

# **COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2013-2018**

Plymouth Arts & Heritage Service



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Acquisition is the process by which Plymouth Arts & Heritage Service (for the purposes of this document Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery, Elizabethan House, Merchant's House and Mount Edgumbe) acquires artefacts, either by donation, bequest, purchase or transfer for the collections. It does this to ensure that the core mission of the service is maintained.

The core mission of the service is to:

Endeavour to be a centre of regional excellence which provides a gateway to inspire curiosity about Plymouth's past, in order to inform understanding of the present and to explore the way the city has shaped, and been shaped, by the rest of the world.

We do this by inspiring and engaging an active interest in our human past and the natural world, which is relevant to all of us, and in doing so, provide collections and memories for future generations. We aim to ensure that:

- Our users have access to a sustainable and quality service
- Our users are inspired and enriched with knowledge and understanding
- Our collections are well cared for

Collection Review is the process by which the Plymouth Arts & Heritage service reviews its collections to ensure that they continue to reflect the core mission of the service. On rare occasions, this may result in the permanent removal of an artefact from the collections.

## **2. ACQUISITION CONSIDERATIONS**

### **2.1 General Considerations**

2.1.1 The collections are fundamental to the function of the service.

2.1.2 The proper management of those collections is therefore a core activity of the service. Acquisition and Collections Review form part of the continuous improvement of the collections.

2.1.3 The act of acquisition implies the acceptance of responsibility for the curation and physical accommodation of collections as defined in the Policy (see 2.4).

2.1.4 The Policy will be reviewed at least once every five years. Potential changes will be referred to museums and other institutions which may be affected by any changes. The relevant museum bodies (currently Arts Council England) will be notified of any changes, and the implications of any such changes for the future of the existing collections.

2.1.5 Acquisitions outside the current policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration, having taken into account the interests of other museums and relevant institutions.

2.1.6 This is a public document and all comments on the development of collections are welcomed. They should be addressed to:

Museums & Heritage Manager  
Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery  
Drake Circus  
Plymouth  
PL4 8AJ  
plymouthmuseum@plymouth.gov.uk

## 2.2 Ethical & Legal Considerations

2.2.1 The service will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that it can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

2.2.2 In particular, the service 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).

2.2.3 The service will only acquire material where it is not in breach of, or does not fall outside the spirit of, the following legislation and international conventions:

- UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property  
[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13039&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13039&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)
- Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/27/contents>
- Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period  
<http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/what-we-do/contributing-sector/spoliation/>
- Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1973/33>
- Treasure Act 1996 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or reporting finds through the Treasure Trove procedure (in Scotland).  
[http://www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/cultural\\_property/3291.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/cultural_property/3291.aspx)
- 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 as covered by the CITES treaty  
<http://www.cites.org/eng/app/index.php>
- It is illegal to collect birds eggs since The Protection of Birds Act 1954 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1954/30/contents/enacted>) and illegal to possess wild birds eggs since the introduction of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>)

2.2.4 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the service is either:

- 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.
- Documentation accompanying bird egg collections provide clear evidence that they were collected prior to 1954.

In these cases the service will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

## **2.3 Relationships with other museums in the region**

2.3.1 Plymouth will continue to work with other regional and local museums to help ensure that its Collections Development Policy avoids undue overlap of collecting areas as well as addressing collecting gaps in the region where cultural patterns are going unrecorded. It will continue to rely on the good will, professionalism and resources of all the museum services concerned.

To this end it will continue to hold acquisition policies of other museums collecting in the same or related areas and subject fields, and will actively seek to establish Collecting Agreements between the museum services and other institutions collecting in the region.

2.3.2 The service works closely with other local partner institutions & collections. These include the Civic Collection (including Plympton St Maurice Guildhall), Elliot Terrace, Port Eliot and The Lord Mayor's Parlour and Council House and Plympton St Maurice Guildhall.

The service will aspire to develop memorandums of understanding with these institutions. The aim will be to formalise various elements of relationships which have evolved on a sometimes *ad hoc* basis. These memorandums will aim to address issues surrounding the roles and responsibilities for acquisitions & collections review.

2.3.3 Through the presence of such properties at Saltram House, Buckland Abbey, Antony House, Cotehele and Lanhydrock, The National Trust has an evident interest in local collecting. When material relating to these properties becomes available for acquisition, consultation with the National Trust will be undertaken to avoid any possible conflict of interest.

2.3.4 Archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, are an integral part of the service's collections. However, at present there is a separate collecting policy for the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.

## **2.4 Limitations on Collecting**

2.4.1 Collecting is a key function of the service. However, out of necessity, the service has to collect in accordance with its existing resources. This will help to ensure that the service is able to make a long-term commitment to both preserve and make accessible all acquisitions to the collection. Key considerations will be:

- Staffing: the ability of the service to make informed decisions on preservation, intellectual and physical access to the object and related information.
- Storage: to provide an accessible space in a suitable environment and physical conditions which minimize the decay of the object. Aspirations to collect larger items, for example furniture, sculpture, ship models are, out of necessity tempered by the restrictions of the physical space available.

2.4.2 The service only has a very minimal budget to fund any acquisitions for the collection. This gap is filled by the resourcefulness of staff in pursuing grants to fund key acquisitions and the generosity of donors including visitors and, in particular, the Friends of Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery.

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING COLLECTIONS

Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery has been actively collecting since 1897. Our multi-themed collections have grown due to the generosity of donors, many of whom have been local Plymothians. The service continues to preserve and display these collections for the enjoyment of the city's residents and visitors.

The collections are described using the following categories:

- Archaeology
- Decorative art
- Fine art
- Natural history
- Social, Maritime & City History
- World cultures

#### 3.1 Archaeology: Description of Existing Collections

##### 3.1.1 Introduction

The archaeology collections have been acquired from the local area within and around Plymouth, Devon & Cornwall, and further afield in Britain. They are nationally noted for including the excavation archives from the sites of Shaugh Moor and Mount Batten and also include what has been described as the largest collection of imported post-medieval pottery in Northwestern Europe and the best in Britain.

Key to the importance of modern archaeological archives is their accompanying documentary archives. Excavation is essentially a process which permanently removes objects from their original context and, in the process, destroys that context. So while archaeological finds hold a level of interest in their own right, it is the precise circumstances of their excavation, as recorded in the documentary archive, which enables the fullest interpretation (and any potential future reinterpretation) of both the finds and the sites where they were found.

Foreign archaeology includes Egyptology and a small collection of Classical Archaeology.

##### 3.1.2 British Archaeology

The main strength of the British archaeological collections is the artefacts and archives from Devon. However, there is also material of importance from Cornwall. In addition, the collection includes artefacts from diverse locations around the British Isles.

- Prehistoric Devon

The collections of several antiquaries, Robert Burnard, Rev. Sabine Baring Gould, Francis Brent, A.L. Lewis and Colonel Sir William Serjeant, several of whom made donations on behalf of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee (DEC) are particularly prominent. A great proportion of these largely comprise of prehistoric lithics. Examples include the collections from the Dartmoor sites of Huccaby, Batworthy and Watern Oke<sup>1</sup>. However, additional material excavated by the Dartmoor Exploration Committee (DEC) between 1893 and 1905 also includes Bronze Age ceramics and other significant prehistoric artefacts such as a stone

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<sup>1</sup> I.K Anderson, J.S. Amery, Robert Burnard, S. Baring Gould, J.D. Podge, J. Brooking Rowe, B. Thomson & R. Hansford Worth. 1906. Eleventh Report of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee. Transactions of the Devonshire Association. Volume 38 pp 101-113

bracer from Archerton Newtake<sup>2</sup> and a jet button from Fernworthy<sup>3</sup>. Other prehistoric finds of particular note, donated by the DEC, are those from sites at Yes Tor, Legis Tor<sup>4</sup>, Raddick Hill<sup>5, 6</sup>, Whittor<sup>7</sup> and Hurston Ridge<sup>8, 9</sup>. Archaeological investigations at Elburton<sup>10</sup> in 1997 and 1999 discovered evidence of an Early Bronze Age cemetery including the remains of several funerary urns.

Single finds of significant Bronze Age artefacts are a ferrule from Gawler Bottom<sup>11</sup>, a rapier from Fice's Well<sup>12</sup>, a spearhead from Thurlestone and an axe mould from Burgh Island. Bronze Age additions made to the collections via the Treasure Act include a gold ingot found near Wembury and two penanular gold rings found in the South Hams.

In common with several other museums in Britain, Plymouth holds examples of Palaeolithic axeheads from the site at Broom, East Devon. A flint core from Worth's Bone Cave, Cattedown, which suffered fire damage during World War II bombing, is potentially Palaeolithic and of interest. During a research visit in 2010 to view material from Kents Cavern Dr Paul Pettit identified a bone object of possible Palaeolithic date.

Archaeological archives from prehistoric sites which are recognised as being of national importance include Shaugh Moor and Mount Batten.

### Shaugh Moor<sup>13</sup>

Archaeological investigations at Shaugh Moor were conducted between 1976 and 1981. Much of the work was due to the threat posed by tipping as a result of the expansion of china clay extraction. The work included survey and excavation and the results from the project were published in successive issues of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* from 1979 to 1982. Key finds from the project included faience beads recovered from a group of four cairns excavated by Ken Smith during 1977 (site 10). Other finds from the excavations include worked flints and stones, pottery and quern stones. Excavations led by Geoffrey J

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<sup>2</sup> Ann Woodward & John Hunter. 2011. Prehistoric Stone Bracers from Britain. Oxbow Books. pps. 44, 167

<sup>3</sup> Robert Burnard, S. Baring Gould, John D. Pote, J. Brooking Rowe, B. Thomson & R. Hansford Worth. 1898. Fifth Report of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee. Transactions of the Devonshire Association. Volume 30 pp 97-115

<sup>4</sup> Robert Burnard, S. Baring Gould, John D. Pote, J. Brooking Rowe, B. Thomson & R. Hansford Worth. 1898. Fifth Report of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee. Transactions of the Devonshire Association. Volume 30 pp 97-115

<sup>5</sup> S. Baring Gould, Robert Burnard, J. Brooking Rowe, John D. Pote, R. Hansford Worth. 1896. Third Report of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee. Transactions of the Devonshire Association. Volume 28 pp 174-199

<sup>6</sup> Newman, Phil. 2011. The Field Archaeology of Dartmoor. English Heritage. p.65.

<sup>7</sup> S. Baring Gould, Robert Burnard, J. Brooking Rowe, John D. Pote, R. Hansford Worth, Irvine K. Anderson. 1899. Sixth Report of the Dartmoor Exploration Committee. Transactions of the Devonshire Association. Volume 31 pp 148-155

<sup>8</sup> Newman, Phil. 2011. The Field Archaeology of Dartmoor. English Heritage. p.56

<sup>9</sup> Pettit, Paul. 1974. Prehistoric Dartmoor. Newton Abbot: David & Charles. pps 143, 163. 54, 105.

<sup>10</sup> Martin A. Watts & Henrietta Quinnell. 2001. A Bronze Age Cemetery at Elburton, Plymouth. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society. No. 59. pp. 11-43.

<sup>11</sup> Pettit, Paul. 1974. Prehistoric Dartmoor. Newton Abbot: David & Charles pps. 143, 163.

<sup>12</sup> As above

<sup>13</sup> G. J. Wainwright, A. Fleming & K. Smith. 1979 The Shaugh Moor Project: First Report. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. Volume 45, pp. 1-33.

G. J. Wainwright & K. Smith. 1980 The Shaugh Moor Project: Second Report - The Enclosure. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. Volume 46, pp. 65-122.

K. Smith, J. Coppen, G. J. Wainwright & S. Beckett. 1981. The Shaugh Moor Project: Third Report – Settlement and Environmental Investigations. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. Volume 47, pp. 205-273.

N. D. Balaam, K. Smith & G. J. Wainwright. 1982. The Shaugh Moor Project: Fourth Report – Environment, Context and Conclusion. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. Volume 48, pp. 203-278.

Wainwright in 1977-1978 of the Shaugh Moor enclosure (site 15) revealed five hut circles. Taken as a whole the site of Shaugh Moor retains its importance in illuminating both Dartmoor's Bronze Age archaeology<sup>14, 15</sup> and the broader national picture of Bronze Age Britain<sup>16, 17</sup>.

In 1979 and 1980 work on Wotter Common and the Saddlesborough Reave (site 208) led by Ken Smith and J Coppen discovered the famous track way running alongside the Saddlesborough Reave. It preserved animal footprints dating to the Bronze Age and showed important evidence of droving. A latex mould of the footprints and subsequent fibreglass cast are included in the collection. The documentary archive, including notes made on site, plans and drawings, photographs and scientific reports, forms an essential part of the archive.

### Mount Batten<sup>18</sup>

Prior to 1982 the service already held a range of finds from Mount Batten and the adjacent site of Stamford Hill. These had been collected during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (though unfortunately some key finds were destroyed during the 1941 Blitz). Subsequently, these finds were supplemented by research excavations conducted 1982-1985 by Professor Barry Cunliffe (then Professor of European Archaeology at the University of Oxford). They produced a wide range of finds from the site, include ceramics, metalwork and bone. The conclusions drawn from the excavations are important both locally and nationally. They demonstrate that from around 800 BC to at least AD 300, the Mount Batten peninsula was the Prehistoric and Roman predecessor of the Port of Plymouth. It was continuously occupied and exploited its location on the estuaries of the Plym and Tamar, flowing down from the mineral-rich hinterland of Cornwall and Dartmoor, to become a focus of trade. At different periods during the occupation of Mount Batten, trade networks operated either regionally along the coast, west into Cornwall and east into Wessex, or at other times internationally, with links to the adjacent shores of France and, ultimately, to the Mediterranean world.

The discoveries at the site were fully described and discussed by Professor Barry Cunliffe and a team of specialist contributors in a Monograph published by the Oxford University Committee for Archaeology in 1988. They have also been integrated into the development of theories about Prehistoric cultural identity and contacts along the Atlantic coasts, including those between Britain and mainland Europe<sup>19</sup>.

#### ▪ Roman and Post-Roman Devon

Beyond the confines of the Roman town of Isca (modern day Exeter) Roman finds have been relatively sparse. However, in addition to items excavated at Mount Batten and Woolster Street, the collections include both individually found coins and those from hoards found locally (Hartley, Okehampton). Further underwater finds recovered from Plymouth Sound include coins and brooches.

In 2001, excavations at Bantham Ham<sup>20</sup>, South Devon, revealed a sequence of post-Roman occupation, radiocarbon dated to c. AD 475-525. The collection includes a well-preserved

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<sup>14</sup> Gerrard, Sandy. 1997. Dartmoor. B.T.Batsford/English Heritage, London. pp.17-19.

<sup>15</sup> Johnston, Robert. 2005. Pattern Without A Plan: rethinking the Bronze Age co-axial field systems on Dartmoor, south-west England. Oxford Journal of Archaeology. Volume 24, No 1 pp.1-23.

<sup>16</sup> Darvill, Timothy. 1987. Prehistoric Britain. BT Batsford. pp.109-111.

<sup>15</sup> Parker Pearson, Michael. 2005. Bronze Age Britain. BT Batsford. pp. 96-97.

<sup>18</sup> Barry Cunliffe. 1988. Mount Batten Plymouth: A Prehistoric and Roman Port. Oxford University Committee for Archaeology. Monograph No. 26. 101.

<sup>19</sup> Cunliffe, Barry. 2001. Facing The Ocean: The Atlantic and its People's. Oxford University Press. pps. 305, 345.

<sup>20</sup> Reed, Stephen, Bidwell, Paul & Allan, John. 2011. Excavation at Bantham, South Devon, and Post-Roman Trade in

assemblage of Mediterranean ceramics, the quantity being the second largest found in Britain. Other finds are large quantities of animal bone, seen as evidence of feasting and fragments of two glass vessels, interpreted as being used in elite drinking rituals. The published report concluded that the settlement engaged in international trade.

- Medieval and Post-Medieval Devon

Important local archives include those from Lydford, Plympton Priory, Okehampton Castle<sup>21</sup> and Buckland Abbey<sup>22</sup>. Finds range from patterned medieval floor tiles from Plympton Priory to a 12<sup>th</sup> century sculpted stone head<sup>23</sup> from Okehampton Castle.

Within Plymouth itself, the medieval and post-medieval period is well represented by material from urban sites including to name but a few, Castle Street<sup>24</sup>, Dung Quay<sup>25</sup>, Kitto Institute<sup>26</sup>, St. Andrews Street<sup>27</sup> and Woolster Street<sup>28</sup>. The excavated finds, in particular the pottery, reflect the port's trading links with all parts of southern England, north and west Europe, and the Mediterranean. Of major national and international significance are the late-medieval and post-medieval imported wares. Castle Street produced the largest collection of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century imported pottery in Northwestern Europe, if not Europe as a whole. It is certainly the most important collection of imported pottery of this date in Britain<sup>29</sup>. Particularly significant are the Portuguese<sup>30</sup>, Italian and Chinese wares, amongst others.

Other significant finds include a large collection of plaster from Mount Wise<sup>31</sup> and objects recovered by metal detectorists and purchased via the Treasure process. These include coin hoards, a post-medieval silver whistle, post-medieval dress hooks and an exquisite medieval

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South-West England. Medieval Archaeology. Volume 55 pp. 81-137.

<sup>21</sup> Higham, R.A. 1977. Excavations at Okehampton Castle, Devon. Part I: The Motte and Keep. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society. Volume 35.

Higham, R.A. and Allan, J.P. 1980. Excavations at Okehampton Castle, Devon: Part II, the bailey. A preliminary report. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society. Volume 38. pp.49-66.

Higham, R., Allan, J. & Blaylock, S.R. 1982. Excavations at Okehampton Castle, Devon: Part 2, the Bailey. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society. Volume 40.

<sup>22</sup> Gaskell Brown, Cynthia. 1995. Buckland Abbey. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society. Volume 53. pp.25-82.

<sup>23</sup> Allan, John and Timms, Simon. 1996. Treasures of Ancient Devon. Devon Books. pp. 32-33.

<sup>24</sup> Gaskell Brown, C. 1979. Castle Street: The Pottery, Plymouth Excavations. Plymouth Museum Archaeological Series, Number 1. Clarke, Doble and Brendan Ltd. Plymouth.

<sup>25</sup> Stead, Peter M. 2003. Excavation of the Medieval and Later Waterfront at Dung Quay, Plymouth. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society No. 61 pp. 21-134.

<sup>26</sup> Allan, John and Barber, James. 1992. A Seventeenth-century pottery group from Kitto Institute, Plymouth. In Gaimster, David and Redknapp, Mark. Everyday and Exotic Pottery from Europe c. 650-1900 Studies in honour of John.G.Hurst. pp 225-246. Oxbow books.

<sup>27</sup> Fairclough, G. J. 1979. St Andrews Street, Plymouth Excavations. Plymouth Museum Archaeological Series, Number 2. Clarke, Doble and Brendan Ltd. Plymouth.

<sup>28</sup> Gaskell Brown, C. 1986. The Medieval Waterfront Woolster Street The Finds. Plymouth Museum Archaeological Series, Number 3. P.D.S. Printers Plymouth.

<sup>29</sup> Hurst, John. 1997. Academic reference requested by PCMAG.

<sup>30</sup> Casimiro, Tania Manuel. 2011. Portuguese Faience in England and Ireland. British Archaeological Reports International Series No 2301

<sup>31</sup> Watts, Martin A. 2000. Investigations at Mount Wise. In Gardiner, Julie. Resurgam! Archaeology at Stonehouse, Mount Batten, and Mount Wise Regeneration Areas, Plymouth. Plymouth Archaeology Occasional Publication No. 5 Part 4 pp.213-306. Trust for Wessex Archaeology Ltd on behalf of English Partnerships and Plymouth City Council.

gold and sapphire ring. Of note are finds of carved alabaster figures from Peter Tavy and Colebrook, Plympton<sup>32</sup>.

- Modern Devon

While most modern finds are disposed of as part of the excavation process, occasionally there is merit in selected retention. The site at Barrack Circus (Emma Place), Plymouth, excavated in 1997, revealed personal artefacts which had been fire-damaged during the World War II blitz<sup>33</sup>. A sample of objects was retained.

- Marine Archaeology

The key collection is that from the Cattewater Wreck<sup>34</sup> c. AD 1550-1600. It was the first wreck to be designated as a Protected Wreck by the British Government under the 1973 Protection of Wreck Act and the first to be scientifically excavated and fully published. The wreck is believed to be an unidentified armed merchantman. Although the collection is incomplete it includes guns, ceramics, leather, textiles and wooden objects.

- Cornwall Archives

Harlyn Bay<sup>35</sup>

Excavations at Harlyn Bay were carried out from 1900-1905. As one of the bodies which contributed funds to the excavations, Plymouth Museum subsequently received a complete cist and its accompanying inhumation and an additional inhumation. Two perforated slate discs or rings, provenanced as being from Harlyn Bay, subsequently formed part of the Serjeant Collection donated in 1924.

Cornish Lithics

Other than Harlyn Bay, the collections from Cornwall mainly comprise of lithics. They are provenanced to over sixty different locations in Cornwall. The largest group is from Dozmary Pool<sup>36</sup> and consists of several thousand artefacts.

- Other British archaeological artefacts of note include lithics from many different parts of the country, a large proportion of which are from the Francis Brent bequest. Also included is a small collection of Roman Samian ware ceramics<sup>37</sup> recovered from the site of a Roman ship wrecked off Pudding Pan Rock off the Kentish coast, during the late second century AD. In addition, there is a small collection of Bronze Age metalwork from Northern Ireland.

### 3.1.3 Foreign Archaeology

The collections, though very valuable, are restricted to the following specialisms:

A small collection of Ancient Greek ceramics, including a rare Corinthian *oinochoe* by the Dodwell painter, dated to the late 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. This is the earliest known example of one

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<sup>32</sup> Allan, John. 2001. An Angel from Pinhoe and other Medieval English Alabasters in Devon. Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society No. 59 pp. 174-175.

<sup>33</sup> Gardiner, Julie (editor). 2000. Resurgam! Archaeology at Stonehouse, Mount Batten, and Mount Wise Regeneration Areas, Plymouth. Plymouth Archaeology Occasional Publication No. 5. Trust for Wessex Archaeology Ltd on behalf of English Partnerships and Plymouth City Council. pp. 30-32, 97-100.

<sup>34</sup> Redknapp, M. 1984. The Cattewater Wreck: the investigation of an armed vessel of the early 16th century. National Maritime Museum Archaeology Series 8. British Archaeological Reports, British Series 131.

<sup>35</sup> Bullen, R. Ashington. 1912. Harlyn Bay and the Discoveries of its Prehistoric Remains. Colonel Bellers, Harlyn Bay, Padstow.

<sup>36</sup> Wainwright, G.J. 1960. Three Microlithic industries from South-west England and their affinities. Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society. Volume XXVI pp. 193-201.

<sup>37</sup> Brent, J. 1861. Some Specimens of the Red Roman Ware commonly called Samian, Dredged up off the Coast of Kent. Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London. Second Series 1, pp 399-401.

of the most influential vase painters of the Corinthian period, and one of only a handful of examples in British museums<sup>38</sup>.

- bronze and stone implements from Prehistoric Europe
- glassware and ceramics from Prehistoric, Greek and Roman Cyprus
- Byzantine jewellery

### Egyptology

The collection comprises of c.1000 artefacts of a predominantly funerary character. It represents a 'solid' group with a good cross-section of material types and dates<sup>39</sup>. A substantial proportion of the collection was obtained via the British School of Archaeology in Egypt. Finds from their excavations at Badari and Qua el-Kebir are well represented. Additionally, in common with many British museum collections there is material obtained by subscription to the excavations carried out by of Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie. Other documented collectors include John J. Judge, Robert Burnard, L.S. Loat, A.L. Lewis and Thomas Henry Ormston Pease.

The collection of Thomas Pease includes two high quality mummy cases of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>40</sup>. A Late New Kingdom shabti box, while not especially rare, is a particularly fine example of its type. Other collection highlights are an interesting group of animal mummies, a fragment of limestone relief which includes titles of the god Aten and a piece of painted linen<sup>41</sup>.

## **3.2 Decorative Art: Description of Existing Collections**

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

The service has a significant decorative art collection, containing a particularly large and important holding of ceramics. This includes one of the most comprehensive collections worldwide of the historically important Plymouth porcelain. The remaining decorative art collections of silver, glass, furniture, costume and textiles, though small, do contain items of special quality and interest.

In addition to the above, there are a series of other decorative art collections housed in branch museums and other Council buildings for which the service has responsibility. These include the collections in the, Plympton St Maurice Guildhall and Plymouth City Guildhall, the sizeable silver and plate collections in the Council House, and the extensive collections of 3 Elliot Terrace (the former home of Lady Astor).

Core specialist collections include:

- Carpenter bequest (1926) - includes a large collection of ceramics.
- Hurdle bequest (1937) - paintings, miniatures and ceramics.

### **3.2.2 Ceramics**

This is an important collection containing both very rare and unique items that are of international interest to ceramic and art historians. Consequently, the collection is frequently used for specialist studies and some items, in particular the collections of Plymouth and

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<sup>38</sup> Blomberg, Mary. 1983. Observations on the Dodwell Painter. *Medel Hausmuseet Memoir 4*. Stockholm Medel Hausmuseet. pp. 92 (fig 47)

<sup>39</sup> Dodson, Aidan. 2013. Personal communication with Fiona Pitt, Senior Curator & Curator of Archaeology.

<sup>40</sup> Dodson, Aidan. 2008. The Coffins of Iyhat and Tairy: A Tales of Two Cities. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*. Volume 94 pp. 107-38.

<sup>41</sup> See reference 39.

Bristol porcelain, have been widely published<sup>42</sup>. It includes material that is of a purely ornamental nature, as well as objects of utilitarian or everyday purpose. The majority of objects are of British origin, but there are also a substantial number of Chinese ceramics, some Japanese, and some Continental pieces. Numerically the 18th century collections are probably the largest, with the 19th century somewhat smaller and the 20th century relatively sparse. The collection includes pieces representative of the full range of ceramic body types.

- Plymouth porcelain

Plymouth was the first English factory to produce a 'true' or hard-paste porcelain. The factory was established in 1768 by a local chemist, William Cookworthy, who patented the method of producing this porcelain using clay excavated locally in Cornwall<sup>43</sup>. Not surprisingly therefore, the 18th century porcelains are a particular strength, especially the group of Plymouth and British porcelains. The collection of Plymouth porcelain is the largest and most representative in existence, and in view of the City's important role as the home of Britain's first manufacture of hard paste porcelain it is of great significance in terms of ceramic history.

- British soft-paste porcelain.

The collection also includes many representatives and some unique examples of other British softpaste porcelain manufacturers. These are particularly important for comparative and contextual purposes with the Plymouth porcelain.

- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramics

Among the 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics there are important holdings of works from studio potters, notably the Martin Brothers and Bernard Moore. Most numerous among the 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramics are collections of work by Freda and Dorothy Doughty for the Royal Worcester Porcelain Manufacture who lived in Falmouth and donated their collection to both Plymouth and the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro.

### 3.2.3 Silver and Other Metalwork

The bulk of the collection is composed of silver items. There are a small number of pewter items and some Sheffield Plate as well as Victorian electroplates. The silver divides into two groups, those made in Plymouth and items produced elsewhere. The non-Plymouth made group is a small mixed collection of 18th and 19th century pieces, principally tableware or items with a local significance. However, the larger of the two categories is of Plymouth silver spanning 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Century with the bulk coming from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

The Plymouth silver is an important collection reflecting aspects of the City's social history and artistic activity during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century silversmiths were particularly numerous in Plymouth, and the collection has tended to reflect the volume of production in this period at the expense of 19<sup>th</sup> century work.

- Church plate

Crucial to the service's ability to show, interpret and promote the study of Plymouth silver is the sizeable Church Plate collection. This consists of items loaned to the service by several Parochial Church Councils. Many important examples of Plymouth silversmiths' work are included in this holding of ecclesiastical plate<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Mackenna, F.S. 1946. Cookworthy's Plymouth and Bristol Porcelain. F.Lewis Ltd, Leigh-on-sea.

<sup>43</sup> 1980 William Cookworthy 1705-1780. Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery. Latimer, Trend and Co, Plymouth.

<sup>44</sup> Rendle, R.S. 1986. The Goldsmiths and Silversmiths of Plymouth, Devon c.1600-1800. Transactions of the

Other key items include:

- late 17<sup>th</sup> century pieces by Plymouth silversmiths, including the Eddystone Salt by Peter Rowe<sup>45</sup>.
- the Drake Cup, by Zurich silversmith Abraham Gessner c.1595, which is of great historical relevance to Plymouth<sup>46</sup>.
- The collection also contains items of metalwork which, by virtue of their function, inscription or associations are of commemorative, civic, trade or other local significance.

### 3.2.4 Glass

Numerically this is a small collection containing items that range from the purely ornamental to the purely functional. Items range in date from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There is no evidence to indicate that Plymouth was ever involved in the production of fine glassware and most items in the collection originate from elsewhere in Britain, and from other European countries.

The majority of the glassware belongs to the 18<sup>th</sup> century period and the collection is especially strong in 18<sup>th</sup> century tableware. The 19<sup>th</sup> century is largely represented by a collection of soft drink bottles, most found locally.

### 3.2.5 Costume and Textiles

The particular strength of the costume and textile collection is female clothing of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There are also some fine and important 18<sup>th</sup> century items. The next most numerous group is of infants' garments, particularly Christening gowns. The textile collection comprises quantities of lace, domestic textiles, embroidery (samplers) and examples of crochet, knitting and whitework. It also has a good representation of haberdashery and craft tools e.g.: lace bobbins and pillows, tatting shuttles, crochet hooks.

### 3.2.6 Costume Accessories

This constitutes a small collection of fans, jewellery, purses and other such personal items, in the main from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3.2.7 Enamels

A small collection of snuff and patch boxes.

### 3.2.8 Furniture and Woodwork

The furniture and woodwork collections were established principally for display purposes at branch museums. For this reason, the group consists largely of 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century pieces in the Elizabethan House, and late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century pieces at Buckland Abbey complimented by long term loan items from the V&A. None of the items have any particular local associations but of historical significance are two beds dating to the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

The collection also includes a small number of wooden boxes, largely 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century, including chests, travel boxes and tea caddies.

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Devonshire Association, 118, 155-225.

<sup>45</sup> 1948, The Eddystone Lighthouse Salt by Rowe of Plymouth circa 1698. The Antique Dealers' Fair. MacLehose & Company Ltd, University Press Glasgow.

<sup>46</sup> Allan, John & Timms, Simon. 1996. Treasures of Ancient Devon. Devon Books. pp.46-7. Culm Print Ltd, Tiverton.

### 3.3 Fine Art: Description of Existing Collections

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

The service has a large and important fine art collection. It is well balanced across the varying media of easel paintings, watercolours, drawings and prints. The exception is in the field of sculpture, which contains a few notable pieces, but is particularly small.

Of prime importance is the outstanding Cottonian Collection, awarded Designation status by Museums and Galleries Commission in 1998 <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/raising-standards/designation-scheme/>. Other specialist fine art collections are also of significance.

In addition, there are a series of fine art collections housed in branch museums and other Council buildings for which the service has responsibility. These include the collections in Plympton St Maurice Guildhall and Plymouth City Guildhall, the Council House and the collections of 3 Elliot Terrace (the former home of Lady Astor).

#### 3.3.2 Core specialist collections

- Cottonian Collection

Within the art collections, but retained as a separate entity, is the Cottonian Collection, comprising small groups of ceramics, bronzes and paintings, several hundred Old Master and English drawings and watercolours, and a substantial body of several thousand fine and rare prints. Together with a sizeable library of some two thousand volumes, this outstanding and Designated Collection is of international importance. Initiated in the late 1740s by Charles Rogers FRS FSA (1711-1784), who amassed a substantial quantity of prints and drawings, it was passed through three successive generations of the Cotton family until gifted to the people of Plymouth in 1852 by William Cotton MA FSA (1794-1863). It opened as a public collection in 1853 and was transferred to Plymouth Corporation in 1915/6 by an Act of Parliament <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/cottoniancollection>.

Notable within the Cottonian Collection as core collections in their own right are a small number of etchings, some extremely rare, by the German printmaker Albrecht Altdorfer<sup>47</sup> and a significant collection of drawings by the artist Michael Rysbrack<sup>48</sup>.

- Sir Joshua Reynolds P.R.A. (1723 – 1792)

The service is fortunate to hold a significant group of some paintings and a number of documents and memorabilia by this internationally renowned Plymouth artist. These include three family portraits, (including a self-portrait), nineteen autograph works, an early pastel portrait (of Charles Cutcliffe c.1743), one quality studio copy of *The Age of Innocence*, and four works previously attributed to or after Reynolds. We also hold the majority of Reynolds's engraved works both loose and in volume, various editions of his *Discourses*, a small number of letters, palette and painting stick and a sitters book for 1755. Many of these have been included in various publications<sup>49</sup>. Examples of notable exhibitions which have included the Reynolds material are:

*Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Acquisition of Genius, a PCMAG exhibition in partnership with Plymouth University, 2009 – 2010*<sup>50</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> Bartrum, G. 1995. *German Renaissance Prints 1490 – 1550*. British Museum Press.

<sup>48</sup> Eustace, K. 1982. *Michael Rysbrack, Sculptor: 1694 - 1770*. City of Bristol Museum & Art Gallery.

<sup>49</sup> 1992. *Sir Joshua Reynolds PRA (1723 - 92). The Self-Portraits*. Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery.

<sup>50</sup> Smiles, S. 2009. *Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Acquisition of Genius*. Sansom & Company.

<sup>51</sup> Berriman, H. 1973. *Sir Joshua Reynolds P.R.A.* Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery.

<sup>52</sup> 1951. *Paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds PRA*. Plymouth City Art Gallery.

Sir Joshua Reynolds PRA, 250th Anniversary Exhibition, Plymouth City Art Gallery, 1973<sup>51</sup>.

Paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds PRA, a Festival of Britain Exhibition by arrangement with the Arts Council of Great Britain<sup>52</sup>.

- Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846)

The service has some 5 oil paintings and a small collection of prints and drawings by this Plymouth artist, many of which are included in the catalogue *Benjamin Robert Haydon*<sup>53</sup>.

- Samuel Prout (1783-1852)

The collection holds over 200 drawings and prints, and a collection of personalia relating to this Plymouth artist. Many were included in the monograph *Samuel Prout (1783 – 1852)*<sup>54</sup>.

Additional core specialist collections include:

- Harmsworth donations (1929 - 46) - large collection of paintings (especially maritime).
- Hurdle bequest (1937) - paintings, miniatures and ceramics.
- Judge bequest (1955) - paintings and watercolours.
- Alfred A. de Pass (1914 & 1926) - major drawings and paintings.
- Sir Charles Radford (1915 & 1931) - watercolours, drawings and paintings.
- Radford, the Misses (1950s) - watercolours and paintings.
- Shepherd family donations (1897 - 1900) - watercolours, drawings and paintings.

### 3.3.3 Paintings

There is an important and substantial collection of some 800 paintings covering a wide variety of national and international schools and periods.

Many of the earlier works were received from several large donations and bequests, such as the A. A. de Pass, Hurdle and Cottonian collections. They comprise Italian, French, Dutch and English paintings from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and include works by Angelica Kauffman, Marcellus Laroon and Jacopo Chimenti. The greater part of the collection is English from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

As might be expected there is a strong bias towards works by artists associated with Plymouth and the region, from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and also a good number of topographical views of Plymouth and its environs from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. This comprises a considerable number of marine and related paintings. There are some particular schools of artists that are well represented in the collections. The Public Catalogue Foundation has published a complete catalogue of all oil paintings<sup>55</sup>, there are also several publications which include individual, or groups of works, as important examples<sup>56, 57</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> Brown, D.B., Woof, R. & Hebron, S. 1996. Benjamin Robert Haydon 1786 - 1846, Painter and Writer, Friend of Wordsworth and Keats. Wordsworth Trust.

<sup>54</sup> Lockett, R. 1985. Samuel Prout (1783-1852). Batsford Ltd in association with the Victoria & Albert Museum.

<sup>55</sup> 2013. Plymouth & Torbay: Oil Paintings in Public Ownership. Public Catalogue Foundation.

<sup>56</sup> Wallace, C. 2002. Under the Open Sky: The Paintings of the Newlyn and Lamorna Artists 1880 – 1940 In the Public Collections of Cornwall and Plymouth. Truran.

<sup>57</sup> Mannings, D. 2000. Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of His Paintings. Yale University Press.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in addition to the above cited works by Sir Joshua Reynolds (see 3.3.2), there are portraits by James Northcote, John and Edward Opie. Also of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries is a group of paintings, largely portraits and history paintings, by such Plymouth artists as B.R. Haydon (see above 3.3.2), S. Hart and others.

- Newlyn School of Artists.

There are some 20 - 30 paintings and watercolours by members of this group of artists, including works by Stanhope A. Forbes, J. Noble Barlow, Norman Garstin, Walter Langley, Henry Tuke and R.H. Carter.

- Camden Town Group. There is a collection of 20 - 30 paintings and drawings by leading members of this group and their contemporaries, including works by Sickert, Ginner, Gore, Gilman, Bevan, Pissaro and Drummond.

- Modern British Artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The gallery is fortunate to have a strong representation of many of the artists residing in/connected to St Ives and elsewhere in the region between the 1950s and 1970s. Many have been included in exhibition catalogues and monographs documenting the work of these of artists, who include Peter Lanyon, Roger Hilton, Terry Frost and Patrick Heron<sup>58, 59, 60</sup>.

### 3.3.4 Watercolours & Drawings

There are about 1,300 drawings and 1,500 watercolours in the collection. The earlier 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century works are mainly continental in origin, whilst by far the largest single group is composed of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century English watercolours. There are a small number of 20<sup>th</sup> century works, and these are for the most part regional in origin.

- Old Master and English drawings

There is a very important group of Old Master and English drawings of the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Cottonian Collection. These include examples of the Italian, Dutch, French and English schools by artists such as Giorgio Vasari, Filippo Napoletano, Jan van Goyen, Michael Rysbrack, Philippe Mercier, Jean-Baptiste Pillement, John Wootton and Philip James de Loutherbourg to name but a few. In subject matter they cover biblical topics, landscapes, architectural works, portraits and animal and figure studies.

- 18<sup>th</sup> century watercolours

Although the collection does not have a large number of 18<sup>th</sup> century watercolours, there are one or two individual and rare works by artists such as Paul Sandby (Cottonian Collection) and J.M.W. Turner.

- 19<sup>th</sup> century drawings

Later donations to the collection have provided a series of late 19<sup>th</sup> century English and French drawings by artists such as George Clausen, John Everett Millais, Sir E.C. Burne-Jones, Jean-Francois Millet, Jean Louis Forain and Edgar Degas.

- Topographical studies

One of the most prominent elements within this section, the watercolours especially, is the group of topographical studies of Plymouth and its environs, and the South West region in general. A few early recordings from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries exist, but as with the rest of the collection most of these too are 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century in date. The majority are by local

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<sup>58</sup> Bird, M. 2010. Bryan Wynter, Lund Humphries. p.186.

<sup>59</sup> 1998. Slyvester, D. (ed.). 1998. Patrick Heron. Tate Gallery Publishing, p.96. Peter Lanyon At The Edge of Landscape, p.60.

<sup>60</sup> Stephens, circa 2000. Peter Lanyon At The Edge of Landscape. p.60.

watercolour artists such as Samuel Prout, Philip Mitchell, the brothers Samuel and William Cook, with a few visiting artists, particularly well represented, such as Francis Towne, William Payne and John Foulston.

- 20<sup>th</sup> century works.

As far as later 20<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary work is concerned, there is relatively less, apart from a few drawings or watercolours of Plymouth during the war years, 1939-45, and later works of buildings, by artists such as Claude Muncaster and John Piper.

### 3.3.5 Prints

The collection of prints is extensive and important, comprising many fine and rare works from the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, through to 19<sup>th</sup> century topographical engravings and 20<sup>th</sup> century works by some of the contemporary exponents of the art. As a whole they encompass a wide range of media from etchings, mezzotints, engravings and lithography, to examples of modern screenprinting and photolithographic techniques. In essence, they present a very full history of the print.

Some 6,000 or so prints of the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries are contained within the Cottonian Collection, grouped largely by school or subject and mounted in a series of large volumes.

- Cottonian prints: “schools”

Schools and engravers represented are the Flemish and Dutch schools with engravings by Vanmerlen and Aliamet after works by Pieter Bout and Van der Neer; the French school with engravings by Cochin and Picart after works by Vleughels and Le Sueur; the Italian schools of Lombardy, Rome and Venice with engravings by Basire, Bloemaert and Zucchi after works by Aqostino Caracci, Guercino and Tiepolo.

- Cottonian prints: Landscapes & portraits

There are also volumes of prints in the Cottonian Collection arranged by subject such as Landscapes and Portraits containing engravings by Altdorfer and Bril, and by Bartolozzi and Dalton after portraits by Piranesi and Holbein. In addition there are volumes that record the work of Reynolds, including different volumes on engravings after the various portraits, and other works.

- Cottonian prints: Old Masters

Particularly personal to the Cottonian Collection is a two volume set entitled '*A Collection of Prints in Imitation of drawings from...celebrated masters*', compiled and published by the founder Charles Rogers. They include engravings such as a Ryland engraving of a Rembrandt drawing in Reynold's own collection', another by Watts of a Van Dyck drawing, and an engraving by Rogers himself of a Van de Velde drawing.

- Topographical prints.

- As a whole the other strength of the collection is the many 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century etchings, engravings and lithographs of topographical views of Plymouth, its environs and the South West generally. These include works by J.D. Harding, W.J. Cooke, C. Tomkins and M.J. Starling of drawings by W. Daniell, S. Prout, J.M.W. Turner, T. Allom and others.

Apart from the historical and topographical engravings outlined above there is a growing collection of prints by contemporary British and other printmakers.

### 3.3.6 Sculpture and Bronzes

- Cottonian collection

This is a small collection comprising a small number of works from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The most exceptional items are the European bronzes Collection.

- 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century

There are a few sculptures from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Though not outstanding in quality it does boast two portrait busts by Sir Jacob Epstein, a small marble by Dame Barbara Hepworth, and works by other mid 20<sup>th</sup> century sculptors including John Milne and Magaret Lovell. Also from the 19<sup>th</sup> century there is a series of plaster works - statues, medallions and plaques - cast from Antique and Renaissance originals.

### 3.3.7 Miniatures

This is a small but attractive group of largely 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century miniatures, including two by Richard Cosway.

## 3.4 Natural History: Description of Existing Collections

### 3.4.1 Introduction

Within the last hundred years Plymouth has been associated with many outstanding naturalists who have left their mark in the field of natural sciences. Their activities are exemplified by some of the collections that have been entrusted to the service.

The collections cover Zoology, Botany, Geology and Quaternary geology / archaeology. They contain both British and foreign material, some of great scientific importance. It also has a good library and archive. They are nationally noted for the British Coleoptera collection covering most British beetles from late 1800 to early 1900. The Ichumonid collection includes many type specimens, and is the second largest collection of parasitic wasps in the UK. Of great importance is the mineral collections, which comprises of specimens from many closed mine sites in Devon and Cornwall. Other notable collections include the spirit preserved marine collections, and the Quaternary geology/archaeology collections.

### 3.4.2 Zoology

- Vertebrate Zoology

The collections include a complete series of mounted British birds, some British mammals, birds eggs, bird study skins, osteology, shells, wet-preserved vertebrates and invertebrates, coleoptera, hymenoptera and lepidoptera collections and miscellaneous items.

#### British birds

The British Bird collections of both mounted and cabinet skin specimens comprise some 800 specimens representing 229 species on the British List. Many are specimens from the following individual collections: Elliot Collection (19<sup>th</sup> century); Collier Collection (1870 - 1905); Penrose Collection (prior 1914); Perks Collection (1880 - 1890); Hingston Collection (1897); Brooking Rowe Collection (1909); Chichester Collection (1933). Many other specimens have been donated as either individual mounted specimens or, in the flesh, as road or cat casualties. The bird collection covers virtually the complete British list, and is frequently used by artists and other illustrators.

#### British birds' eggs

Other collections of vertebrate material include a comprehensive collection of birds' eggs from H. M Evans, E. A. S. Elliot, and F. C. Hingston from the 1890s. The collection is representative of most British bird species.

#### British marine fish

A good collection of wet-preserved fish from the Plymouth and the surrounding area. The fish were added to in 2000 by a large donation from the Marine Biological Association of their entire spirit preserved collection. Species represented include many local specimens of historic importance.

#### British mammals

The British mammal collection (skins, mounts and osteology) has been sadly depleted through pest activity.

#### British amphibian & reptiles

The collection is not representative of amphibia and reptilia from the region. There are a small number of foreign dissected reptile specimens held in the wet preserved collections of historical interest.

#### ▪ Invertebrate Zoology

The following insect orders are represented in the collections:

##### Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths)

Of the three major collections (40,000 specimens), the Bignell Collection is of particular importance. George Carter Bignell (1826 - 1910), a native of Devon, specialised in lepidoptera in the early part of his life<sup>61</sup>. He collected not only the adult of each species but also the egg, larva and pupa, making the collection a particularly valuable source of reference material. Other collections include those of Moore, May, Jeffery and Lidstone, and are mainly of local specimens, including regional variations.

##### Coleoptera (beetles)

The Keys Collection of British coleoptera (26,000 specimens) is of national importance. James H. Keys (1855 - 1941), a Plymothian, built up a magnificent collection of British coleoptera and made many valuable contributions to our knowledge of that order<sup>62</sup>. Many of the specimens are of species unique to Devon, and the service also holds his collection of European and Asian beetles.

##### Hymenoptera (bees, wasps, ants, ichneumons etc.)

After his work on lepidoptera, Bignell focused his attention on the hymenoptera. Within 15 years he had collected 51 species new to England and 19 which were new to science.

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<sup>61</sup> Baring-Gould. 1909. Cornish Characters and Strange Events. London: John Lane the Bodley Head. pp. 145-147.

Freedman, J, Hodge, D. & Kearsy, A. The Life and Entomological Collections of George Carter Bignell. Antenna. 34 (1). pp. 3-8.

<sup>62</sup> Keys, J. H. 1911. Barypithes duplicatus and notes on other British members of the genus. The Entomologist's Monthly Magazine. 2<sup>nd</sup> Series. Vol. 22. pp. 138-142.

Keys, J. H. 1917. Ants' nest beetles and other Myrmecophiles. Transactions of the Plymouth Institution and Devon and Cornwall Natural History Society. 1917 – 1918. pp. 1–8.

Keys, J. H. 1918. A list of the maritime, sub-maritime and coast frequenting Coleoptera of South Devon and South Cornwall, with especial reference to the Plymouth District. Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the UK. Vol. 11. No. 4. pp. 497 – 513.

Keys, J. H. 1921. Cathormiocerus attaphilus Bris. An Addition to the British Coleoptera. The Entomologist's Monthly Magazine. 3<sup>rd</sup> Series. Vol. 7. pp. 100 – 102.

Outside the British Museum (Natural History) the Bignell Collection of parasitic hymenoptera is one of the most important reference collections in the U.K.<sup>63</sup>.

- Jack Spittle Freshwater Invertebrates

Collected over 40 years in streams across Devon and Somerset, this collection holds approximately 15,000 freshwater invertebrate specimens. This relatively new collection holds a lot of archival material relating to rivers and streams sampled, as well as water chemistry data. The freshwater invertebrates are of importance, as they provide a historical marker of the species present in rivers and streams from the 1960s and 1970s.

- Invertebrate wet collection

There is also a comprehensive collection of wet-preserved marine invertebrates donated in 2000 from the Marine Biological Association. The wet collection covers most of the invertebrate species found along the Plymouth Coast. Included in this collection are three type specimens<sup>64</sup>, and five specimens from Scott's Terra Nova expedition. In addition, there is also a teaching collection of various pests and dissections and a variety of items donated to the service from the Dockyards, travellers, supermarkets and others.

### 3.4.3 Botany

The herbarium is an outstanding collection of vascular and non-vascular plants, some lichen and bryophytes. It provides a good range of species collected over a long time period, from the late-1700s to the present day in Devon and the surrounding area. This extensive collecting period means that it has developed in time with scientific thought, and is of significance for anyone studying the history of Botany.

The collections are made up of the following:

- British angiosperms (flowering plants), representing approximately 1,514 species.
- T.B. Flower collection

Of particular note is the herbarium compiled by Thomas Bruge Flower (1817 - 1899) which is regarded as being of great botanical significance. Flower formed the scientifically valuable herbarium of plants from Somerset and Wiltshire during the middle years of the 19th century. The herbarium was last reputed to exist in 1937 before it 'disappeared'. In 1984 a chance remark led to its recognition in the Plymouth collections where it had been amalgamated with other herbaria.

- St Aubyn collection

An important collection is that of Lord St. Aubyn, collected at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>65</sup>. Many of the plants represented are now rare or extinct locally, and so form a vivid picture of what Devon has lost in 300 years. The sheets contain information of historic significance, including local folklore about the plant, medicinal uses it was considered to have, recipes using the herbs, and detailed locality information about places that are often no longer accessible. This makes the collection unique as a record of local knowledge as well as local flora.

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<sup>63</sup> Hodgson, T. V. 1917. Parasitic Hymenoptera: Ichneumonidae and Braconidae. Type Species in the Bignell Collection. *Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art*. 59. pp. 397-415.

<sup>64</sup> Freedman, J. 2011. Type Specimens Discovered in the Spirit Preserved Collections at Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery. *MBA News*. 46

<sup>65</sup> Shepherd, J. 2009. Bringing a herbarium to life at Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery. *NatSCA News*. 17. pp.43-50.

- Bryophytes

The collections consist of mosses and liverworts from the Plym Valley and lichens collected throughout the county of Devon. Their importance lies in their growing scarcity subsequent to their collection in the earlier part of the 20th century.

Ferns and algae are represented in several volumes of bound herbaria sheets. Fungi are largely unrepresented.

### 3.4.4 Geology

Taken as a whole, the collection demonstrates the breadth of the mineral wealth of the South West, with special attention having been paid to the collection of ore-bearing minerals and rocks, many from mines that have been closed for decades. The acquisition of the Barstow mineral collection in 1985 now makes our mineral collections the most important collection of South West minerals in the British Isles.

- Petrology (rocks)

An extensive and representative collection of Devon rocks is due to a large collection from the former Devonport Museum, which has been supplemented by additional donations. It covers local building stones, ore-bearing rocks and pieces demonstrating features such as mud-cracks.

- Mineralogy

This is the most extensive and scientifically important collection in the natural history department, consisting of some 10,000 specimens specialising in the minerals of Devon and Cornwall. Notable collections include those of Sir John St. Aubyn (1758-1839), Colonel Sir William Serjeant (1857-1930), Rene Gallant (1906-1985) and Richard Barstow (1947-1982). The collections are associated not only with the development of scientific thought and practice (e.g. the St. Aubyn/Babbington collection), but have been made by leading geologists (such as Rene Gallant and Sir William Serjeant), or collected from type localities.

#### St Aubyn collection

The St. Aubyn collection is a very early collection of minerals, many of which St. Aubyn purchased from Dr. William Babbington in 1799<sup>66</sup>. Babbington used his collection to publish one of the first systems for scientifically classifying minerals - 'New System of Mineralogy in the Form of a Catalogue'<sup>67</sup>.

#### Barstow collection

A nationwide appeal by the service for donations raised the funds required to purchase the Richard Barstow collection of Devon and Cornwall minerals, one of the most complete and beautiful collections of minerals from this area in the world<sup>68</sup>.

#### Gallant collection

Many of the smaller mineral collections held by the service are also of significance; Rene Gallant was one of the first people to understand meteorites and meteoritic impacts<sup>69</sup>, while

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<sup>66</sup> Bishop, M. 1991. The St Aubyn Collection. 200 years of Curation. Dip. Thesis. The Museums Association.  
Torrens, H. S. 1974. Collections and Collectors of Note. Lichfield Museums (pre 1850). Geological Curators Group Newsletter. 1. pp.5-10.

Lewis, C. L. E. & Knell, S. J. 2009. The Making of the Geological Society of London. Geological Society of London Special Publication. 317. pp.70-72, 106-107, 140.

Shepherd, J. 2010. The St. Aubyn mineral collection (c.1794-2010) at Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery. Geological Curator. 9(2). pp.45-56.

<sup>67</sup> Babbington, W. 1799. A new system of mineralogy. T. Benzley, Fleet Street.

<sup>68</sup> Starkey, R. and Cooper, M. 2010. Richard Barstow Mineral Dealer Extraordinaire. UK Journal of Mines and Minerals. Number 31.

many local collectors are represented by their minerals, some of which are from mines that are no longer accessible.

- **Palaeontology (fossils)**

A small collection, it includes some local reef limestone fossils, in the form of polished slabs, and an ichthyosaur from the Dorset Lias. Due to the nature of the geology of Devon, there is little local material older than the Quaternary, and the collecting policy understandably restricts the collection of non-Devonian material. There is also a small teaching collection of fossils.

### **3.4.5 Quaternary geology / archaeology**

A significant collection of sub-fossil mammal remains from the Plymouth and Devon area including specimens from Cattedown Caves, Plymouth and Kitley Caves, Yealmpton<sup>70</sup>. Excavated in 1886, the Cattedown collection is of local and historical importance, and includes mammal glacial and interglacial fauna (hyena, woolly rhinoceros) and also the remains of approximately fourteen human individuals<sup>71</sup>. It was housed in the Plymouth Athenaeum which received a direct hit during the World War II Blitz. The surviving collection was subsequently recovered, some of it damaged by fire.

In 2013 the service acquired the Kitley Caves Collection including a large amount of sub-fossil specimens. This nationally important collection includes specimens noted by William Buckland, and a large amount of glacial and interglacial fauna, including hyena, cave bear, woolly rhinoceros, woolly mammoth and reindeer.

### **3.4.6 Other Natural History Collections**

There are many Natural History collections in the service that do not fall neatly into the categories above - the microscope slide collection and the small collection of wax models are two examples.

## **3.5 Social, Maritime & City History: Description of Existing Collections**

### **3.5.1 Introduction**

This collection has evolved over many decades, and the focus for collecting has shifted greatly during that time. For example, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century many Victorian items that had gone out of use were collected under the broad heading of 'Bygones'. Subsequently, in the post-war period, when the City was being rebuilt, fragments of old buildings that were due for demolition, were salvaged by transferring them to Plymouth Museum. In more recent years there has been a move to collect more items representing the everyday life of Plymothians - at home, at work, at play, and across all communities. Significant items relating to the City's maritime heritage and civic history have always been retained where possible. Objects relating to important local figures and events remain key areas for collecting.

### **3.5.2 Social & Local History**

The collection totals approximately 5000, mostly English, artefacts dating from circa 1600 to the present. Much of the collection has a Plymouth or south western bias, but it cannot be considered comprehensive.

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<sup>69</sup> Gallant, R. 1964. Bombarded Earth. John Baker.

<sup>70</sup> Chamberlain, A.T. & Ray, K. 1994. A Catalogue of Quaternary Fossil-Bearing Cave Sites in the Plymouth Area. Plymouth Archaeology Occasional Publication No. 1 Plymouth City Council.

<sup>71</sup> Worth, R. N. 1887a. On the Occurrence of Human Remains in a Bone Cave at Cattedown. Transactions of the Devonshire Association. 19. pp.419-438.

Worth, R. N. 1887b. The Cattedown Bone Cave. Transactions of the Plymouth Institution. 10. pp.10-38.

The collections predominantly reflect urban life and town/city dwelling with few artefacts representing rural life.

The following examples are among the highlights and are worthy of particular note:

- **Fielden Collection**

A collection of domestic equipment given by Mrs Eckett Fielden in 1959. It includes twelve skillets, one of the largest collections outside London. One unique example was identified in an early 1990s survey<sup>72</sup>.

- **Elliott Collection**

From the grocer's shop and domestic accommodation occupied by the Elliott family in Saltash from 1903-1995. This collection of more than 700 pieces contains furniture, domestic items, toilet articles, magazines and brochures, receipts and invoices, personal correspondence, advertising and other ephemera.

- **South West Gas Historical Society Collection**

In 1996, the Society transferred the Plymouth element of their collections to the service. Well documented, the collection primarily consists of gas appliances and photographs and includes eleven cookers ranging in date from 1860 to 1960, as well as a 1930s refrigerator.

- **People's Plymouth**

The 'People's Plymouth' exhibition (2000-2007) led to the acquisition of a large quantity of social history items from the 20th century. Some artefacts, such as the material acquired from the Plymouth Odeon Cinema prior to its closure in 1999, were donated during preparatory work for the exhibition. Others, which had been on loan from members of the public for the duration of the exhibition, were acquired during de-installation. These included artefacts from a local funeral director and 1970s toy Star Wars figures.

- As a local manufacturer, Bush (later Toshiba) is deliberately represented within the collection. There are three television sets and several radios and record players made by the company at their Plymouth factory during the post war period until its closure.
- The Social History collection has around three hundred bottles<sup>73</sup>, predominantly local<sup>74</sup>, including stoneware ginger beer bottles and glass mineral water and beer bottles. Of particular interest is an example of a square bottle with a seal "S. Brent 1715"<sup>75</sup>.
- A collection of more than one hundred village Friendly Society pole heads, most donated by S.A. Ponsonby of Horrabridge, represent an important reference and research collection within the South West region.
- McKeer family: In 2006, around three hundred 20th century objects and items of ephemera were donated by Mr. McKeer. This collection, related to 20th century life in Plymouth and Plymstock, includes make-up, toiletries, children's toys and games and magazines. It is accompanied by a comprehensive family history.
- Truncheons and associated material: there is a fine collection of local, Victorian, police equipment including twelve truncheons, three beadle staves, eighteen maces of office and

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<sup>72</sup> Eveleigh, David. 1995. Cooking Pots and Old Curios - the Posnet and Skillet. *Folklife*

<sup>73</sup> Douch, Leslie & Wills, Geoffrey . 1976. *The English Glass Bottle Through The Ages: An Exhibition at the County Museum, Truro. Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue*. Royal Institution of Cornwall. pps.14-15, 17, 20-21, 31,32, 46

<sup>74</sup> Scutt, Winfrid. c.1980. *Plymouth Bottles*. Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery Publication.

<sup>75</sup> Jones, Olive. 2010. English Black Glass Bottles, 1725-1850: Historical Terminology. *Journal of Glass Studies* Volume 52, pp. 142-144 fig. 31

other associated material. Of particular note are truncheons associated with the Hospital of the Poor's Portion<sup>76</sup>.

- A wide variety of objects salvaged from Portland Square, which was bombed during World War II and subsequently redeveloped by the University of Plymouth. Artefacts include internal fixtures and fittings from the building, domestic items and ephemera, along with gas masks and other items relating to the building's use as a public air raid shelter.

### 3.5.3 Maritime History

Many artefacts with maritime content or interest are held within other collections (see 3.7). However, there is a distinct collection which is classed as maritime. Once largely art and ship model based, the maritime collection has steadily widened its scope over the last few decades. The following are examples of some of the highlights of this collection.

- The Harmsworth collection donated in 1946 includes ship models, as well as eight exceptional Napoleonic French prisoner of war bone models and six straw-work boxes<sup>77</sup>.
- There are some significant notable objects associated with Plymouth born Robert Falcon Scott; including Scott's silver-gilt Christening Cup, a pair of Scott's ski's from his 1910-13 Antarctic expedition and a rare Expedition issue 'In Memoriam' photograph folder.
- A small amount of material relating to Sir Francis Drake including the legendary Drake's Drum<sup>78</sup>. Dating to the late 16th/early 17th century, it is thought to be the oldest side drum surviving in Britain. The collections also include an important group of documents, printed books and pamphlets associated with Sir Francis Drake and his descendants. When not on show at Buckland Abbey, the manuscript material is normally deposited for specialist storage at the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.
- Models

A sizeable collection of ship models, of mixed type, date and quality. It includes important Napoleonic bone models and other Napoleonic prisoner of war made material, along with significant 19<sup>th</sup> century naval/dockyard made ship and technical models. The collection aims to be broadly representative of ship/rig type as well as model type. It includes both naval and merchant vessels, with a focus on ships and boats that would have been seen in Plymouth. Additional collection strengths include models that help show the evolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century warship from sail to steam and examples of merchant sail in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including several models of Plymouth fishing boats. There are also three liner models, including one large builder's model of *SS Austral*. Further types represented include professional, scratch built, sailor made and pond models and these range from full hull, full rigged models to those that are waterline, half hull/part hull or ship diorama.

Other material includes:

- Miscellaneous and generally small collections of material relating to local ship launches, Antarctic exploration (Scott and others), war at sea, life at sea, maritime trades and crafts and so forth.

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<sup>76</sup> Mitton, Mervyn. 1985. The Policeman's Lot: Antique British Police Equipment including Truncheons and Tipstaves. Quiller Press Ltd. pp. 47-49.

<sup>77</sup> Lavis, B. The Harmsworth Collection of Pictures and Ship Models. Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery.

<sup>78</sup> Gaskell Brown, Cynthia. 1996. The Battle's Sound: Drake's Drum and the Drake Flags. Devon Books in association with The National Trust & The City of Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery.

- Eddystone Lighthouses & Plymouth Breakwater: a small but important collection of material relating to the building of the Eddystone Lighthouses and the Breakwater; including a number of paintings and prints held in other collections.
- Plans and Charts: a small number only and generally of limited significance.
- Archives & Documents: a small number only, largely relating to Plymouth born or based seafarers and/or maritime trades and complementing related artefacts.
- Ephemera: a small collection largely concerning significant Naval Dockyard events, promotions and anniversaries of major local maritime events and large and small ferry activity within the port.

### 3.5.4 Industrial, Transport & Architectural History

There is a small but significant collection relating to local horse drawn industrial railways and tramways. The collections also includes:

- Devon Transport Collection: Selected items, including road finger post signs, directional road signs, and a Plymouth parking meter, were transferred to the service from the Devon County Council Environment Directorate in 2000.

### 3.5.5 Photographs and Postcards

Local interest photographs have long been collected but increasingly so since the 1970s. These collections have also broadened out and no longer represent mainly key City and Civic events.

The service holds a large collection of photographs and negatives, totalling over 80,000 images. Individual images or themed groups of images and have been reproduced in a good number and wide subject range of publications over many years. A selection of these is referenced below<sup>79</sup>. Most of the collection is specifically of Plymouth interest. The collection focuses on subject rather than technique or process. However, it includes nine original and extremely rare and important paper *calotype* negatives by Devonport born Linnaeus Tripe, dating from the mid 1850s<sup>80</sup>. There are also representative *daguerreotype* and *ambrotype* portraits and examples of *carte de visite* and cabinet card portraits, taken in 'Three Town' photographic studios in the period 1860-1900.

The majority of the collection is of topographic and townscape interest, starting with the aforementioned Tripe images. There are a number of stereographic images from the 1860s and 70s, many of wider scenic SW interest, as was the fashion and demand. There are selected mounted and un-mounted paper prints from the period 1860-1890.

The collection extends to include printed and real photographic postcards, most acquired for their topographic interest and dating from the period c.1903 to 1950.

Among the highlights of the collection are<sup>81</sup>:

<sup>79</sup> Cluer, Andrew. 1974. *Plymouth & Plymothians: Photographs & Memories*. Lantern Books Limited.

Cluer, Andrew. 1975. *Plymouth & Plymothians: More Photographs & Memories*. Lantern Books Limited.

Foot, Sarah. 1983. *Views of Old Plymouth*. Bossiney Books.

Foot, Sarah. 1988. *The Barbican*. Bossiney Books.

Moseley, Brian. 1982. *Vanishing Plymouth*. B.S. Moseley.

Moseley, Brian. 1985-1993. *Plymouth Through The Lens* (A Series of Six Books). B.S. Moseley.

Robinson, Chris. 1996. *Plymouth Pubs Past & Present*. Pen & Ink Publishing, Plymouth.

Robinson, Chris. 2000. *Union Street*. Pen & Ink Publishing, Plymouth.

<sup>80</sup> Dewan, Janet. 2003. *The Photographs of Linnaeus Tripe: A Catalogue Raisonné*. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto.

<sup>81</sup> See Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery Website for overview and examples.

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/creativityandculture/museums/museumpcmag/museumcollections/museumphot>

- Rugg Monk Collection: About three hundred glass plate negatives taken mostly in the period c.1890-1914 by Richard Rugg Monk, some being copies of older photographs.
- James J. Judge Collections: Including a bequest of glass plates and photographs.
- Astor Albums: Recording the local election campaigns of Lady Nancy Astor from 1919 onwards.
- John H Palmer RN (Royal Navy) Albums: Over 1000 unique album mounted prints from the Edwardian period, including many, varied, Plymouth and local interest subjects, but also images of wider interest.
- Fitzgerald Collection: Negatives taken by a local freelance professional, active from the 1930s through to the 1960s. The Collection is significant for its Wartime, 'Plymouth Blitz' and City Re-construction content.
- Doris Goodridge Collection: An album of mounted photographs, along with prints and negatives, recording Plymouth past and present. Collected copies of older photographs and photographs taken by the Goodridges themselves, reflecting change and development in the local area.
- City Engineer's Collection: Over 20,000 record photographs by the taken by the City Engineers Department and dating from 1949 to 1962. Essentially, the Collection captures the post-World War II reconstruction of the City.
- People's Plymouth: Images of Plymouth people and daily life commissioned as part of the People's Plymouth exhibition and taken 1999-2000.

### **3.5.6 Ephemera, Printed Material and Personalia**

There are in excess of 1000 items that are considered to fall within this collection category. Most items are, primarily, of Plymouth interest.

The collection is varied and mixed, in date, type and quality. The following examples give an indication of its scope and range:

- Pamphlets and guides: includes for example Plymouth City guides, Plymouth Navy Days guides, local building guide books and histories, conference information pamphlets.
- Promotional & Information Leaflets: local initiatives, enterprises and selected, significant national events.
- Theatre and cinema programmes: including a group of 59 items donated in 1998.
- Greetings cards: examples of birthday, Christmas and Valentine cards.
- Civic functions: including invitations, opening programmes, service sheets, menus.
- Tickets: toll tickets, tram tickets.
- Ration books, government issued identification cards, personal certificates and documentation.
- Letters of appointment and collection related correspondence - some pertaining to local notables.
- Proclamations, bills and posters of local interest.
- Published street maps and plans of local interest.
- Selected commemorative or event specific contemporary newspapers and publications.

- Example packaging and collection related business stationery - local businesses.

#### Archives

The Plymouth and West Devon Record Office is a part of the Plymouth Arts and Heritage Service and is the specialist city archive. There is a separate collecting policy for PWDRO at present.

### **3.5.7 Coins, Tokens and Medals**

There are around 4500 coins, tokens and medals in the collection.

- About 1000 coins form a very nearly complete series (with obverse and reverse both represented) of British copper coins.
- There are over 260 English silver coins from Ethelred II to George VI: 26 are Anglo-Saxon silver pennies from Devon mints (Exeter, Totnes, Barnstaple and Lydford).
- The 31 English gold coins range from Edward III to George V, and include several locally found specimens.
- A comprehensive collection of 17th and 18th century Devon tokens; including the Hooper Collection, which consists of 335 17th century halfpennies and farthings.
- A substantial collection of Commonwealth coins and tokens.
- Roman and other foreign coin collections, each numbering about 250 coins.
- Medals and medallions: About 400, including non-local and representative military, sporting and educational awards to local individuals. Most medals known to have been issued to commemorate local events are represented in the collection. There are several outstanding individual medals, including a 1777 gold medal of the Royal Society, an 1815 award from Pope Pius VII, plus examples of Arctic and Polar exploration medals.
- The first ever Albert Medal: awarded to Samuel Popplestone for a sea rescue at Start Point, Devon.
- Smeaton's 'Press Gang' Medal (1756-59): a rare example; this one being uniquely stamped on obverse and engraved on reverse.

## **3.6 World Cultures: Description of Existing Collections**

### **3.6.1 Introduction**

The service holds about 4,500 artefacts from Oceania, Africa, the Americas and Asia. These include many collections and individual items of great interest. The collection is fairly balanced between the four continents with over 1400 items from Oceania, 1100 from Africa, 900 from Asia and 800 from the Americas. Other than certain outstanding collections, outlined below, acquisition of material has not been systematic.

### **3.6.2 Key Collections & Collectors**

- Gertrude Benham

Bequeathed her worldwide collection of more than 700 items to Plymouth Museum in 1934. Benham<sup>82</sup> was a well-known pioneering mountaineer and explorer. She travelled around the world eight times, was the first European woman to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, and collected jewellery, containers and other small portable items everywhere she went. Her collection is particularly strong in Himalayan, Indian and Tibetan material.

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<sup>82</sup> Howgego, Raymond John. 2009. Gertrude Emily Benham 1867-1938: A 'very quiet and harmless traveller'. A Biography. Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery and Raymond John Howgego.

- Oceania

Henry Moore Dauncey's Papua New Guinea collection (acquired in 1909, 1917 and 1923) is particularly comprehensive (more than 350 objects) and is one of Britain's most important collections from the Papuan Gulf region. Dauncey collected the artefacts whilst living and working in the area as a missionary for the London Missionary Society at the turn of the twentieth century (see Dauncey 1913<sup>83</sup>). The sizeable Oceanic collections also include the Carwithen Collection (1899), of more than 30 wooden clubs, predominantly from Fiji, and nearly 40 Australian items, including six Tasmanian necklaces.

- Africa

Amidst the large collection of African material are jewellery and accessories, food containers, bags and other items collected by Gertrude Benham during her travels across Africa.

Significant African collections include the Wright collection of over 170 items of mid twentieth century Zulu beadwork, and over 20 items of clothing, weapons and horse gear obtained by Lieutenant Francis Pye during the Keffi-Abuja Expedition in Northern Nigeria in 1902. Other African collections of interest include about 100 items from Nigeria, including several Benin pieces and a group of tools associated with iron-smelting and other Yoruba metal working<sup>84</sup>. A small collection of objects from West Africa donated by C.H. Mitchell includes what is probably the finest example of a Yoruba *ayo* or *mancala* gaming board in British museum collections<sup>85</sup>.

- Asia

More than a third of the Asian material comes from Gertrude Benham's bequest, which is particularly strong in jewellery and charms from Northern India, the Himalayas and Tibet. The Asian collection also contains a good selection of textiles and costume of fine quality, most notably Chinese clothing. The Brent Collection (1903) includes around 40 pieces from East Asia, mostly Chinese soapstone figures representing the eight immortals of Daoism.

- Americas

There are over 800 objects from the Americas: over 100 from North America, including a superb range of 10 argillite carvings from the Northwest Coast of Canada (one of the largest groups in the UK<sup>86</sup>), and nearly 600 from Central and South America, of which the 50-plus objects collected by William Fosterjohn, from the Lengua people of Paraguay in about 1900, are of major importance<sup>87</sup>.

### 3.7 Overlap between collections areas

Inevitably, there is an element of overlap between the different collection areas. This can be because of the different context within which collections are made, for example excavated examples of ceramics and coins overlap with non-excavated examples within the Decorative Art and Numismatic collections, respectively. As such, many overlaps are legitimate and an internal awareness of them serves to identify areas where potential acquisitions may fall into more than one collection. The following cascade is listed alphabetically by collection area.

- Archaeology – general overlaps with Social History, specific overlaps with photographic material within archaeological documentary archives and social history photographs; general

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<sup>83</sup> Dauncey, H.M. 1913. *Papuan Pictures*. London Missionary Society.

<sup>84</sup> Bellamy, C.V. 1904. A West African Smelting House. *Journal of the Iron and Steel Institute*. No 11 pp. 99-126.

<sup>85</sup> Len Pole. c. 2000. Personal Communication with Fiona Pitt, Keeper of Human History.

<sup>86</sup> Drew, L. & Wilson, D. 1980. *Argillite: Art of the Haida*, Hancock, Vancouver, pp 292ff.

<sup>87</sup> Sue Giles, Bristol Museum has commented on its quality and rarity - Pole, L., 1995, Devon Ethnography Project, Devon Curators Group, pp16.

overlap of interest in Marine Archaeology with Maritime History; specific overlaps with Decorative Art ceramics & coins within Numismatics; general overlap of interest with Quarternary sub-fossil remains within Natural History though not of collecting. Overlap of interest in the lithic collections within World Cultures.

- Decorative Art – general overlaps with World Cultures, specific overlaps non-European ceramics in World Cultures; metalwork in Social History & World Cultures; glass (particularly glass drink bottles) and pieces of Plymouth Porcelain in Social History; Costume and textile in Social History and World Cultures, naval uniform in Maritime History.
- Fine Art – overlaps of interest though not of collecting with Maritime History in terms of maritime and topographical paintings.
- Natural History – overlaps in terms of local quarry samples within Social History
- Social, Maritime & City History – overlaps with ethnographic ship models within World Cultures. Internal overlap with photographic collections with Maritime content, specifically albums largely of naval interest.

## **4 FUTURE COLLECTING & RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER MUSEUMS**

### **4.1 General Considerations**

When making acquisitions full account will be taken of the operating areas and existing interests of other museums. Where interests might overlap, consultation will take place in order to resolve which is the most suitable institution to acquire the object.

Acquisition will only take place where appropriate storage for an object is available within current resources and where acquisition does not unnecessarily duplicate items already in the collections. Collecting is currently heavily constrained in many areas by lack of sufficient suitable storage space. Careful consideration will be given to the condition of an object. Where an object is considered to be in too poor a condition, relative to its importance, it will not be acquired.

Where appropriate, items that are not accepted will be offered to the Arts & Heritage Engagement Team for the Learning Collection. Where the Arts & Heritage Engagement Team wishes to accept an object, it will only be given to the Learning Collection with the written consent of the donor.

Full documentation for all acquisitions will be actively sought at the point of acquisition and hard copy object history folders created. Further manuscript and published material may be acquired as a reference resource to enhance access to collection items.

### **4.2 Archaeology: Future Collecting**

#### **4.2.1 Introduction**

The focus of archaeological collecting is within the established local collecting area for archaeology, as mutually agreed with other local and regional museums. It is important that the service continues to support the collecting of archaeological archives, generated through fieldwork, to ensure the coherence of future understanding of local archaeology.

#### **4.2.2 Local Archaeology**

- Archaeological Archives

The service acts as the receiving institution for locally excavated archaeological archives within its established archaeological archive collecting area. For the full terms and conditions

outlining the acceptance of archaeological archives, please refer to the 2013 Archaeological Archives Deposition document <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/museumdepositingarchives>

- **Treasure Items**

Where the service wishes to acquire a find classed as Treasure (as defined in the 1996 Treasure Act) it will follow the procedures as set out in the Treasure Act Code of Practice (see Treasure Act Code of Practice, paragraph 60).

- **Non Treasure Items**

Where archaeologically significant local items are offered, which are not classed as Treasure, the service may acquire them subject to the circumstances of their recovery. If they have been responsibly recovered, for example accidental finds from gardens, are well provenanced and the donor has clear title, they may be accepted.

- **Marine Archaeology**

Items will only be accepted subject to appropriate conservation having been completed, preparation of any archives to the standard required for land-based excavations and sufficient storage capacity within the service. Clear documentation of their provenance and history will also be required including evidence of the legal obligation to report finds to the Receiver of Wreck.

In all cases acquisition of such items will be subject to consideration of condition, contextual information and relevance to the collections.

#### **4.2.3 Other British Archaeology**

Material from outside the local collecting area will not normally be acquired. Offers of such material will be diverted to the appropriate Museum.

#### **4.2.4 Industrial Archaeology**

Industrial archaeological items are not collected because of the lack of special resources needed to care for and store this material. If the service becomes aware of endangered industrial archaeology within the local area the relevant archaeological bodies will be contacted e.g. Heritage Environment Officers and English Heritage.

#### **4.2.5 Foreign Archaeology**

The assumption is against the acquisition of foreign archaeology.

#### **4.2.6 Archaeology: Relationships with other Museums**

- **Archaeological Excavation Archives**

The local area of acquisition of the service for archaeological excavation archives is well established. However, there are cases where some overlap of interests may occur.

One instance is where other historical institutions or individuals are perhaps keen to research and/or display items excavated on their land. The position of the service is that to ensure the future integrity of the archaeological archive, it only accepts complete archaeological archives. Notwithstanding this position, the service will seek to accommodate the interests of other parties, wherever possible, through standard loans of relevant material and deferred deposition.

Another instance of overlapping interests is where an excavation area overlaps the collecting area of two museums. In such cases the service will enter negotiations with the other institution to come to a mutual agreement as to which Museum the archive will be deposited with. A decision will be made on the grounds of size of the excavation overlap and greater relevance to one institution rather than another. While such assessments might be difficult to make prior to an excavation commencing, in all cases efforts will be made to reach a decision

in advance of digging. Decisions in such cases will be made in consultation with the local Heritage Environment Officers. In cases where projects involve considerable overlap and consist of a series of separate excavations (for example along a pipeline), a decision may be taken to split the archive amongst the receiving institutions while ensuring that the full relevant documentary archive is deposited with each museum.

- **Treasure**

The area for which the service collects Treasure items mirrors that of the area from which it receives archaeological excavation archives (see 4.2.2). See also Treasure Act Code of Practice, section 38.

The Treasure Act states that if a national museum regards a Treasure item as being of national importance and wishes to acquire it then it can do so (Treasure Act Code of Practice, section 60). If it does not wish to acquire it then it can be offered to the local Accredited Museum. Where conflicts of interest might arise as to which local museum an object might be offered to the Act states:

When considering to which local registered museum a find will be offered, account will be taken of the collecting areas and collecting policies of any local museums (Treasure Act Code of Practice, section 60.3)

Overlaps of collecting interest may also occur concerning the acquisition of Treasure items where they are recovered from the land of other institutions. However, the National Museum will make the final decision.

If either of the above scenarios were to occur, where we wish to acquire an object but where other institutions lobby for its acquisition, then we will make a strong representation to the National Museum.

### **4.3 Decorative Art: Future Collecting**

#### **4.3.1 Introduction**

The service will collect works of art that relate to Plymouth and its environs, and also to the South West region. It works to the following definitions:

Local artist: which may be defined as:

works by an artist/craftsperson from Plymouth and the region, or,

works by an artist/craftsperson who had / has strong associations with the locality or region, e.g. St Ives group, visiting artists and (Turner, Payne, amongst others).

works by an artist or craftsperson which has a strong resonance with methods of manufacture or media in the existing collection and with the history of arts and crafts in the South West.

Local topographical work: which may be defined as:

works of art which depict the locality or region, or

works of art which have some connection with the locality or region through ownership, with buildings, institutions, collections and the like.

Acquisitions will be made in the following areas:

- Works of art which otherwise exemplify and/or reflect the cultural and artistic heritage of the City and region, where appropriate.
- Works of art or objects relating to existing collections, widening context and providing greater depth and understanding.

- **Special Subject Collections**

Works of art will be acquired which strengthen specific subject collections, e.g. Plymouth Silver, Plymouth Porcelain, especially where there are obvious omissions; and also works which will continue to expand the horizons of our holdings of any one such group or individual artist.

- **Associated works**

The service will acquire works of art which are representative of ideas and styles which influenced, or have been influenced by other works in the collection.

- **Contemporary art**

Works of art by contemporary British and other artists and craftspersons will be acquired which represent influences within 20th/21st century art. This could include artists and craftspeople working nationally and internationally but who provide a context for the history of arts and crafts in the South West. This is aided through the service's membership of the Contemporary Arts Society.

#### **4.3.2 Ceramics**

The consolidation of existing strengths should continue, especially in the late 18th century porcelains, including Plymouth and Bristol, to ensure that this collection remains the most representative world-wide. The bulk of the Chinese porcelains are export items so the collecting of a small amount of home market wares should be considered for comparison. In addition, the collection should seek exemplar pieces of armorial porcelain with links to South West families. The holdings of 19th century ceramics should be developed and broadened as should examples of early 20<sup>th</sup> century design and manufacture (e.g. Art Nouveau) to strengthen this gap in the collection. The work of 20th and 21st century regional potters should be acquired in a variety of ceramic media, in particular, key studio potters with links to the South West including Bernard Leach, Shoji Hamada, Michael Cardew and their circle.

#### **4.3.3 Glass**

The service should aim to broaden and deepen this whole collection, including the collection of contemporary examples of work by local craftspeople working in a variety of styles.

#### **4.3.4 Silver and Metalwork**

The acquisition of Plymouth silver should continue with the aim that the collection should hold representative pieces of all Plymouth silversmiths' work. Additionally, it is important that other work with local associations or relevance to the collections should be collected. Acquiring examples of other metals, for example Britannia Metal and nickel silver which are largely unrepresented, should rectify the imbalance of the collections towards silver. A policy of collecting metalwork by contemporary craftspeople in copper, bronze, brass, alloys and other metals, should be implemented as well as work by those experimenting with new techniques and methods of manufacture.

#### **4.3.5 Furniture**

Examples of vernacular and Plymouth cabinetmakers' furniture should be collected with due consideration given to storage areas and display space.

#### **4.3.6 Costume and Textiles**

In relation to social groups, the collection has a preponderance of 'middle-class' clothing, having little or no 'working-class' clothing or male or female occupational costume. This is particularly unfortunate, as it is in the latter two categories of clothing that regional differences are especially evident. Generally there is very little male costume, and children's

clothing is similarly limited. As such, the acquisition of male clothing and working class and occupational clothing should be broadened and the collection of female garments should be continued. Collecting of ceremonial wear (e.g. Christening gowns and bonnets/ wedding dresses) should only be considered if there is a strong local link with the wearer and if supportive materials can be provided (e.g. photos of the owner wearing the costume). The holdings of costume accessories should be developed, along with related archival material.

#### **4.3.7 Decorative Art: Relationships with other Museums**

##### Ceramics

- RAMM, Exeter

Although they do not possess a similarly extensive porcelain collection, they have developed their holdings as a 'regional centre' and hence have much greater representations of North and South Devon wares. They have also acquired examples of local studio potters' work. With Exeter's agreement, Plymouth has recently acquired ceramics made at Bovey Tracey (which falls geographically between Exeter and Plymouth).

- Bristol

The main area of potential overlap of interests lies in the acquisition of Bristol porcelain. Plymouth and Bristol porcelains represent a continuity of production - hence the interest to both our collections.

- Bath

The Holburne Museum has important collections of works by South West potters including Bernard Leach. We should ensure that contemporary work by potters active in the region today is collected now.

##### Silver

As there was an assay office at Exeter from 1700, much Plymouth silver is marked with the Exeter stamp, and therefore has been collected by RAMM. There has been no cause for conflicts in this field of acquisition and good communication surrounding potential acquisitions should ensure that this continues.

##### Costume

RAMM has a particularly strong and active collecting policy in this area and has more provision for collection and storage and display of the collection. However, good lines of communication are open between Plymouth and RAMM in this area and there is frequent, amicable discussion of appropriateness of location in accepting donations.

#### **4.4 Fine Art: Future Collecting**

##### **4.4.1 Introduction**

The service will collect works of art that relate to Plymouth and its environs, and also to the South West region. For a definition of local artists and local topographical works, please see section 4.3.1

Acquisitions will be made in the following areas:

- Works of art which otherwise exemplify and/or reflect the cultural and artistic heritage of the City and region, where appropriate.
- Works of art or objects relating to existing collections, widening context and providing greater depth and understanding.

- **Special Subject Collections**

Works of art will be acquired which strengthen existing collections, e.g. Camden Town Group, Newlyn School, Modern British Painting, Portraiture, especially where there are obvious omissions; and also works which will continue to expand the horizons of our holdings of any one such group or individual artist.

- **Associated works**

The service will acquire works of art which are representative of ideas and styles which influenced, or have been influenced by other works in the collection.

- **Contemporary art**

Works of art by contemporary British and other artists and craftspersons will be acquired which represent influences within 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century art. This could include artists and craftspeople working nationally and internationally but who provide a context for the history of arts and crafts in the South West. This is aided through membership of the Contemporary Arts Society.

#### **4.4.2 Cottonian Collection**

The Cottonian Collection is a closed entity and no further accessions will be made. The service will however acquire items, for example manuscript or archival material, that relate to the history of the Cottonian Collection. Very occasionally, if important works once provenanced to the collection or the collectors become available, PCMAG may consider acquisition. All such material will be kept discrete from but connected to the Collection through its documentation in order to preserve the integrity of the original 1915 donation.

#### **4.4.3 Paintings**

There are notable omissions in our holdings of work by local and regional artists, including major figures that have influenced the development of 20<sup>th</sup> century art, such as Ben Nicholson, Sandra Blow, Sven Berlin, Oskar Kokoscha (who lived in Polperro during the war) and Trevor Bell. More vigorous collecting of Modern British art would help ensure that the service does not miss opportunities which may well become more limited in future years by rising market prices.

With regard to the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the service aims to build a collection which exemplifies the output of artist's early career, his artistic development, his links to the local area and to the local families who were his patrons. Reynolds had a seismic impact on the development of British portraiture, and we aim to collect works which place that impact in context; from the work of his masters to that of his students and followers, and beyond into the work of contemporary artists whose work approaches the genre of portraiture from varied critical positions (NB: Some very early accessions to the collection were made when it was housed at the Plymouth Proprietary Library and later at PCMAG. When identified, these are flagged as such in the object's catalogue record).

#### **4.4.4 Watercolours, Drawings and Prints**

Efforts should continue to acquire works that relate to artists and their paintings in the collection, such as preparatory drawings, portraits of artists, etc. Additionally, works by contemporary watercolour artists and printmakers who display prowess in the use of the technique, and which will further put into context the historical works in the collection. The other essential area is in the acquisition of topographical images that reflect the changing environment of Plymouth and the region, through topographical prints will not be duplicated in the collections, except where the proposed accession is of better quality or condition than that already held.

#### **4.4.5 Sculpture and Bronzes**

There are several omissions in the Modern British collections, such as works by prominent sculptors like Henry Moore, William Turnbull and Robert Adam, and by contemporary regionally connected sculptors of note such as Richard Deacon and Peter Randall Page.

#### **4.4.6 Miniatures**

These should be collected where the artists or sitter is of particular relevance to the collections.

#### **4.4.7 Fine Art: Relationships with other Museums**

Plymouth, Exeter, Bristol, Bath, Truro, Falmouth and Penzance have many artists in common. As such, various factors must be assessed where works are specific to more than one museum. These include content of the work, provenance of the artist, existing collections held and the current financial ability of an institution to acquire a particular work.

### **4.5 Natural History: Future Collecting**

#### **4.5.1 Introduction**

The collecting area for Natural History falls in three main zones:

- Plymouth Unitary Authority

The majority of collecting is confined to this area, and a detailed picture of the flora, fauna and geology of this area has been built up.

- Devon and Cornwall

Few large museums in Devon and Cornwall have access to the resources of the Plymouth Arts & Heritage Service, and the collections for Natural History contain material that give a full picture of the two counties, e.g. the Barstow mineral collection contains many Cornish specimens collected from mines that are no longer open, and this collection was acquired with the agreement of the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro.

- Foreign material

Although foreign material is not actively sought for addition to the collections, it does have relevance for display, educational and research purposes. RAMM carries large foreign Natural History collections, and they must be consulted before any decision is reached. Any acquisition of foreign material must be fully justified on the grounds of its educational or display value before it can be considered for acceptance (see also 2.1).

#### **4.5.2 Vertebrate Zoology**

In summary, effort should be made to make the collections representative of the full diversity of marine, terrestrial and freshwater species found in the local area, whether mammals, birds, fish, amphibia or reptiles. Duplicates and unprovenanced material may be acquired for a handling collection. All environmental information will be referred to the Nature Conservation Officer, Plymouth City Council.

- Birds

New acquisitions that fill gaps in the list of species will be a priority, as will be the acquisition of birds that are migrant or seen in the local area infrequently.

Acquisitions which will add to the small collection of skeletal material will be considered, whether by straight forward acquisition, or by the preparation of carcasses.

Birds' eggs are not collected. Where they are offered and their legal status is in question they will be refused. Otherwise, potential donors will be directed to the RAMM, Exeter.

- **Mammals**

It would be desirable to add to this collection, which is lacking in small, common, local mammals to make it representative of the area's fauna. All forms of preservation (study skin, mounted, skeletal, tracks, wet-preserved) will be considered. Although data is important, the acquisition of unprovenanced specimens for a handling collection would relieve pressure on the main collection.

Foreign material will be referred to the RAMM, Exeter.

- **Other vertebrates**

The main collection does not represent the diversity of reptiles or amphibia to be found in the local area, and material should be acquired to fill this gap. Fish are well represented in the wet collections, however gaps should be filled to ensure it is representative of the diversity of the shore.

Again, foreign material will be referred to the RAMM, Exeter.

### **4.5.3 Invertebrate Zoology**

Although the main collections are strong in Lepidoptera, Hymenoptera, Diptera and Coleoptera, other orders are poorly represented or not at all. Future acquisitions should aim to make collections truly representative of the wide variety of invertebrate life in the area. Thought should also be given, when resources allow, to the acquisition in the field of all invertebrate species including those that the service currently excels in, in order to represent the current status of the environment in Plymouth. The collection is not strong in other invertebrate orders such as Diptera (flies), Arachnia (spiders etc), Orthoptera (dragonflies, damselflies, and crickets). It would be desirable to strengthen these areas of insects.

Foreign material will be referred to the RAMM, Exeter. Environmental information will be referred to the Nature Conservation Officer of PCC.

### **4.5.4 Botany**

The main herbarium is very comprehensive, and provides a good representation of vascular plants found locally. However, there are some large gaps in the collection. As well as filling the gaps below, consideration will be given to the acquisition of related material, whether plant models, prints, books or ephemera.

- **Vascular plants**

Consideration will be given to the collection through fieldwork or donation of modern examples of local plants, to gain a comprehensive picture of the current status of the local flora.

In addition to this, freshwater and marine vascular plants will be sought to fill the gap in the collection.

- **Non-vascular plants**

The collection poorly represents non-vascular plants, and emphasis will be put on the acquisition of lichens, mosses, liverworts etc. In particular, freshwater and marine plants will be added to the collection to make it truly representative.

### **4.5.5 Geology**

The geology collections of PCMAG are extensive, with minerals predominating. It is the intention to further strengthen existing collections by careful acquisition of relevant material.

- Petrology

More general local stones from Devon and Cornwall should be acquired to complete the existing reference collection. Duplicates can be acquired for handling.

- Minerals

The mineral collection is one of the strongest areas of the Natural History collections. The further acquisition of minerals is largely dependent on current resources, and should concentrate on filling any gaps in the mineral list, and acquiring local mineral specimens.

#### **4.5.6 Palaeontology**

The palaeontology collection is lacking in some major areas. Effort will be made to acquire representative samples of the main fossil groups for education and display, as well as creating a collection representative of the fossil biota of Devon, both marine and terrestrial.

The Quaternary geology/archaeology collections are strong and represent important extinct species in the local area. Any future local finds should be added to the service's collections to add to this recent history of Plymouth.

#### **4.5.7 Other Collections**

Any further small collections that do not fall into the main collection categories will be considered for acquisition, but not actively sought. These new collections must have a relevance to the main collections, or be of use for education or display.

#### **4.5.8 Non-accessioned Collections**

- Handling collection

The Natural History department has a large handling collection of items which have no provenance. These items are regularly used for a variety of workshops and outreach. Additional items without data will not be actively sought, but will be considered for educational use.

- Related materials

The acquisition of books relating to the collections themselves (field books, catalogues etc), collections in general (text books and identification guides) will be encouraged. In addition, the acquisition of related material such as scientific equipment will be considered in conjunction with the Human History department, in order to ensure a fully representative Natural History collection, as appropriate to the extent of the main collection.

#### **4.5.9 Natural History: Relationships with other Museums**

- The Royal Albert Memorial Museum (RAMM)

The service holds extensive collections of botany and zoology from around Devon, and is engaged in active collecting of both records and specimens from the majority of the county. With this in mind, RAMM will be contacted if any zoological or botanical material from outside the Unitary Authority boundaries is being considered for acquisition.

RAMM also holds large collections of foreign material, and in the past 'exotic' items have been transferred to RAMM from our service. In future, all foreign material offered to our service will be referred directly to RAMM.

If the service is collecting locally relevant bird species, there will be no collecting conflict with any other museum. For more rare species, agreement will be sought from the RAMM, Exeter, which has an extensive collection of migrant, visiting and foreign birds.

- The Royal Cornwall Museum

The collection consists mostly of minerals from Cornwall, and is second only to the collection of Cornish minerals held by the Natural History Museum. The museum will be consulted if any large geological collection is being considered for acquisition, particularly if the material is of Cornish origin. In the case of a collection being offered to us that contains some Cornish minerals, agreement will be sought as to whether we keep the entire collection, or passes those minerals to Truro. Any collection that contains mostly Cornish minerals will be referred to Truro.

- **Torquay Museum:**

The museum holds extensive collections of sub-fossil bone material from the Kents Cavern excavations, and also paleontological material from Devon and beyond. In view of this, and the relative paucity of the fossil collection at Plymouth, Torquay Museum will be consulted before the acquisition of any paleontological or sub-fossil material, and agreements sought to allow PCMAG to consolidate the geology collection.

## **4.6 Social, Maritime & City History: Future Collecting**

### **4.6.1 Introduction**

Across these broad subject areas, the current collection emphasis is that all material considered for acquisition must have a suitable Plymouth provenance and/or, more importantly, a strong Plymouth relevance. The service strives to avoid duplication within its collections, but an item in better condition might be considered for acquisition in conjunction with an associated disposal.

Some Social History collection material might be representative of type and not uniquely local, but again a Plymouth provenance or relevance would considerably enhance the case for acquisition.

### **4.6.2 Social & Local History**

Bearing in mind the criteria outlined in the Introduction above, all items with a significant Plymouth association or origin may be considered for acquisition. Artefacts with a strong connection to surrounding areas will also be considered as will non-local items that fill in gaps in the current collections.

In addition, in some aspects the Social and Local History collection is already considered to include sufficient examples of a type. For example, this currently applies to gas cookers, sewing machines, printing blocks and plates, typewriters, many carpenters' tools and gramophone records. In these circumstances, again, only items with a remarkable Plymouth association will be considered.

Past collection of artefacts pertaining to farming and rural life has reflected the expansion of the City as it has taken in villages and agricultural land. Further acquisition of this type of material is unlikely.

Finally, and primarily due to the lack of suitable storage space, there is a predisposition against the acquisition of certain material. Current examples include computer equipment and large models of landscapes or buildings.

### **4.6.3 Maritime History**

The service aspires to develop a maritime collection that is unique to Plymouth, primarily through its relevance to Plymouth.

Plymouth's maritime history is rich and diverse, and not just confined to a local historical perspective. Whilst it is important to develop a collection that focuses on the port's evolution and activities, Plymouth has long been a maritime community with an international significance and outlook in terms of trade, emigration, conflict, exploration and ocean science, and has a culture grounded in the maritime tradition.

Maritime history is concerned with a three-way relationship between people, the sea and the land. As such, it is a broad based subject that encompasses many disciplines including art, natural history and science, social history and technology. As such, collecting mirrors this interdisciplinary approach, aiming to provide an integrated collection for the City of Plymouth, which is truly representative of Plymouth's maritime past.

The service will continue to focus on the acquisition of Maritime material pertaining directly to the maritime history of waterfront and waterside communities embraced within the current boundaries of the City of Plymouth and the Port of Plymouth.

Decisions regarding the acquisition of Maritime material which currently fall within the categories of Decorative Art (i.e. uniform, scrimshaw, etc.), Fine Art (paintings and prints) or Archaeology (marine archaeology) will be made in consultation with the specialist curators concerned.

All items with a strong Plymouth association or origin will be considered. Artefacts with a strong connection to surrounding areas will also be considered.

There is a recognised need to steadily strengthen the collections with relevant material as opportunities present themselves. This applies, particularly, in respect of areas of maritime employment, including various maritime trades and crafts, dock construction and operation, ship building, ship repair and cargo handling, fishing, towage, pilotage, HM Coastguard, life-saving and HM Customs and Excise.

The service will also consider the acquisition of non-local maritime material where it relates directly to significant voyages, journeys and trade to and from the Plymouth area, and/or seafarers with strong local associations.

All other non-local items will, generally, continue to fall outside of our sphere of interest.

It should be noted that, primarily due to the lack of suitable storage and/or display space, there is necessarily a strict requirement that future ship model acquisitions will have enhanced Plymouth relevance.

Due, primarily, to issues of storage and display, there is also a predisposition against the acquisition of larger maritime objects. This can sometimes apply to ship models. It currently most certainly applies to ships, boats and large ship fittings.

#### **4.6.4 Industrial, Transport & Architectural History**

Historically, the limitations of both adequate storage and/or display opportunities have necessarily restricted the acquisition of large and/or heavy artifacts and this is unlikely to change in the near future.

If the service is offered or made aware of endangered items that fall within these collection areas, and meet the necessary relevance criteria, every reasonable effort will be made to help find a suitable home and to safeguard said item. Generally, the service seeks interest and support from regional specialist collections and/or heritage agencies to help collect and preserve such material, for example the South Devon Railway at Buckfastleigh or the Robey Trust, Tavistock. In the worst case scenario, the service will try to ensure that appropriate level records are made and publicly archived.

In the case of robust material, outdoor display and exhibition might be an option. Such opportunities will be explored in conjunction with relevant City Council colleagues, landowners and developers, as appropriate.

Generally, the service remains keen to see and encourage large items that fall within these collection categories to be preserved in use, in situ, or re-displayed in an appropriate context within a sympathetic successor development on the same site. This would certainly be the case for items of street furniture, architectural fabric, foundation stones and other such items.

The service occasionally has responsibility for temporarily displaced plaques or memorials in stone or cast metal, ideally with a view to re-site in a more appropriate and contextual setting.

#### **4.6.5 Photographs and Postcards**

All photographic images, negatives, lantern slides and transparencies that have a distinct and unique historical interest and relevance to Plymouth and its immediate environs will be considered. Those enhanced by associated information, for example, name of photographer, subject, date, will be of particular interest. The acquisition of large collections of personal photographs, family albums and transparencies (35mm slides) is, necessarily, subject to tight control and would generally be selective. The policy for the future acquisition and storage of digital photographs is under consideration. Again it is likely to be highly selective and possibly subject to the receipt of actual 'hard-copies' to archival standard, alongside the digital format image.

Plymouth photographers qualify but, primarily, the emphasis will be on appropriate 'quality' images and Plymouth and environs subject matter.

Very careful consideration will be given to the existing holdings and collection strengths and weaknesses. Local subject postcards are passively collected, but with strict controls on relevance, condition and duplication. The works of local photographers and/or real photographic cards, especially of local scenes are more likely to be of interest.

##### Film and Video

The service does not collect moving image at present. Previously items have been transferred to the specialist South West Film and Television Archive (SWFTA) in Plymouth. Offers of any material will be similarly referred to SWFTA until History Centre plans are more fully developed.

#### **4.6.6 Ephemera, Printed Material and Personalia**

The acquisition of these categories of material is based primarily on their connection to Plymouth and the surrounding area - their social and local history content and relevance (embracing maritime, industrial, transport and architectural interest). Due consideration is also given to the value of the content to researchers, possible graphic design interest and the item's heritage display and reproduction potential.

Particularly desirable is advertising material and packaging from local businesses not already represented in the collection, along with examples of programmes, promotion, publicity and other graphic media relating to significant local events.

It should be noted that the service does not generally collect published material such as newspapers, magazines, bibles or other books, except in exceptional circumstances and where there is significant local interest and enhanced local relevance. Local newspapers are generally preserved and archived elsewhere and would only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Sheet music is generally not acquired. Exceptions might be made for compositions, lyrics and songs with a distinct Plymouth association and/or clearly complementing other collections.

#### **4.6.6 Coins, Tokens and Medals**

The existing collection is considered to be fairly comprehensive and future acquisitions will be made passively. If offered, coins, tokens and medals will be collected to fill gaps.

Priority and preference will be given to items with a clear local connection, especially to local commemorative medals. Other medals are collected to enable us to hold a representative collection of types - distinctive medal groups or awards to local individuals and/or notables are most likely to be of interest. It should be noted that Plymouth School Education Committee Attendance Medals are already well represented in the collection so we are unlikely to acquire more examples.

#### **4.6.7 New Directions**

Many of Plymouth's established and newer minority communities are generally under-represented within the Social and Local History Collections. Our outreach work and temporary exhibitions are helping to open up and improve existing connections and dialogue with these communities. We will continue to be pro-active in respect of identifying and acquiring appropriate material to better represent key minority communities.

#### **4.6.8 Contemporary Collecting**

We are also aware of the need to be pro-active in terms of the acquisition of items that reflect the everyday life of Plymothians in recent decades. Acquisitions need to be carefully considered in terms of expanding existing collection areas. Opportunities to collect contemporary items in mint condition should be exploited where possible.

A particular emphasis will be placed on acquiring items that have a strong and direct Plymouth link and character, for example marking or reflecting significant local events, changes and so on. Equally, the growing collection needs to continue to document significant and landmark national events (e.g. decimalisation, metrication, the European referendum, the eclipse, royal occasions).

#### **4.6.9 Social, Maritime & City History: Relationships with other Museums**

In general, there are no strong conflicts of interest with other museums in the region. However, when items from outside of the Plymouth City boundaries or material of wider than Plymouth interest and/or relevance are offered, due consideration will continue to be given to the likely interest of other museums and specialist regional collections, local and otherwise. As such, consultation will continue both with other Accredited Museums and smaller museums and collections such as the Tamar Valley Preservation Trust, Saltash Heritage and the Devon Rural Archive.

##### Maritime

In terms of Maritime collections, the service is a partner within the United Kingdom Maritime Heritage Forum, having previously contributed to the UK Maritime Collection Strategy (UKMCS) <sup>88</sup>.

The service will continue to work in partnership with the National Museums of the Royal Navy over the care and curation of the 'Devonport Collection'. In doing so, it will seek to

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<sup>88</sup> See [www.ukmcs.org.uk](http://www.ukmcs.org.uk) for further details

avoid duplication and work within the agreed aspiration to ensure the further development of a co-ordinated City based collection. This will particularly be the case where material relates to the Royal Navy in Plymouth, 'Support of the Fleet' from Plymouth or the Royal Naval Dockyard at Devonport.

Any maritime interests of other local museums and heritage bodies, such as Saltash Heritage, Morwellham Quay, Mount Edgcombe House and the National Trust at Cotehele, will continue to be taken into consideration.

#### Photographs

Due reference will be made to the interests and collection strengths of other City based photographic archives and collections; notably the Plymouth Library Service and Plymouth and West Devon Record Office collections, plus the South West Image Bank.

#### Archives

All offers of written manuscripts, hand drawn maps and plans, business records, minute books, diaries and other written documents will be managed by the Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.

## **4.7 World Cultures: Future Collecting**

### **4.7.1 Introduction**

There is a presumption against collecting material directly from overseas. The material must have been used in Plymouth or have strong resonance for local people. Material representative of local ethnic minority communities is included in the social history collections. Overseas items will only be accepted where they compliment existing collections and have a strong connection to the Plymouth area, and where they are securely provenanced and *bona fide* methods of acquisition can be proven (see also 10.2).

There is a presumption against disposal except in the case of repatriation requests.

### **4.7.2 Repatriation of Human Remains**

Where requests are made for the repatriation of human remains these will be considered following the recommendations outlined by the Museum Ethnographers Group<sup>89</sup>. Namely, that any requests for repatriation:

*will involve consideration of ownership, cultural significance, the scientific, educational and historical importance of the material, the cultural and religious values of the interested individuals or groups, and the strength of their relationship to the remains in question.*

Human remains stored in the collections will be cared for in accordance with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's recommendations<sup>90</sup>.

### **4.7.3 Repatriation of Cultural Material**

Any approaches made to the service for the return of cultural material will be considered on a case by case basis. These will be considered following the recommendations given by the Museums & Galleries Commission<sup>91</sup> and the Museum Ethnographers Group<sup>92, 93</sup>:

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<sup>89</sup> Museum Ethnographers Group. 1994. Guidelines Concerning the Storage, Display, Interpretation and Return of Human Remains in Ethnographical Collections in United Kingdom Museums. *Journal of Museum Ethnography* No. 6 pp. 22-24. <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/subjects/ethnography/1133-meg-guidelines-on-the-management-of-human-remains>

<sup>90</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sport. 2005. *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums*. DCMS. <[http://webarhive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/publications/3720.aspx](http://webarhive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/3720.aspx)>.

<sup>91</sup> Legget, Janet. 2000. *Restitution and Repatriation: Guidelines for Good Practice*. Museum & Galleries Commission.

<sup>92</sup> Museum Ethnographers Group. 2003. *Guidance Notes on Ethical Approaches in Museum Ethnography* [http://www.museumethnographersgroup.org.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=7&Itemid=6](http://www.museumethnographersgroup.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7&Itemid=6)

*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, 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.*

#### **4.7.4 World Cultures: Relationships with other Museums**

As the emphasis is against any further acquisition of ethnographic material, conflicts of interest should not occur. However, a possible area of overlapping interests might exist in the collection of material associated with a person who had links both with the Plymouth area and additional areas. In such cases, it is hoped that an amicable conclusion can be reached between competing institutions. In all cases the position of the RAMM, as the regional museum with the most significant ethnographic collections, will be considered.

## **5 COLLECTIONS REVIEW AND DISPOSALS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

It is normal for museums to have collection items where the decisions regarding their original acquisition are maybe unclear or are no longer thought to be relevant. Collection reviews allow the service to assess and research such objects and make an informed decision as to whether they should remain part of the collections. This process is necessarily exacting and is fully outlined below. Where objects are deemed no longer suitable for the collections every effort is made to ensure that they remain within the public domain.

- 5.1.1 Within this context the 'service' will refer to Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, Elizabethan House Museum, Merchant's House Museum and Smeaton's Tower, as all collections held are registered with the Museums Documentation Association (now: Collections Trust) as such.
- 5.1.2 By definition, the service has a long-term purpose and holds its permanent collections in order to achieve its stated objectives. It accepts the principle that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the collection<sup>94</sup>.
- 5.1.3 Necessarily, the service is obliged to occasionally review aspects of its collections in line with its obligation to deliver the best care and access to those collections. The review process is led by collection curators, ideally seeking the advice and guidance from key stakeholders. Where possible, stakeholders should include independent specialists and users, including Plymouth residents.
- 5.1.4 There is a strong presumption against disposal. Decisions to dispose of items will be made for sound museological reasons. Full account will be taken of their condition, their relevance, their provenance and legal ownership, their historical, research, scientific & cultural value and their educational and display value.
- 5.1.5 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, transfer, exchange, sale or destruction will be the responsibility of a Disposal Committee, working from the advice of the professional curatorial and conservation staff.

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<sup>93</sup> See footnote number 59 Section 1.2.9

<sup>94</sup> Museums Association. 2008. Code of Ethics for Museums: Ethical Principles for all who work for or govern Museums in the UK. Museums Association.

- 5.1.6 Disposals will not be made with the principal aim of generating funds. Any monies received from the disposal of items by sale will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions.
- 5.1.7 If proposed disposals are likely to be contentious, the Disposal Committee will pro-actively seek the opinions of stakeholders and appropriate professional and ethical guidance from independent specialists and organisations, including Arts Council England and the Museums Association Ethics Committee.

## **5.2 Collection Review Process**

- 5.2.1 The service will operate an ongoing programme of collection reviews which will generally be collection or specimen 'type' specific<sup>95</sup>. They will be led by the collection specialist curator/s. The views of independent specialists and stakeholders will be sought and will be reflected in any proposals for disposal that result.
- 5.2.2 There may be an occasional requirement to identify an object or specimen for disposal outside of a broader collection review process. Such cases would generally reflect a sudden change in the service's ability to provide adequate care and access for an item, or the serious degradation of an item, which has rendered it beyond economic conservation.

## **5.3 Reason for Disposal**

- 5.3.1 Disposal of objects from the collection may be considered in the following circumstances:
- items no longer relevant to the service's mission and whose public accessibility is best served elsewhere
  - duplicate items (after consideration of an item's provenance and research value as well as physical duplication)
  - inappropriately accessioned replica and prop items and reference material
  - items in very poor condition which have as a result irredeemably lost their useful purpose

## **5.4 Responsibility for Disposal**

- 5.4.1 Any Disposal Committee will generally comprise of members of the Arts & Heritage Management Team and Senior Officers responsible for Heritage within Plymouth City Council. In cases where there might be a greater degree of potential controversy a committee might also draw members from the Curatorial Team and Friends of Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery.
- 5.4.2 A Disposal Committee will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency. Proposals for disposal will arise from a collection review process or, occasionally, in response to a serious changed circumstance affecting the well being of a particular object or specimen.
- 5.4.3 By definition, the service has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. A Disposal Committee 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 collection.
- 5.4.4 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, transfer, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for

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<sup>95</sup> An example of the thorough review process is outlined by a recent collections review of the wet preserved specimens;  
Freedman, J. 2012]. Undertaking an Effective Review of Natural History Collections. NatSCA News. Issue 23. pp.25-42

the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of a Disposal Committee acting on the advice of curatorial staff.

- 5.4.5 The service will have confirmed that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Any specific agreements on disposal made with original donors will be respected.
- 5.4.6 When disposal of an object is being considered, the service 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.
- 5.4.7 Any decision to dispose will be taken by a Disposal Committee only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the 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 will also be sought.

## **5.5 Act of Disposal**

- 5.5.1. Disposal will normally be by gift, transfer or exchange. There is a strong presumption against the sale of items gifted to the service. In some instances, the necessary or default option will be physical destruction. All disposals should be handled sensitively.
- 5.5.2 The following provides a guiding framework for disposals:

Objects /specimens donated, without conditions, should be:-

- offered to another accredited museum / gallery
- offered to another research institution or charitable organisation (as appropriate)
- offered to the original donors, if traceable and still living
- offered to the immediate descendants / holder of the estate of the original donor, if identified
- considered for the handling collection
- offered to another educational establishment (as appropriate)
- disposed of by sale
- disposed of by destruction

Objects /specimens purchased, without conditions, should be:-

- offered to another Accredited museum/gallery (sale or exchange might be considered)
- offered to another research institution or charitable organisation (sale or exchange might be considered)
- considered for the handling collection
- offered to another educational establishment
- disposed of by sale
- disposed of by destruction

Objects /specimens acquired by gift or purchase with conditions should be:-

- Disposed of in line with the agreed conditions

## **5.6 Methods of Disposal**

- 5.6.1 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 be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 5.6.2 If the material is not wanted by any Accredited museums to which it was offered directly, then the museum community at large will be advised of the service's intention to dispose of

the material. This is normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's 'Museums Journal', Museums Association disposal web pages, and via other specialist journals, as appropriate.

5.6.3 Any announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the terms 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 service may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations. Priority will be given to organisations in the public domain and with similar objectives.

#### 5.6.4 Disposal by exchange

- The nature of disposal by exchange means that the service will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The Disposal Committee will ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 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.
- If the exchange is proposed with a non-accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the service will make an announcement in the 'Museums Journal' and in other specialist journals, as appropriate.
- Any notifications and announcements must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved, on both sides of the proposed exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. The Disposal Committee must give due consideration to all responses before a final decision is made.

#### 5.6.4 Disposal by destruction

Objects or specimens nominated for destruction should be destroyed safely and fully, beyond salvage or repair.

#### 5.6.5 Disposal by sale and monies received

There is a strong presumption against the sale of gifted items.

- In respect of any proposed disposal of purchased items, the service's priority is to repay any grant funding or cash donation received in support of the original acquisition.
- Any other monies received from the disposal of items will be ring-fenced for the benefit of the remaining collection. 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.
- The service will 'ring-fence' proceeds of any sale so that it can be publicly demonstrated that monies received are spent on the collection and in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Where monies are intended to be used for the care of collections, appropriate advice and guidance will be sought from the Arts Council England (or subsequent body responsible for monitoring the Accreditation standard).

- Any insurance monies received in compensation for the accidental damage, loss or destruction of collection items will be utilised as outlined above in this section.

## **5.7 Documentation of Disposal**

Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved. Proper arrangements will be made for the preservation and transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the disposed items, including photographic records. Where practicable, process will be in accordance with the SPECTRUM Procedure on de-accession and disposal

[http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/assets/Deaccession\\_and\\_disposal\\_SPECTRUM\\_4\\_04\\_For\\_DownloadVersionforCLuser-21.pdf](http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/assets/Deaccession_and_disposal_SPECTRUM_4_04_For_DownloadVersionforCLuser-21.pdf)

In all cases where disposed items are not passed to another museum (Accredited or otherwise), all identifying marks, such as accession numbers, should be removed to avoid future issues around mistaken ownership.

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27.9.2013

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