



**HULL MUSEUMS**

## **CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY**

Review Date: July 2024

**Name of museum:**

Hull Museums

**Name of governing body:**

Hull City Council through the board of Hull Culture & Leisure Limited

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

July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019

**Policy review procedure:**

The Care & Conservation Policy will be under review over the next five years, with updates as required.

**Date at which this policy is due for review:**

July 2024

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Care & Conservation Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the collections.

This policy outlines the commitment by Hull Museums to maintain and improve the care of objects within its collections, as required to meet museum accreditation standards for collections care, and the Forward Plan. The policy is an overview to compliment the Care and Conservation Plan.

This policy sits within the context of the Arts Council funded NPO business strategy for the Humber Museums Partnership, and the National Lottery Heritage Fund project Hull: Yorkshire's Maritime City (HYMC), in regard to the Maritime collections. The NPO and HYMC funding is allowing additional staff capacity for conservation and collections care across the museum service to meet the requirements of the Care & Conservation Plan. The Care and Conservation Policy and Plan will be updated at least every five years, to guide the service approach to collections care across all Hull Museums sites, including loans to other institutions. Benchmarking surveys of the collections will also be carried out every five years, to feed into the Care & Conservation Plan. During the period of NPO funding up to 2022, policies and procedures may require updates more regularly to facilitate the changes within the museum service to meet the requirements of the Art Council, particularly in regard to digital and access.

The museum service will maintain awareness of environmental sustainability in regard to collections care. This may include recycling of packaging materials, low energy lighting, storage conditions, and size of the collections in relation to storage space available.

## **2. Standards, Ethics and Legislation**

We will follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines Including, but not exclusively the following:

- ICOM Code of Ethics
- MA Code of Ethics
- ICON Professional Guidelines
- PAS 197:2009
- PAS 198:2012
- Benchmarks in Collections Care

- Spectrum 5.0
- UKRG Security and Facilities Reports
- Guidelines for the Care of Larger and Working Historic Objects (ABTEM), as they relate to conservation and care of collections.
- A Manual of Maritime Curatorship (2018)
- Health and Safety at Work (1974)
- Control of Asbestos regulations (2012)
- COSHH regulations (2002)
- Care, conservation and use of human remains will conform to the Policy on Human Remains, and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums (2005)

### **3. Expertise**

A Conservation & Engagement Officer post is in place as part of the Hull: Yorkshire's Maritime City project, to concentrate on conservation of the Maritime Museum collections. Other than this post there is no professionally qualified conservator employed at Hull Museums, although there is a Paper Conservator at Hull History Centre who can be called upon for general advice and expertise where required. All other conservation on the collections is procured externally. In all cases of interventive conservation, every effort will be made to contract in a fully qualified, experienced, accredited professional conservator. If an accredited conservator is not available due to the specialism required, then Hull Museums curatorial staff will ensure that the conservator is qualified and suitably experienced in their field. Advice will also be sought from a qualified conservator in cases where specialist knowledge is required, for example the mounting and display of costume, treatment of leather, or use of cleaning products. In addition we will draw on advice and support from networks such as NMDC and the Local Authority Museums Network. A full time permanent Collections Curator is on staff to give advice about collections care cross-service.

### **4. Specialist Collections**

Hull Museums has a wide variety of different types of collections, including specialist areas such as costume & textiles, natural history, art, transport, industrial, social history, ethnographic, stonework and archaeology. In all

cases, a specialist conservator will be sought, who may not always be ICON accredited, but will have equivalent extensive experience in their field.

## **5. Communication**

This policy and the associated Care & Conservation Plan will be communicated to all staff and volunteers who are involved with collections care across the service. This may be in the form of the full policy/plan, an edited version, or verbally.

## **6. Audits**

Due to the size and nature of the collections, it is not possible to carry out systematic condition checks of every object on a regular basis. As such, general visual checks of items on display will be carried out at least every six months, and more detailed checks made of vulnerable objects, which may also require a written condition report. All loan items will be condition checked with photographs before they leave the care of Hull Museums, and the form completed when they return, likewise for inward loans.

Object condition will be checked on a routine basis whenever items are moved or handled, and any issues recorded.

## **7. Insurance & Security**

All accessioned collections will be fully insured with a specialist fine arts policy, whether on site or on loan. This will always be nail to nail to cover transit.

Government Indemnity or insurance cover will be in place for all loans.

Security reports will be carried out every 5 years to ensure that the museum service is adequately protecting the collections from theft or damage.

Emergency Plans are in place for each site and are reviewed on a 5 year basis.

## **8. Hazards and Health & Safety**

Staff or contractors involved in collections care and conservation will be trained in working with hazardous substances, which may be in regard to substances used in collections care, or the museum objects themselves.

Health and safety will remain paramount, with risk assessments, safe systems

of work, data sheets and COSHH in place, to ensure that staff and contractors are adhering to a legal and ethical framework. Curatorial staff have received training in identifying common hazards found within collections and we will continue to identify, monitor and take steps to address hazards within the museum collections.

## **9. Links to Other Policies & Resources**

This policy sits within a collections management framework with reference to the following policies and procedures:

Care & Conservation Plan

Collections Development Policy

Documentation Plan

Documentation Policy

Documentation Procedural Manual

Emergency Plans for each museum site

Access Policy

Loans Out Policy

Forward Plan

Security Reports for each museum site

Collections hazards procedures (in process)