

# **York Museums Trust**

## **Collections Development Policy**

**April 2013**

## **Contents and Formatting**

This collections development policy is written in line with the Arts Council of England's Accreditation Template (December 2011) – and the Arts Council of England's Accreditation Collections Development Policy (December 2011) and subsequent guidance issued in February 2013.

A requirement of the Arts Council's Accreditation Standard is: Requirement 2.2: The museum must have an approved policy for developing collections (also known as an acquisitions and disposal policy). The policy must include:

**1 Statement of Purpose**

**2 Overview of current collections**

History of the Collections  
Areas of Strength and Significance  
Unique Nature of Museums

Current Collections

History  
Archaeology  
Science  
Art  
Numismatics

(Each collection section to contain makeup, scope and scale)

**3 Future themes and collection**

**4 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal**

**5 Information on the legal framework for acquisition and disposal**

## 1. Statement of Purpose

### Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

**Our Vision** is for York Museums Trust to play a major part in positioning York as a world class cultural centre

**Our Mission** is to cherish and enhance the collections, buildings and gardens entrusted to us, presenting and interpreting them as a stimulus for learning, a provocation to curiosity and a source of inspiration and enjoyment for all

### Strategic Objectives

- To protect and conserve the collections, gardens and buildings
- To promote access to the collections, gardens and buildings appropriate to the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- To attract more visitors to our sites, thus contributing to the local and regional economy
- To create learning opportunities for all and develop innovative programmes springing from the collections, gardens and buildings
- To network and collaborate with partners and contribute to the development of the economic and cultural life of the city and the region
- To raise substantial funds to realise these aims

## **2. Overview of Current Collections**

### **History of Collections**

The collections managed by York Museums Trust (YMT) on behalf of the City of York Council (CYC) have their origins in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Private and civic collections began to amass as intellectual curiosity and interest in the history, art, archaeology and natural sciences increased within the city and across North Yorkshire. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries these collections came together within a number of York-based organisations principally The Yorkshire Philosophical Society (YPS) and York Corporation to be exhibited within three institutions The Yorkshire Museum (YM), York Castle Museum (YCM) and York Art Gallery (YAG) and a botanic garden The Yorkshire Museum Gardens (YMG).

### **Yorkshire Museum**

The YM opened to members of the YPS in 1830 to display its ever-increasing natural science collections. In 1847 the YMG were laid out and included a half-timbered building known as the Hospitium in which the YPS displayed its archaeology and ethnography collections.

Important local collectors, and generally members of the YPS, such as Backhouse, Cook, Monkman and Mitchelson, donated or sold their collections to the YPS. Although a privately-owned museum, the YM became the repository for the city of York's archaeology from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. In 1960 the YPS gifted the YM, YMG and their collections to York City Council (formerly York Corporation). Museum staff along with members of the YPS and other local collectors continued to add to the YM's archaeology and natural science collections. The 1974 municipal boundary changes resulted in the YM being transferred to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and gaining a County Museum status before being returned to CYC control in 1996. Between 1984 and 1987 the archaeology, ethnography and architectural collections were transferred from the Hospitium building into the main museum.

## **York Castle Museum**

York Castle Museum was opened in 1937 by York Corporation. The social history collections that formed its core were housed in York's Female Prison, built in 1780 and only recently vacated as a prison in 1930. At the core of this new museum were the collections of Dr John Kirk and, latterly, John Bowes Morrell. A second building, the adjacent Debtors' Prison was added to YCM in 1951. This was used to display the military collections of Edward Timperley, Dr. Kirk and local regiments alongside large vehicles, costume and textiles.

## **York Art Gallery**

In 1878 the permanent Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition building opened to the public. This new building held on an annual basis very successful temporary exhibitions. In 1882 John Burton, a local collector, donated his important collection of over 100 paintings to the Fine Art and Industrial Exhibition Committee. In 1892 the building and its newly formed collection were sold to York Corporation and became known as the City Art Gallery. Important bequests from F.D. Lycett-Green, Dr Evelyn and Very Rev. Milner-White were added to the gallery's collection.

The collections of all three institutions grew in size and stature under the ownership of York's City Council. The combined collections of CYC gained Designated status in 1997. In 2002 the management of the collections, buildings and gardens were transferred to the newly formed YMT.

YMT has continued to develop York's collections. Important collectors such as Bill Ismay, Henry Rothschild, Amy Wallis and Anthony Shaw held York's collections in high enough regard as to either bequeath or place on loan their nationally important collection with YMT. YMT manages and develops its collections by discipline rather than by site. The overall YMT collection is divided into History, Science, Archaeology, Numismatics and Art.

For the detailed history of the museums and their collections see: Green, R., 1991, *York City Art Gallery: An Illustrated Guide*.

Pyrah, B. J., 1988, *The History of the Yorkshire Museum and its Geological Collections*.

YCM Guidebooks (1970's-1990's)

## **Areas of Strength and Significance**

The whole of the collection managed by YMT is Designated as an outstanding collection, recognising its national importance.

Within YMT's collections there are individual objects of international significance:

- The Middleham Jewel
- The York Helmet
- The Vale of York Viking Hoard
- The Cawood Sword
- Portrait of Captain John Foote by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1761-65)
- Portrait of Monsignor Agucchi by Annibale Carracci (1603-4)
- Jean Abercromby, Mrs Morison of Haddo 1767 Allan Ramsay (1713 - 1784)
- Leaping Salmon Vase, 1930-31 by Bernard Leach
- The York Moa
- The Middlesbrough Meteorite
- The Heslington Baby House

and smaller discreet collections:

- Roman York's (Eboracum's) Burials
- Viking York's Domestic and Trade Waste
- Paintings by William Etty
- The Ismay collection of British Studio Ceramics
- The Milner-White Collection of British Studio Ceramics
- The Kirk Collection
- Kirkdale Cave Collection
- Timperley Collection of Arms and Armour
- The Evelyn Collection
- Geological Type and Figured Specimens
- Biological Type and Figured Specimens

## **Unique Nature of Museums**

The three institutions each hold a unique place in British museum history. The YM is the third oldest purpose-built museum in UK and the only one to have standing medieval monastic ruins under its roof. YCM's Kirkgate is the original prototype for reconstructed streetscapes as a means of contextual display of museum collections.

The Yorkshire Museum has played an integral role in the establishment of some of most important organisations within the museum sector. On 26<sup>th</sup> September 1831 the first meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science was held at the YM. The Museums Association held its inaugural meeting at the invitation of the council of the YPS in the YM on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1889.

YAG throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century was used for a wide range of social and cultural functions and exhibitions from All in Wrestling to hosting the first ever recreated street display as a temporary exhibition in advance of the YCM's Kirkgate. YAG has become internationally recognised as a pre-eminent centre for twentieth century British studio ceramics.

All the museums occupy listed buildings and are in part are comprised or are surrounded by scheduled ancient monuments. The Yorkshire Museum building (1830) was designed by William Wilkins who later went on to design the National Gallery. York Castle Museum was in part (The Female Prison 1780) designed by John Carr.

## **Current Collections by Subject**

### **History Collection**

#### **Make Up**

YMT's history collection is in the main housed within YCM. Previously it has been sub-divided between military history, costume and textiles, scientific instruments and social history. YMT now curate the entire collection as one. The History collection is made up of objects drawn from everyday life as well as rare and

exceptional items. It is made up of objects that have connections with all aspects of local, regional and national history.

### **Scope**

Most of the collection relates to York and North Yorkshire, but some material is nationally based. The collection ranges chronologically from the late medieval period (circa 1400) up to the present day. In this it overlaps in a small way with the other YMT collections. The History collection can tell the story of how ordinary people lived in York and the surrounding area from circa 1700 to the present day in a way and a depth that no other museum in the region can.

### **Scale**

The history collection is one of the largest and most comprehensive regional collections in the UK. In the main it represents everyday items and clothing used by the lower and upper English middle class from circa 1700 to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Archaeology Collection**

### **Make Up**

The archaeology collection is housed primarily in the YM. It is made up of private collections constructed by local antiquarians of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, individual chance finds, and the excavation archives produced by antiquarian, amateur and modern archaeologists. Within this collection are the small and now closed to development residues of ethnography and classical archaeology. YMT curates and manages seven listed buildings three scheduled Ancient Monuments as an adjunct to its collection.

### **Scope**

The archaeology collection covers a chronological period from the later Palaeolithic Period (circa 100000 BP) to the present day. The collection represents a geographical area of North and East Yorkshire and within this the city of York. There are a small number of objects in comparison from elsewhere in UK and Europe. These represent the collecting activities of important York individuals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and have a place in the story of the development of the collection and the study of archaeology as a discipline.



## **Scale**

The archaeology collection is one of the most comprehensive and important in the UK. The archaeology collection numbers some 55,000 objects ranging from the Palaeolithic up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most significant objects within the archaeology collection, in no particular order, are: The Middleham Jewel, Coppergate Helmet, Ormside Bowl, Head of Constantine, 12<sup>th</sup> century statues from St Mary's Abbey; infirmary mortar from St Mary's Abbey, Castle Yard hanging bowl, Gilling West Sword, The Escrick Ring and the Vale of York Viking Hoard (co-owned with the British Museum).

## **Science Collection**

### **Make Up**

The science collection comprises two distinct collection subsets; biology and geology. In addition a working observatory within the YMG is included within the science collection. Founded in 1821, the collection is also of real significance to the history of science – linked with leading scientists, William Smith, John Philips, Richard Owen and Gideon Mantell and discoveries of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### **Scope**

The geology collection is of enormous scientific value. It represents material of quality and breadth from classic localities across the UK and worldwide, many of which are no longer accessible.

The biology collection is made up primarily of specimens collected in Yorkshire and the UK, with some significant specimens from international sources. It represents a nationally important historical and scientific dataset, and a resource through which to explore the natural world.

### **Scale**

The palaeontology collection includes over 100,000 specimens, mostly from Great Britain. Special strengths include Carboniferous material from the north of England (fish, crinoids, and plants), Lower Jurassic vertebrates (including marine reptiles and dinosaur footprints from the Yorkshire coast), Middle Jurassic plants, and the

Quaternary Kirkdale Cave fauna. The collection includes 293 type specimens, and 1,000 status specimens.

Mineral and petrology collections, containing circa 5,000 and circa 7,500 specimens respectively are made up of UK and worldwide material. They include reference collections for Yorkshire, The Greenbank Collection of display-quality mineral specimens from the North of England, and the petrology collection of the Yorkshire academic B. Hobson (specimens and thin sections), meticulously assembled during the course of his worldwide travels.

A small collection of meteorites, including the Middlesbrough meteorite, and an important collection of mostly vulcanological photographs assembled by Tempest Anderson, add to the collection's significance.

The collection encompasses: entomology (140,000 specimens), botany (45,000), ornithology (skins, cased and uncased mounts, eggs, and skeletons – 10,000), mammals (850), fish, reptiles and amphibians (60), osteology (200), mollusca (10,000), and spirit material (10,000).

These are largely made up of a series of smaller collections assembled by amateur and professional naturalists over the last 180 years, and can tell very personal stories alongside the scientific. The collection includes one of the finest beetle collections in the country, and the original herbarium of the YPS. There is significant work by regional taxidermists, including a considerable number by the Victorian taxidermist Edward Allen.

Rare and globally important specimens include two Great Auk mounts (of only 79 remaining worldwide), an almost complete moa skeleton, two passenger pigeons and the first dodo bones to be brought back to Britain in the modern era.

## **Fine and Decorative Art Collection**

### **Make Up**

The Art collection is made up of two collection sub-sets Fine Art and Decorative Art. The Fine Art collection is made up from several important individual collections: The Burton Collection of paintings, Dr W. A. Evelyn's collection of topographic works of art on paper, The Lycett-Green Collection and a large number of additional acquisitions. The Decorative Arts collection is based around the pre-eminent collection of British studio ceramics including the Ismay, Milner-White and Rothschild Collections. YMT is also home to a long-term loan of the Anthony Shaw collection. The collection also comprises a representative selection of other crafts.

### **Scope**

The Fine Art Collection aims to provide a survey of post-medieval painting in Western Europe. A comprehensive works on paper collection with appropriate local emphasis is based around a collection of York views purchased from Dr W.A. Evelyn. Sculpture is collected to complement the 2 dimensional collections. The ceramic collection represents the foremost collection of contemporary studio pottery in Britain in the Milner-White and W.A. Ismay collections. The glass collection consists of a small but important selection of painted glass by Henry Gyles and William Peckitt of York; English glass of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and post-war studio glass. We have a small collection of York silver and other metalwork.

### **Scale**

The Fine Art Collection includes some 1000 oil paintings, 10,000 works on paper and 80 sculptures. The gallery houses an important collection of paintings covering Italy, France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and Britain from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the present. A collection of late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century British designs for published illustrations was presented by James Tillotson-Hyde in 1962 and there is a small collection of approximately 150 Japanese prints. There is a small group of mainly British sculptures, many of which have been acquired through the Contemporary Art Society.

The ceramics collections represent a survey of ceramics in Britain from its earliest appearance in prehistory through to the foremost collection of contemporary studio pottery in Britain in the Milner White, Henry Rothschild and WA Ismay collections together numbering some 4000 pots. The glass collection consists of a small but important selection of painted glass by Henry Gyles and William Peckitt of York; English glass of the 18th and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and post-war studio glass. We have a small collection of York silver and other metalwork.

## **Numismatic Collection**

### **Make Up**

YMT's numismatic collection is made up of three collection subsets: Coins, Banknotes and Medals. The collection was formed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century through bequests of local collectors – in particular Robert Cook, Rook and Wakefield. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the collection grew through the addition of large collections of early medieval English and Northumbrian coinage. More recently archaeology has produced the additions to the collections as individual coins or assemblages alongside coin hoards which have been discovered by metal detectorists including The Middleham Hoard, The Bootham Hoard and The Beckenbrough Hoard.

### **Scope**

The coin collection contains extensive coverage of the history of coinage in England including: Roman (a good general collection, with a high proportion of provenanced and hoard material); Saxon (Unparalleled collection of *stycas*, plus very strong collection of provenanced material); medieval (Excellent range of material almost all securely provenanced); early modern (strong collection of Tudor and Stuart coins in gold and silver - almost all provenanced) and an exceptional collection of contemporary counterfeits. An exceptional collection of 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century tokens along side a seventeenth to nineteenth century silver and base metal milled coinage complete the collection. The banknote collection is comprised a good collection of nineteenth century provincial banknotes, with bias towards issues of Yorkshire/ northern banks.

A very good collection of York/ Yorkshire commemorative medals exists alongside a representative collection of British commemorative and Fine Art medals. YMT also has an important collection of Soviet orders, decorations and medals.

### **Scale**

The collection numbers nearly 60,000 pieces. These can be broken down into Ancient coinage (31,600); Northumbrian *stycas* (5,000); other hammered coinage (6,000); British milled coinage (3,000); overseas coinage (2,500); token and jetons (5,500); medals (700); and banknotes (300).

### **Library and Archives**

#### **Make Up**

YMT's library and archive holdings are important in their own right but have principally been amassed to support the historic and archaeological object, works and art and scientific specimen collections. The YM historic library is the most significant individual part to the overall collection. In its own right it is a significant rare book and historic library. The earliest individual books date back to the sixteenth century. The strength of the overall collection is in academic and popular published collections catalogues and academic works 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Continuous runs of a wide range of regional and national academic journals are included within the library holdings. The archives that YMT hold relate only to the collections within its curation and the operation of the museums and gallery in its care.

#### **Scope**

This collection was established by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society (YPS) in 1822 alongside its specimen and artefact collections – together forming a resource for the scientific study of the natural world and human history. The numismatic collection is supported by a library that dates back to the foundation of the Yorkshire Museum. The library contains complete runs of the principal UK numismatic journals in addition to a wide range of both general and specialist works.

## **Scale**

Together the library holdings of YMT number of 50,000 books and journal volumes.

### **3. Future themes and collection**

YMT's collection will develop in line with YMT's strategic principles and individual collections development priorities and that are outlined below.

#### **YMT Strategic Principles for Acquisition**

- Representation fulfilling specific collection development Themes and Priorities
- Exhibition
- Learning

#### **Conditions**

- Accurate Provenance
- Accompanying Story
- Legal Title
- Compliance with all relevant legislation
- Capacity and Resources for long-term preservation, care, storage and documentation
- Fulfils specific Collection Development Themes, Priorities and Criteria for individual collections

#### **YMT Collection Future Development Themes and Priorities**

##### **The future development of YMT's History collection will:**

- enhance the material representation and interpretation of the history and daily life of the people, of firstly, York, secondly, North Yorkshire and thirdly the region.
- be accompanied by individual, group or cultural stories that add local or regional significance to objects.

- create, through research and investigation, displays, exhibitions, learning activities and publications that provide insight into the lives of the people of York and the surrounding region.
- create a high profile resource that is at the centre of York's cultural life.
- strengthen the research potential and significance of the nationally Designated history collection through prioritised research, loans and acquisitions within both areas of existing strengths and weaknesses .....
- Strengths
  - the 1900-1918 World War 1 period
  - costume and textiles from 1790-1810
- Weaknesses
  - men's clothing from 1900 and late 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - post-1960s material culture reflecting cultural history trends rather than fleeting fashions in particular industry and technology
  - the development and use of York's prison buildings
- be pro-active and seek out opportunities for collecting to reflect the contemporary and future development of York and North Yorkshire.

**The future development of YMT's Archaeology collection will:**

- create a dynamic collection reflecting the regional character and significance of the archaeological record of North Yorkshire and the City of York that tells the story of its people through the prehistoric, Roman, Anglian, Anglo-Scandinavian and Medieval periods.

- establish a pre-eminent resource for the archaeology of York and its hinterland that will be used for learning, research and informing future development by a wide range of local communities and stakeholders.
- strengthen the research potential and significance of the nationally Designated archaeology collection through prioritised research, loans and acquisition within the .....
  - Anglian Period
  - Prehistoric Period
  - peculiar, particular and significant objects that are outstanding on a national level
  - history and development of the Yorkshire Museum and Gardens, St Mary's Abbey, York's Medieval Castle, St Mary's Church Castlegate, York
  - Specific collections amassed by individual local collectors

**The future development of YMT's Science collection will:**

- create a scientific resource that reflects the geological wealth and biological diversity of the Yorkshire region, with particular reference to disappearing and changing habitats and wildlife of the Yorkshire region and its wider geographical, temporal, historical and scientific context
- celebrate figures from York and the region, who contributed to the history and development of natural science and the Yorkshire Museum's role within the subject
- create a regional reference tool for a wide range of communities and will contribute to a multi-level understanding of ecology, biodiversity, the history of the natural sciences and also how the natural world is meshed with our own



- strengthen the research potential and significance of the nationally Designated science collection through prioritised research, loans and acquisitions within the .....
- marine reptiles of the Jurassic Period
- the typology of Yorkshire geology
- the historic and contemporary biodiversity of Yorkshire and the North of England

**The future development of YMT's Art collection will:**

- provide a survey of western fine art from the late medieval period to the modern day
- create a resource from which a rich and varied series of temporary exhibitions can be created that will raise the profile of YAG and the art collection
- create the pre-eminent resource for the study of British Studio Ceramics in UK
- establish the leading knowledge base within York for the drawn representation of the topography of York
- strengthen the research potential and significance of the nationally Designated art collection through prioritised research, loans and acquisitions within the .....
- post-medieval painted glass with particular reference to Gyles or Peckitt,
- makers in the W.A. Ismay collection which reflect changes in style and direction, as well as selecting work by new and emerging potters to reflect the manner in which Ismay grew his collection
- decorative arts that illustrate crafts that were significant to York and Yorkshire
- paintings of the 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. There is an aspiration to acquire works by Stubbs, Gainsborough, Devis, Romney, Wright of Derby and Raeburn

- paintings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century French paintings, particularly a good example of work by the Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists
  - paintings of the 19<sup>th</sup> century British paintings including works by Turner, Constable, Wilkie, Bonington, Leighton, Alma-Tadema and Poynter, as well as examples of Pre-Raphaelitism
  - paintings and sketches by York born artist William Etty, particularly examples of Etty's history paintings which are underrepresented in our collection
  - paintings of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century paintings, particularly from the period after 1960 which is not well represented
  - sculpture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth
- watercolours, drawings and prints devoted to the topography of York and North Yorkshire where they provide new topographical information are of aesthetic significance
  - British watercolours of aesthetic significance that complement the paintings collection and strengthen our existing holdings
  - paintings and new media works by contemporary artists which have links to our historic collections. We will work in partnership with the Contemporary Art Society to inform and enhance our approach to contemporary collecting
  - The decorative art collection will continue to grow in terms of contemporary ceramics (and other crafts when relevant) that are representative of new developments in the field

**The future development of YMT's numismatic collection will:**

- lead to a resource that helps to elucidate the history and economy of York and North Yorkshire
- strengthen the research potential and significance of the nationally Designated numismatic collection through prioritised research, loans and acquisitions within the .....

- coins, banknotes, commemorative and fine art medals that were minted or designed, excavated or traded in York or North Yorkshire
- coins, banknotes, commemorative and fine art medals that have proven links to significant individuals or events in the history of York and North Yorkshire

## **Library and Archive**

### **The future development of YMT's library and archive collection will:**

- create a research resource for the other collections
- an in-depth knowledge base on the history, development and significance of all the collections
- enable communities to use the collection to gain knowledge about YMT collections and their role in the development of the appropriate disciplines
- strengthen the research potential and significance of the nationally Designated art collection through prioritised research, loans and acquisitions within the .....
  - The development of Historic Library of the Yorkshire Museum
  - The development of British Studio Ceramics and its significant patrons with a link to York's collections
  - books, pamphlets, leaflets, correspondence and journals that are directly linked to the individual collections, objects, buildings and landscapes curated by YMT

## **Handling Collection**

YMT will in principle use its accessioned collections for all museum activities. YMT is committed to developing and maintaining an extensive programme of learning and display activities through its Collections Studios, Hands on Here Programme and Open Studios.

YMT will acquire objects for its collections that are for specific learning and display activities. Such objects will be acquired with a view to disposal once that specific activity is completed.

#### **4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal**

##### **Principles for Disposal**

- Sampling Collections
- Rationalisation of Collections outside of specific collection development
- Poor Condition – beyond the point of preservation
- Acquisition Learning, Exhibition of Collection Conditions Fulfilled

##### **Individual Collection Development Rationalisation and Disposal Themes and Priorities**

The strategic priorities for the rationalisation of YMT's collections are to create capacity within all collections and associated resources to allow YMT to develop the collections to match the aspirations outlined in the organisation's Vision and the Future Themes section of this policy.

YMT will rationalise all its collections in line with its strategic principles for disposal, the MA Code of Ethics, the relevant statutory frameworks and the individual collection themes and the individual collection priorities laid out below.

##### **History**

- Objects with no discernable personal, group or cultural story that relates to York, North Yorkshire or the region

##### **Closed Collection Sub-set**

- None

## **Archaeology**

- Bulk archaeological assemblages
- Architectural fragments

## **Closed Collection Sub-set**

- Ethnography
- Objects from outside of North Yorkshire
- Classical Collections

## **Science**

- Non-English Specimens that are insignificant in the field of Natural Sciences

## **Closed Collection Sub-set**

- Biological specimens preserved in alcohol

## **Art**

- Historic frames that cannot be matched to or have never been associated with YAG collections
- Historic furniture and fittings purchased for display purposes
- Archive and library that is unrelated to YAG art collections and the history and operation of YAG

## **Closed Collection Sub-set**

- Historic furniture and fittings

## **Numismatics**

- Non-Yorkshire badge collection

### **Closed Collection Sub-Set**

- None

### **Library and Archive**

- Material that is not related to YMT collections and sites

### **Closed Collection Sub-Set**

- Publications used for research for exhibition

### **Handling Collections**

- YMT will actively dispose of objects that have been acquired specifically for learning and exhibition activities at the point that YMT no longer deliver the specified activity.

## **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):**

## **History**

Beck Isle Museum, Pickering  
City of York Council Archives  
East Riding of Yorkshire Museums Service  
Malton Museum  
Ryedale Folk Museum  
Scarborough Museums Trust  
The National Trust  
Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society  
Yorkshire Farming Museum

## **Archaeology**

Beck Isle Museum, Pickering  
British Museum Doncaster Museums Service  
Clifford's Tower (English Heritage)  
East Riding of Yorkshire Museums Service  
Malton Museum  
Scarborough Museums Trust  
Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society  
York Archaeological Trust

## **Science**

Beck Isle Museum, Pickering  
East Riding of Yorkshire Museums Service  
Leeds City Council Museums Service  
Natural History Museum  
Scarborough Museums Trust  
Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society

## **Art**

Leeds City Council Museums Service  
Shingley Gallery, Gateshead  
Tate  
Victoria and Albert Museum

## **Numismatics**

Leeds Museums Service

## **Library**

Leeds Museums Service

## **7. Policy review procedure**

### **Next Review Date: May 2016**

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. 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.
- e. The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (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.
- e. 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.
- f. Any exceptions to the 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. As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004.
- h. 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.

## **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**

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 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 13a-13d, 13g and 13o/s below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

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'.

## **12. Management of archives**

As the museum holds / intends to acquire 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.

*In 13f, please include one of the following two paragraphs:*

f. In exceptional cases, the disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below in paragraphs 13g-13m and 13o/s 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

OR

g. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

### ***The disposal decision-making process***

h. 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***

- i. 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. For YMT's collections this decision will be ratified by CYC.

### ***Use of proceeds of sale***

- j. 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.
- k. 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***

- l. 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.

- m. 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.
- n. 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***

- o/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.