

Ipswich Transport Museum Collections Development Policy

Name of museum: Ipswich Transport Museum

Name of governing body: The Council of Management (The Trustees)

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 11 April 2013

Date at which this policy is due for review: 11 April 2018

1. Museum's statement of purpose

The Ipswich Transport Museum exists in order to preserve the transport and engineering history of the Ipswich area.

It does this through the operation of the Museum itself in Cobham Road, Ipswich; through its website – www.ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk; through the organisation of external events such as exhibitions and rallies; through lectures to other organisations and through public access to all of its collections.

The trustees accept the principle that a museum is an institution which collects, documents, preserves, exhibits and interprets material evidence and associated information for the public benefit.

2. An overview of current collections

The Road Transport Collection comprises material made or operated in the Ipswich area, which can be classified in the following two ways; 'method of propulsion' and 'use' as detailed below

Method of Propulsion

- Hand powered vehicles
- Foot powered vehicles
- Horse drawn vehicles
- Battery powered vehicles
- Electric powered vehicles (external source)
- Petrol powered vehicles
- Diesel powered vehicles

Use

- Fire fighting equipment
- Personal transport vehicles
- Public Transport vehicles
- Road Haulage vehicles
- Service vehicles

Note that each object can/will appear in both lists and may also appear in the Ipswich Engineering Collection if it was made in Ipswich, and may also form part of the small objects collection.

Other forms of transport are featured in displays incorporating small exhibits, models, photographs and archives.

- Airborne Transport
- Railway Transport
- Waterborne Transport

The *Ipswich Engineering Collection* comprises engineering products designed and manufactured in the Ipswich area, including

- Ipswich based manufacturing and general engineering companies
- Communications engineering (including telephony & radio)
- Electrical engineering (including generation, distribution and end user)
- Gas engineering (including generation, distribution and end user)
- Motor engineering

The museum also keeps other collections relating to transport and engineering of the Ipswich area.

- Archives Collection
- Library Collection
- Plans Collection
- Photographs Collection
- Moving Images Collection
- Aural History Collection
- Costumes Collection
- Small objects

3. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The museum collections generally only cover objects made or used in or around Ipswich or the surrounding area; usually defined by a radius of approximately 12 miles from a given point on the town boundary.. Exceptions to this are objects that operated regularly into the town from other geographic areas, or objects which were made or used outside our defined area which can depict, allow interpretation of, or provide a genuine representation of a local object or objects where local specimens no longer exist.

The overall museum collection is very large and our priorities for collecting further objects is generally limited to exceptional objects that may become available from time to time which do not feature in our current collections. Relevance and Comparison Analysis with objects held in other accredited and non accredited collections allow trustees to make informed decisions in respect of identifying exceptional objects we may consider suitable for inclusion in our collections. Our collections cover the approximate period 1825-1985, although more older and more modern objects are included and further objects will be considered from time-to-time. Generally it is our policy not collect objects that are considered contemporary, unless

- it is felt an object is sufficiently important in the context of the museum's collections policy and
- it is felt the object is likely be impossible to obtain at a future date

4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

The Trustees reserve the right, from time to time, to review themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal of objects. Our approach to rationalisation and disposal will be carried out in accordance with clause 13 (e) and 13 (f) of this policy.

At the time of writing, the museum does not have any current themes it wishes to pursue in respect of disposal of large objects. The trustees do and will continue to review the relevance of

objects in the museum's collections from time to time. Such reviews are/will be undertaken in consultation with the museum's membership organisation, other accredited museums and other non-accredited collections as appropriate. The trustees particularly recognise that as a voluntary museum, disposing of objects previously collected by others (who may still be museum volunteers) is potentially time consuming, divisive and disruptive in the wider context of the museum. Rationalisation therefore has to be undertaken with the utmost care and in a spirit of consensus.

Our priorities for rationalisation and disposal of items will be concentrated on reviewing and identifying small objects, archive items and publications where objects do not match the themes and priorities identified in section 3.

5. Limitations on collecting

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

6. Collecting policies of other museums

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.

Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

- Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service
- MEAL (Museum of East Anglian Life), Stowmarket
- East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville
- Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Museum, Brockford

7. Policy review procedure

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted above.

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 existing collections.

8. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

9. Acquisition procedures

- a. 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 or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b. 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).

- c. 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.
- d. The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.
- e. The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.
- f. Any exceptions to the above clauses 9a, 9b, 9c, or 9e 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

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.

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

10. Spoliation

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

11. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

Not applicable to this museum

12. Management of archives

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 United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

13. Disposal procedures

Disposal preliminaries

- a. The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.

- b. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- c. The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- d. 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.

Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

- e. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 13g-13s will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.
- f. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

The disposal decision-making process

- g. Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, 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 the 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. External 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.

Responsibility for disposal decision-making

- h. 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 of the collection acting alone.

Use of proceeds of sale

- i. Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied 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.
- j. The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

Disposal by gift or sale

- k. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. 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.
- l. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly 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 an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- m. 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.

Disposal by exchange

- n. 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.
- o. In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or unaccredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 13a-13d and 13g-13h will be followed as will the procedures in paragraphs 13p-13s.
- p. 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.
- q. If the exchange is proposed with a non-accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will make an announcement in the Museums Journal and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- r. 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.

Documenting disposal

- s. 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.