## 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.
- 11.2 Biological material acquired historically has been reported, and added to, the **Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA) DNA Database in 2013**.

## 12. Archaeological material

- 12.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body (Tamworth Borough Council), or the Castle Collections and Archives Officer and Castle Museum Manager 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 as defined by the **Treasure Act 1996. (i.e., the Coroner for Treasure - 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

- acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970

13.2 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.

#### 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 (Tamworth Borough Council), acting on the advice of the professional curatorial staff (at the Castle, or for another museum) 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 16.5 below 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**' (**DCMS 2005**).

#### 16. Disposal procedures

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

16.2 The governing body (Tamworth Borough Council) 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 (Tamworth Borough Council) 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 (Tamworth Borough Council) 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 Museum Association's '*Find an Object*' online 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 (Tamworth Borough Council) 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.

### **16.13 Disposal by exchange**

- 16.13.1 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.
- 16.13.2 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.
- 16.13.3 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.
- 16.13.4 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 Museum Association's *'Find an Object'* online web listing service or make an announcement in the Museums Association's *'Museums Journal'* or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

16.13.5 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.

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

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

16.14.2 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

16.14.3 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.

16.14.4 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.

16.14.5 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.

**End**

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