Reading Museum
Collection Development Policy
2027-2032



Adopted on at Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee on 18 November 2026 (agenda item 10)

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Reading Borough Council
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Reading Museum Collection Development Policy 2027-2032

Name of museum: Reading Museum

Name of governing body: Reading Borough Council (RBC)

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 18 November 2026

Policy review procedure:

The Collections Development Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 2032

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Collections Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

1.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:

Reading Museum champions our town's unique identity. We play a leading part in Reading's development as a cultural community and a place of culture by:

1. actively engaging with our diverse local communities and partners locally, nationally, and internationally
2. providing inclusive opportunities for high quality object-based learning and creativity
3. caring for our collections and Reading Abbey, making them physically and virtually accessible
4. developing innovative and sustainable income opportunities
5. taking action for a healthy environment and working towards net zero

1.2. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. This policy is based on the Accreditation scheme's collections development policy template wording. It

will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements (also see 4.2).

1.6. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, or bequest, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

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

2. History of the collections

Reading Museum was founded in 1883 and its Art Gallery opened in 1897. The original intention when the museum opened was to educate visitors about the world. Therefore, from its earliest days it collected broadly in the fields of Archaeology, Art and Applied Art, Natural History, Numismatics and Ethnography as well as objects relating to the history of Reading and its environs.

The museum's first collection was a bequest of Horatio Bland's private museum of fascinating objects from around the world, including Greek pots and a duck-billed platypus. Other early additions to the museum often came from all over the world, usually gifts from local people, gathered during overseas visits, missionary work, or while they were involved in some way in Britain's colonial activities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This included extensive foreign antiquities, ethnography, zoology, geology and mineralogy. The range of objects represents the interests of Reading people over the last century and are also significant to the history of the Museum itself. The extensive collecting of world objects stopped in 1952.

Collecting specifically for handling, particularly for the museum's education loan service, has been a key part of the collection's development. This began in 1911 and has been distributing museum objects since the 1930s. From 1952 there has been collecting specifically for the loan box collection.

In the absence for many years of any other public museum in the immediate region the museum collected within the old (pre-1974) county boundaries of Berkshire and in parts of north Hampshire and south Oxfordshire. A key example is the acquisition of the Silchester Collection, the finds from excavations at the Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum by the Society of Antiquaries (1890-1909). With the establishment of local museums in these areas, particularly in the early 1960s, the museum's geographic remit has shrunk in most subject areas. Since the 1990s there has been a greater focus on collecting objects linked with Reading, its people and environment.

More detail can be found in the subject appendices 1.1 to 1.7.

2.1 Previous policy documents

This policy replaces the Reading Museum Collection Development Policy 2022-2027. The museum's first Acquisition Policy was created in 1987 and has been regularly reviewed and revised ever since[1]. The Disposal Policy was presented as a separate policy in 1996 and reviewed in 2002 and combined with the Acquisition Policy in 2006.

[1] Reviewed in 1990, 1996, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2011, 2016, 2022 and 2026

There are only minor changes to this policy since its last review in 2022, including the insertion of the updated statement of purpose (section 1.1) from the Reading Museum Forward Plan 2025-2030, that was adopted at RBC Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee on 11th March 2025, and some minor factual updates.

3. An overview of current collections

The collection contains almost 500,000 accessioned objects of archaeology, art, natural history, social history and world cultures.

Collections of international significance include the Romanesque stones from Reading Abbey, the Victorian copy of the Bayeux Tapestry, Ancient Greek ceramics, and the finds and records resulting from various excavations of the Roman town of Calleva at Silchester.

Collections of national significance include the Thames Conservancy Board finds from the source of the Thames to Teddington Lock (Thames Water Collection), the Huntley & Palmers biscuit tin and ephemera collection, the Bayley mineral collection, entomology, tin-glazed earthenware and twentieth and twenty-first century British Art.

Collections of regional significance include works by major regional artists and makers such as John Piper and Alan Caiger-Smith, archaeological archives from excavations in central and east Berkshire, taxidermy, geology, and lichens.

Collections of local significance include objects connected with Reading industries, local flora and fauna, and works by Reading artists.

All real objects in the education loans collection are regarded as having the same status as objects in the rest of the museum's permanent collection. Replicas or models in the loans collection acquired or made in-house, for use in loans boxes and primarily for the purpose of interpretation are regarded as being outside of the museum's permanent collection.

Since 1974 the Reading Foundation for Art (RFFA) has worked in a long-term partnership with the museum. The RFFA is a Trust founded to acquire for the people of Reading works which are loaned to and cared for by the museum and used within its public programme.

More detail can be found in the subject appendices 1.1 to 1.7.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The museum collects objects:

1. To document Reading and its surroundings and environment
2. To celebrate and respond to local people and culture
3. To provide inspiration for learning and creativity
4. To encourage debate on environmental issues including the climate emergency

An object can only be acquired if it meets at least one of these criteria, and the majority must fulfil the first criterion. Additional criteria are also considered to ensure a proper process and sound resource management.

4.1 Criteria for the significance of the object

Four criteria will be used to judge significance of an object:

- Geographic
- Cultural and contemporary
- Learning and creativity
- Environmental

The first of these is the main priority for the majority of acquisitions, but the museum recognises the requirement to collect some items that are not directly related to the region in response to clearly identified needs and aspirations of local people.

4.1.1 Geographic significance

The museum's collection has an important role in providing a sense of place for people from Reading and the surrounding area by acquiring objects that document its history and environment.

Collecting will concentrate on items that have strong associations with the Borough of Reading as a first priority and Greater Reading urban area as a second priority. Non-Reading items will only be collected if they are highly significant under the Cultural & Contemporary, Learning & Creativity, or Environmental criteria.

Association will be defined as follows:

Strong Association: items PRODUCED in the area, DEPICTING the area or FIELD COLLECTED from the area.
This comprises:

- Artefacts made in the locality
- works of art that depict the locality, but not necessarily made there
- items of archaeology or natural history discovered in the locality

Medium Association: items not produced, depicting or field collected in the area, but produced, collected or used by a person or organisation that was BASED in the area for a considerable time or that are linked to a notable LOCAL EVENT.
This includes:

- artefacts produced outside the locality by a craftsman, artist or company that had been based in the locality for many years
- items field collected outside the locality by a person or organisation based in the locality
- an item, not mass-produced, that was used or owned by a person or organisation from the locality for a considerable period in that locality
- an item used in a notable or famous event or incident in the locality.

Weak Association: items whose only association with a geographical area is that they were used there for a short period. The association is particularly weak if in addition the majority of their use has been with an outside locality, or they are a mass-produced item and therefore likely to have equal associations with many other localities.

4.1.2 Cultural and contemporary significance

The museum will actively collect objects with clear relevance to and association with Reading people. It will encourage people-based collecting, particularly working with existing, self-defining groups within Reading rather than individuals. The link with the selectors and their reasons for collecting will be recorded at the time of acquisition.

Just as the museum will seek ways to make the non-British objects that it already holds accessible to local people, priority will be given to collecting objects that reflect the interests of Reading's diverse and multicultural population. This may involve acquiring objects with strong meaning for particular groups of local people but weak geographic associations, including objects from around the world. Collecting will aim to reflect all the cultures that have enriched local life from prehistoric times until the present day.

High priority will be given to objects that reflect contemporary life in Reading. For acquisition purposes 'Contemporary' is defined as the last thirty years.

The museum recognises that acquiring contemporary material is problematic, particularly as few contemporary items are offered as gifts to the museum and because the range of items that could be acquired is extensive. Therefore, it will focus its efforts to acquire contemporary & culturally diverse material through its developing Active Contemporary Collecting Strategy (see Appendix 1.7). This may include empowering self-defined groups to select on the museum's behalf. The groups will be provided with clear guidelines and procedures, and selected items will be subject to the same acceptance procedure as any other acquisition.

In this context it may be necessary, at times, to acquire representative mass-produced items made outside the local region. However, whenever possible, such items should have some form of documented local association.

4.1.3 Learning and creative significance

Priority will be given to objects with immediate use within the museum's public programme or which meet the needs of a particular audience e.g. The National Curriculum for schools or reminiscence boxes. Objects already in the collections can meet most current needs for handling and educational activities, but these will occasionally need to be supplemented by collecting where a clear demand can be demonstrated. All acquisitions for handling should have good contextual and provenance information.

The museum will not acquire items purely for temporary display purposes.

To support our aims of 'actively engaging with diverse local communities and partners and of 'providing inclusive opportunities for high quality object-based learning and creativity', the museum will collect to strengthen a few specific areas of the Art collection. These parts of the collection are clearly identified in the Art subject clarification and interpretation (Appendix 1.2). They were chosen after consultation with special interest groups, such as the Reading Foundation for Art and the Contemporary Art Society.

4.1.4 Environmental significance

Items that document environmental change in the locality will be acquired, with reference to Geographic Significance (4.1.1).

In addition, a small number of items may be acquired that were collected outside Reading but can be demonstrated to have a role in facilitating debate, discussion, awareness and understanding of environmental and conservation issues, including the climate emergency. Such acquisition may be carried out in consultation with interested environmental and education groups and organisations.

4.2 Limitations on collecting

4.2.1 Selectivity and sampling

The museum recognises the limitations of its resources in terms of staffing, storage and finance (see section 1.5). Therefore, all collecting must be selective. In all fields of collecting the museum will aim to employ recognised sampling strategies or to develop one if none is available. For material collected by others, such as archaeological excavation units, the collector may be required to implement and document recognised sampling strategies in consultation with the museum. Criteria for selecting among related significant items will include the long-term value and relevance, quality and in some cases the completeness of the item.

The museum will not usually attempt to collect exhaustive type series, even of local material, especially if this would involve collecting very large numbers of items.

Caution will be applied to acquiring items in very poor condition, or large artefacts requiring expensive specialist or external storage facilities.

Whenever possible the museum prefers to keep objects in context and will advise for their preservation in situ rather than acquisition for the collection, for example architectural features of important historic buildings, site-specific artworks or archaeological structures.

4.2.2 Active and reactive collecting

The museum recognises the difference between active collecting (collecting planned, costed and initiated by the museum, although perhaps with the participation of others) and reactive collecting (collecting initiated by other people and to which the museum responds) and will adopt an active approach to collecting with specific areas of the collection.

It also recognises the resource implications inherent in an active collecting strategy and all project workgroups intending an acquisition to be a project outcome will involve the Acquisition Group (see section 8.1) in considering the cost of collecting at the outset.

4.2.3 Authenticity

The museum will not usually seek to acquire replicas, facsimiles or other forms of copies. The museum will seek outside advice on authenticity, if necessary, before purchasing items of considerable value.

The museum will concentrate on acquiring 'real things'. Replicas or copies will only be acquired where the copy itself has developed an historic or artistic interest in its own right (e.g. the Bayeux Tapestry replica or an original architect's model).

4.2.4 Conditions applying to acquisitions

The museum will not normally accept an acquisition to which any special conditions apply, such as need to display. However, when receiving grant-aid for a purchase, such as from the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the museum is bound by any restrictions such bodies impose.

The museum will nevertheless always be sensitive to the feelings of donors, for example in the case of oral history recordings of a personal nature.

The museum recognises that it may acquire culturally sensitive items that could have restrictions on the way that they can be used and kept. Reasonable restrictions will not preclude acquisition, and the museum will try to identify any such restrictions and document them at the time of acquisition.

The museum is not obliged to acquire unsolicited gifts or bequest. Any items arriving in this way will be considered by the Acquisition Group and if unsuitable for acquisition, discarded according to local government legislation. After three months left items become the property of that authority to use or discard as they so wish. This can include objects rejected as offers for donation to the museum but not collected by their owners within three months.

4.2.5 Documentation of acquisitions

The museum will give priority to the acquisition of items with substantial accompanying documentation and supporting contextual material. Documentation will, wherever possible, include supporting photographic, oral history or archival contextual material.

The museum will not acquire more items than it has the resources to document within three months of deposit.

The museum recognises its responsibility to ensure the proper documentation of any items it acquires, and the need to make this documentation accessible as soon as possible to museum users through its computer database (although some information, such as the value of objects and the names of donors, will always be treated as confidential).

In addition to information about an object's context, the museum will document the reason for the museum's collecting decision and that of anyone else involved in the selection of the object, and any restrictions that have been identified on the way that the object can be used or stored.

4.2.6 Copyright and intellectual rights

The museum will give priority to the acquisition of material for which it can also acquire the copyright.

Where this is not possible, the museum will respect the rights of copyright owners, though it will seek to obtain licence to make copies, without

incurring a fee, for the purposes of exhibition, marketing, educational use and preservation.

The museum will respect the intellectual rights of makers and seek to clarify any restrictions on the use and care of items, particularly art works, with the maker before deciding on acquisition.

The museum will document any copyright and intellectual rights, restrictions or permissions at the time of accessioning into the collection.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

5.2 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

5.3 The museum's priority for rationalisation and disposal will continue to be those objects that have been formally reviewed through its Collection Management Plan. The museum has previously undertaken active disposal following conclusion of this process.

The completion of retrospective documentation has previously identified material of low quality, poor condition, and/or duplicate mass-produced articles which have been disposed of.

It is likely that archaeological material will be identified that should be disposed of to another institution which already cares for material from the same sites, and which will provide better care or access to users; or common natural history specimens in poor condition and lacking significant provenance may be identified, which will be considered for disposal.

Beyond rationalisation relating to the Collection Management Plan, disposals will only be undertaken for legal, safety or care and conservation reasons (for example, spoliation, infestation, repatriation).

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

6.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

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

Berkshire Yeomanry Museum
Buckinghamshire County Museum Trust
Cole Museum of Zoology
Hampshire Cultural Trust
Maidenhead Heritage Centre
Museum of Berkshire Aviation
Museum of English Rural Life and University Special Collections
The Oxfordshire Museum
Reading Local Studies Library
Royal Berkshire Archives
Royal Berkshire Hospital Medical Museum
Slough Museum
Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre
Thames Valley Police Museum
The Rifles (Berkshire and Wiltshire) Museum (The Wardrobe, Salisbury)
Wessex Film and Sound Archive
West Berkshire Museum
Windsor & Royal Borough Museum

8 Acquisition

8.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

The decision to accept a particular item into the collection will not be made by a single member of the museum staff. All offers to the museum will be judged by a small team of staff, known as the Acquisition Group, or a quorum of three members of the Acquisition Group, who will apply the criteria set out above. This group will include the curatorial team and a member of the museum learning team (to advise on learning significance).

Acquisition procedure is recorded and updated in the museum's Acquisition Procedure document in the Collection Management Manual.

For purchases (above £20,000) or whenever large resources need to be made available to acquire an item or care for it long-term, the Museum Manager/Libraries & Museum Manager and/or Director must ratify the acceptance. Purchases must be made in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.

8.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws (for the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

8.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible

acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 2005.

9 Human remains

9.1 As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

9.2 The museum does not hold and will not acquire human remains under 100 years old that require a licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004.

10 Biological and geological material

10.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

11 Archaeological material

11.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

11.2 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

12 Exceptions

12.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases, the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

13 Spoliation

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

14 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

14.1 The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 15.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

14.2 The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums'.

15 Disposal procedures

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

15.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

15.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

15.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, or as a last resort - destruction.

15.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

15.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

15.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It

will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

15.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the Collections Trust's Find an Object web listing service or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

15.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

15.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

15.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

15.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

15.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

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

15.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

15.16 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health

and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

15.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

15.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

15.19 Where destruction/waste disposal is the final option, in the interests of the environment the museum will endeavour to avoid landfill by re-use or recycling.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1.1

ARCHAEOLOGY – Subject clarification and interpretation

The archaeology appendix is a supplement to the main Collection Development Policy and should be read alongside it. It provides additional notes and clarification on the acquisition of archaeological material. **(Numbering of the subsequent sections follows that of the main policy, so there are gaps in the numbering sequence where there is no relevant addition to the corresponding section in the main policy.)**

This section refers to those collections that are acquired using archaeological methodology or are of archaeological significance, along with their associated documentation archives.

1.0 Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation

1.5 The Museum no longer undertakes archaeological excavation itself but liaises with Berkshire Archaeology who maintain the Historic Environment Record (HER), assess planning applications for their implications for the archaeological landscape in central and east Berkshire with reference to the HER, and set project briefs for archaeological fieldwork. The Museum provides contractors/units with procedures for the acceptance of archaeological material (Reading Museum, *Procedures for the deposit of archaeological archives)*. These procedures are based upon best practice as laid down nationally by the Society for Museum Archaeology, Historic England and the Archaeological Archives Forum.

1.5 The Museum will ensure that ownership of archaeological material is established and transfer of title arranged for all future acquisitions. In the case of casual finds, the Museum will not acquire items unless it is sure that the relevant landowner has been informed (also see section 11).

2.0/3.0 History and overview of the Archaeology collections

Palaeolithic (Old Stone Age)
The Museum has a particularly rich collection of Lower Palaeolithic stone tools from the gravel terraces of the Thames. Some of these objects were salvaged from gravel pits in the 19th and early 20th centuries, sometimes by private collectors such as George Smith whose collection and diaries are now in the Museum.

Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age)
The collection includes many flint implements of the Mesolithic period including axeheads with a distinctive triangular cross section known as ‘Thames picks’. The earliest dated settlement of post-glacial man in north western Europe is at Thatcham. Reading Museum staff excavated this site in the 1960s and the archaeological archive from this work is an important source of data for research on the period.

Neolithic (New Stone Age)
Excavation archives of the burial mounds at Lambourn Seven Barrows and Wayland’s Smithy, the former excavated by Reading Museum staff in 1964, are of great significance for understanding how these sites were used in southern Britain during the Neolithic. The collection also includes pottery and tools, some from excavations and some stray finds, which illustrate life in the period.

Bronze Age
Controlled excavations at Rams Hill enclosure on the Berkshire Downs and settlement sites in the lower Kennet Valley at Aldermaston Wharf, Pingewood, and the Thames Valley Business Park and Reading Business Park (Green Park) have created archaeological archives which enhance our understanding of life in this period. There are also burial urns from several sites in Berkshire and north Hampshire.

Many weapons of the Bronze Age have been found in riverbeds in the region. They are well represented in the Thames Water Collection (see below). These may well not have been casual losses, but deliberate offerings thrown into the river. The two Moulsford torcs are also items that represent the symbolic power of this period, although the excavation on the site by Reading Museum when the first torc was found revealed no evidence of settlement before the Iron Age.

Iron Age
There is an important archive of Iron Age material from Blewburton hillfort on the Berkshire Downs, excavated by Reading Museum staff in the 1940s and 1950s.

Archives created by developer funded excavations provide further evidence of lowland settlement in central and east Berkshire, along with finds from the River Thames. Evidence for Iron Age occupation within the Borough's boundaries is still being revealed, such as the former Elvian School site in Southcote.

One of the most important archaeological collections held by the Museum is the Silchester Collection from the Late Iron Age oppida and Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum, 10 miles south of Reading (see below).

Roman
The archaeological collections from Calleva Atrebatum (modern-day Silchester) are nationally important. The bulk of the material comes from the excavations by Revd. J. G. Joyce from 1864 to 1878 and by the Society of Antiquaries of London from 1890 to 1909. The archive includes photographs and diaries recording these early excavations. This collection was initially deposited on loan by the third Duke of Wellington and was then purchased in 1978 (the Silchester Eagle was purchased separately in 1980).

Silchester is one of the most fully explored Roman towns and the material gives a remarkable insight into all aspects of Roman urban life and is of international importance. Finds from later excavations in the twentieth century by Cotton, Boon (a member of the museum staff), and Richmond have added to the material. Hampshire County Council now owns the site and material excavated after 1974 by the University of Reading now goes to the Hampshire Cultural Trust. The two collections complement each other, and cooperation between the two museum services and the University is essential to furthering research and interpretation of the site and Roman Britain.

The collection from the town of Calleva is complemented by important collections of material from the countryside it administered. Material from burials, rural settlement sites, kilns and casual finds are well represented in the collection. Developer-funded excavations within Reading are cumulatively indicating that there was significant Roman rural settlement within the Borough's boundaries, for example the settlement enclosure and coin hoard excavated at The Ridgeway School in Whitley.

Anglo-Saxon/early medieval
The Museum holds material from Saxon cemeteries at Dreadnought, Blewburton, Field Farm (Burghfield) and Harwell, as well as many individual early medieval burials from across the region, including Reading, Taplow and Wallingford. There are also many Anglo-Saxon and Viking items in the Thames Water Collection (see below).

The most important early medieval material comes from Brian Hope-Taylor's excavations at Old Windsor. Between 1953-1958 he investigated the site of the palace of Edward Confessor, revealing continuous Saxon occupation from the 7th century to the 11th century. After Hope-Taylor's death his excavation records were rescued by Historic Environment Scotland, so the documentary archive is now split between Reading and Edinburgh. The Unlocking Old Windsor Project, with Berkshire Archaeological Society and the University of Reading, quantified the huge assemblage of finds, re-examined some of the excavation results, virtually reunited the excavation archive for researchers on the Archaeology Data Service website.

Medieval
The history of Reading Abbey, founded in 1121, is inextricably linked with the history and development of the town of Reading. The Museum holds an internationally important collection of carved Romanesque stonework from the Abbey complex. Some of these Romanesque stones have been recovered from sites where the stones were reused after the Dissolution. Major modern development of the Abbey site has allowed major excavations to take place on the Abbey Stables, the Abbey Wharf and the Cloisters, as well as smaller sites such as Plummery Wall and Forbury Square. These archives are all in the collection.

Objects from the excavation of the Jack-of-Both–Sides medieval cemetery in the 1890s and other finds from Reading help to throw light on life in medieval Reading.

There is material from the important archaeological excavations which took place before the construction of The Oracle shopping centre in Reading. The excavations revealed information about medieval industries in Reading, particularly tanning, metalworking, cloth production and milling. A virtually complete pit wheel made of oak from the 13th century mill machinery of St Giles Mill was a unique find. Developer-funded investigations are adding to our picture of the medieval town, including excavations at Jubilee Square and Silver Street that have revealed medieval tile kilns associated with Reading Abbey.

Foreign material
The Museum contains significant collections of foreign archaeology, from Europe and from the Middle East and Egypt, mainly collected in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These have sometimes come from collectors and sometimes from excavations. Some of the Egyptian material was transferred to Birmingham Museum in the 1950s. Some important Greek ceramics are on loan to the Ure Museum at Reading University. This loan includes seventeen Greek pots from the Bland Collection which was the founding collection of Reading Museum.

Thames Water Collection
A significant collection covering items from the Stone Age to recent times is the Thames Water Collection made up of material found primarily during dredging operations along the River Thames by the Thames Conservancy Board and its successors. Its main strength is a nationally important collection of Bronze Age metalwork. The Museum also holds items from the Thames acquired from other sources and by methods other than dredging.

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Criteria for the significance of the object

4.1.1 Geographic significance

The Museum's prime responsibility for archaeology is to take in material from the post-1974 local authority boundaries of Reading borough.

Since 1 January 2011 the Museum no longer collects archaeological site archives from other authorities in Berkshire. The only exception is where an archaeological site straddles the boundary between Reading and a neighbouring authority. In this situation the Museum may acquire all material from that site to maintain the archaeological integrity of the site archive.

For the built-up area of greater Reading to the west, which currently falls within the West Berkshire Council boundary, the Museum will maintain its close liaison with West Berkshire Museum when considering acquiring material from this area.

The Museum will not collect from Silchester unless the circumstance should arise that Hampshire Cultural Trust or the University of Reading, was unable to take an item. The exception to this would be material or excavation records directly and inextricably relating to excavations already held by the Museum in order to maintain the integrity of the site archive. The same criteria may be applied to material from sites such as Thatcham and Blewburton Hill where the Museum already holds excavation archives, but the site lies outside the current collecting area.

The Museum may consider acquiring significant single finds or hoards found within the area of East Berkshire not covered by the collecting policies of other museums (in particular Wokingham and Bracknell Forest), especially those identified as Treasure, for example the Syngenta coin hoard or Moulsford torcs. It will not collect individual finds that form part of archives from excavations or field walking in these areas, in order to maintain the integrity of archives which fall outside the Museum's collecting area for archaeological site archives.

Objects from outside the prime collecting area defined above will only be collected if they form part of the same find as material already in the collection in order to maintain the integrity of an archaeological context.

The existing foreign collections are regarded as closed collections and material will not be added to them, except when the Museum's existing loans to other museums are returned.

4.1.2/4.1.3/4.1.4 Other significance criteria

The Museum will not normally collect archaeological material under the Acquisition Policy headings of Cultural and Contemporary significance, significance for Learning and Creativity or Environmental significance, unless they meet the Geographic significance outlined above.

4.2 Limitations on collecting

4.2.1 Selectivity and sampling

The Museum will not acquire items for which it cannot provide proper care, storage and access. In particular, great caution will be exercised in acquiring large quantities

of waterlogged material, building materials, and soil samples, unless a definite programme of research on these items has been established in advance.

Section 10.1 of Reading Museum's *Procedures for the Deposit of Archaeological Archives* sets out the expectations regarding selection, retention and dispersal of an archaeological archive prior to deposit. With surface and casual finds the Museum will only collect selective examples of the most common find types, especially for more modern material.

Some excavations, such as those of kiln or midden sites, can reveal huge quantities of material. For this reason, the profession has developed guidelines on selection strategies. All material disposed prior to deposition should be agreed with the Museum and should be recorded in the archive.

Similarly, fieldwalking or casual collecting can produce large amounts of common material. The Museum will collect very selectively from such material.

The Museum will always seek to promote the option of the preservation of archaeological sites in situ rather than their excavation.

4.2.2 Active and reactive collecting
The Museum will not actively collect by undertaking fieldwork and excavation itself. It will however liaise closely with archaeological contractors and through the policy laid down in the Reading Museum, *Procedures for the deposit of archaeological archives,* will be actively involved in how archaeological archives are deposited in the Museum.

4.2.3 Authenticity
The Museum will not usually collect replica archaeological material unless it enhances understanding of a real object in the collection.

The Museum will seek outside advice on authenticity, if necessary, if considering purchase of an archaeological item.

4.2.4 Conditions applying to acquisition
The Museum will not normally acquire archaeological items to which any special conditions apply.

4.2.5 Documentation of acquisitions

Archaeological archives
The Museum's procedures for the deposit of archaeological archives lay down the requirement that funding for the excavation will include the costs of remedial conservation, proper packing, basic documentation, preparation of the archive for publication, and publication costs as appropriate. Only archives conforming to these procedures will be accepted.

Casual finds
Important archaeological items are sometimes found by non-professionals either as surface finds or using a metal detector. The Museum will promote the need for such finds to be accompanied by information on their location and the circumstances of discovery, as this forms a vital part of their archaeological value. Only finds with this information will be considered for acquisition.

Historic Environment Record (HER)
The Museum will report all archaeological discoveries that come to its attention to the relevant HER.

4.2.6 Copyright and intellectual rights
The Museum will usually expect to acquire copyright for any archaeological archival material it obtains as set out in section 5 of *Procedures for the deposit of archaeological archives*.

5.0 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

Following the completion of retrospective documentation, it is likely that archaeological material will be identified that should be disposed of to another institution which already cares for material from the same sites, and which will provide better care or access to users. This is most likely to apply to archaeological material from outside the current prime collecting area, defined above, that form part of the same site archive already in another Accredited Museum's collection, and where transfer would maintain the integrity of an archaeological context.

7.0 Collecting policies of other museums

The Museum will consult with West Berkshire Museum over items from west Berkshire.

The Museum will continue consultation with the Hampshire Cultural Trust relating to shared interests over material from Roman Silchester.

The Museum will discuss acquisition of 'same find' items, as defined in section 4.1.1 above, with the relevant Museum and will always seek to make such material as widely accessible as possible.

11.0 Archaeological material
Further to the main policy the Museum will not acquire archaeological artefacts that have been acquired in contravention of any national or international archaeological area protection law, in particular Ancient Monument Scheduling, except with express consent of the appropriate advising authority, such as Historic England. Material will be collected ensuring that legal considerations have been met, for example the Treasure Act 1996, the obtaining of permits to excavate human remains and notification of the coroner upon the discovery of human remains.

Furthermore, acquisition will not occur if it is believed that the recovery of the item involved intentional and unauthorised destruction of an archaeological site (according to the professional standards applying at the time of discovery), or that it was acquired without disclosure to the landowner or occupier.

APPENDIX 1.2

ART – Subject clarification and interpretation

The art appendix is a supplement to the main Collection Development Policy and should be read alongside it. It provides additional notes and clarification on the acquisition of art works in all the above categories and covers any associated materials (e.g. artists' tools). **(Numbering of the subsequent sections follows that of the main policy, so there are gaps in the numbering sequence where there is no relevant addition to the corresponding section in the main policy.)**

2.0/3.0 History and overview of the Art collections

FINE ART:

Local Portraits
The collection includes some fine paintings and sculpture of individuals associated with Reading and Berkshire. The earliest portraits are 16th century. Many of the early portraits, such as an oil painting of Elizabeth I, were part of the civic collection long before the Museum was established.

Local Topography
The collection includes many paintings, prints, drawings and photographs of Reading and Berkshire dating from the 17th century to today.

Local Artists
The collection contains many paintings, prints, drawings, photographs and craft objects by artists/makers who have lived in Reading and the region (about 25 miles around Reading). It includes artists/makers of national and international standing such as Stanley and Gilbert Spencer, John Piper, Alan Caiger-Smith, Robert Gillmor and Gerald Benney. It also includes many works by local artists/makers both professional and amateur who have exhibited with the Reading Guild of Artists, the Berkshire Artists Group or in some of the smaller local commercial galleries.

Reading has been an important centre for art education since the 19th century, notably the Reading School of Art which became the University of Reading Fine Art department, and Berkshire College of Art & Design. The collection contains work by several nationally significant artists who have taught or studied in Reading including Robert Gibbings, Alan Seaby, and Anthony Betts. Recent acquisitions include work by Jean Spencer, Stephen Buckley, Terry Frost, and Wendy Ramshaw.

There is a comprehensive collection of the work of William Havell and drawings, paintings and prints representing the work of other members of this gifted 19th century family of Reading artists. William Havell was a founder member of the Old Water Colour Society and was compared with J.W.Turner at the time.

Pre-20th century British Art
Some of the greatest art treasures that the Museum care for are the carved Romanesque stones from Reading Abbey which, like the Roman sculptural fragments and bronze figures, are considered part of the Archaeology collection. Similarly, the 19th century embroidered copy of the Bayeux Tapestry is considered part of the Social History collection. In the Art collection there are a significant number of oil paintings, watercolours and drawings which have been given to the Museum, notably a large group of 19th century British oil paintings and watercolours

given to the Museum in the 1890s by William Isaac Palmer. The Museum has also been given works through the Art Fund.

Baxter Prints
George Baxter was a pioneer of colour printing in the 19th century. The Museum now has over 700 examples of his work and the work of his licencees, principally Le Blond and Kronheim. The basis of the collection was an extensive gift from a lifelong collector, Arthur Knox.

20th-21st century British Art
Between 1970 and 1990 the Museum actively built a collection of 20th century British Art focusing on painting between the First and Second World Wars. There are significant works from between the wars by such artists as Eric Ravilious, David Bomberg and Eric Kennington, and more recent work by artists such as William Roberts, Prunella Clough and Mary Fedden. The collection includes an interesting group of Modern Scottish paintings by such artists as Joan Earley, Elizabeth Blackadder and David Michie. A small group of sculpture includes work by Michael Ayrton, Jacob Epstein and John Tweed. Some works have been given to the Museum through the Contemporary Art Society (CAS), recent CAS acquisitions include prints by Turner Prize winner Helen Cammock, a wood-turned sculpture by Eleanor Lakelin (specially commissioned from the Covid Rapid Response Fund), and a commission from metalsmith Adi Toch. Important 20th century British works from this area of the collection are frequently lent to other institutions.

Prints, Printed Books and Book Illustrations
The Museum has wide range of prints, notably original prints from the 1970s. It also has a group of prints and books associated with local printmakers and presses, for example prints and books illustrated by Robert Gibbings.

Artists' Archives
The Museum has a few artists' archives that relate to work in the collection, notably a large and interesting archive of material from the estate of John Tweed, a pupil of Rodin and important figure in the Edwardian New Sculpture movement.

European Art
The Museum has a small number of works from Europe including two 16th century Italian oil paintings and two small-scale sculptures by Rodin (part of the John Tweed Archive). It has a greater number of works by British artists working in Europe. The archaeology collection includes a large and important group of painted Greek pots (Attic and Corinthian).

APPLIED ART:

Ceramics
Two large donations, the Blatch and Tufnell collections, form the basis of the Museum's extensive tin glaze earthenware collection. Items range from fragmented pieces of 13th century Italian work to a great number of English 18th century pieces. The addition of over 70 pieces of tin-glazed earthenware by the contemporary potter Alan Caiger-Smith has invigorated this area of the collection. There is also a range of examples of British domestic ceramics of all periods and 19th century European and Indian work acquired around the turn of the century. The 20th century work includes groups of Elton ware, Martin ware and a collection of pot-lids and Pratt ware.

British Glass, Metal and Wood
The Museum has a small number of works in these media.

Non-European Craft
Within its Historic World Objects collection (see Appendix 1.5) the Museum has an extensive and eclectic range of craft from around the world. Most was donated between 1880 and 1950, and it is largely unprovenanced. It covers textiles (notably Asian and African), woodwork (African, Australasian & Asian), metalwork (notably Asian and Far Eastern), ceramics (notably African, South American and Asian) and carved ivories (Far Eastern).

20th and 21st century British Studio craft
Throughout the late 1960s and 1970s the Museum collected contemporary woven, printed, dyed and embroidered textiles, and ceramics. The resulting collection of over 300 works was added to a large group of 1950s embroideries given to the Museum under the Needlework Development Scheme. A few more recent examples of both textiles and ceramics have been added to this work, such as Sunflowers by Alice Kettle, and Vestige by Halima Cassell.

READING FOUNDATION FOR ART COLLECTION:

Since 1974 the Reading Foundation for Art (RFFA) has worked in a long-term partnership with the Museum. The RFFA is a Trust founded to acquire for the people of Reading works which are cared for by the Museum and used within its public programme. To date it has acquired and helped the museum acquire some 250 works. It is not constrained by the Museum's Collection Development Policy, having its own, although the Museum is consulted and advises on each acquisition.

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Criteria for the significance of the object

4.1.1 Geographic significance

- The Local Portraits and Topographic drawings, paintings and prints provide an extensive and invaluable record of Reading and Berkshire before photography and images of Reading and Reading people will continue to be collected.
- Much of the art being collected will fall within the Museum's priority of collecting work associated with Reading. However, the individual nature of works of art does not lend itself to being defined by political boundaries. Instead, it is more appropriate to think of collecting in terms of acquiring high quality artwork produced or connected with a wider region around Reading, a 20-mile radius around Reading. This includes parts of Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire and Buckinghamshire. The Museum will consult with other institutions throughout this area (see section 7.0 below).

4.1.2 Cultural and contemporary significance

- As part of the Museum's policy of empowering people to collect on its behalf, the RFFA will continue to add to the Art collection. The Museum may also consult with interested art practitioners, educators and organisations over specific acquisitions. This includes its ongoing membership of the Contemporary Art Society.
- Occasionally the Museum will collect art works connected with Reading's twin towns.
- As part of its contemporary collecting focus the Museum will concentrate on acquiring art from the last 30 years. It will focus on representative works from local groups of contemporary artists as well as actively collecting one contemporary form, small-scale sculpture.

4.1.3 Significance for learning and creativity

- Centre of Excellence: There are important parts of the Art collection that do not have any geographic link with Reading and that people might not expect to find in Reading, for example tin-glazed earthenware, Baxter prints, 20th century British art and 20th century studio craft. The Museum will take up the increasing opportunities that now exist to make these areas more widely known to a world-wide audience through web-based projects and publications. Researchers come to us to consult these collections, and other institutions borrow from these collections for exhibition. As they become more accessible the Museum anticipates that this demand will increase. As the Museum does not have the resources to collect in all these areas it is appropriate to collect selectively to strengthen some of them further, although purchases are not likely.
- The Museum will focus on actively collecting small-scale contemporary sculpture for several reasons. Since 1970 sculpture has increased in importance within Fine Art practice. It is generally less widely collected than two-dimensional work. It plays an important part in the current blurring of definitions between traditions of painting and sculpture and between traditional Craft and Fine Art, both in terms of approaches and media. It complements the existing 20th century sculpture and 20th century craft in the collection. The Museum also has a small bequest, the Tweed bequest, to assist in purchasing sculpture. It is hoped that such a clear statement of intent will provide a focus for grant-giving bodies and national schemes of distribution.
- When collecting the Museum will always try to acquire preparatory work with a final piece and any background material that illuminates the artist's working practices.
- Issues to do with handling and interaction with a contemporary work will be agreed with the artist and recorded at the time of acquisition.

3.3.4 Environmental significance

Historic topographic images can be an important reference for studying environmental changes and will continue to be collected.

4.2 Limitations on collecting

4.2.1 Selectivity and sampling - setting standards of high quality

- Active collecting will be limited by resources to two or three projects a year.
- The Museum's ability to maintain a work will be an important consideration, particularly when acquiring works in new media, such as digital-based work, moving images, sound works or mixed media. Although the Museum will not normally acquire works which it expects to deteriorate, it will not be limited by media when collecting contemporary work. It will always weigh the significance of the work against the cost of caring for it.
- Much of the most exciting contemporary work deals with themes of mortality, aging and decay and this is reflected in artist's choice of media and their expectations of changes in the work as it ages. Some work is expected to disintegrate. Whenever deterioration can be expected the Museum will seek confirmation of the artist's intentions and agree approaches to conservation and recording changes at the time of acquisition. These will be documented along with a note that the work has not been acquired for posterity.
- Scale is an essential part of the aesthetic of any artwork and while always considering the resource implications of large works the significance of scale in an artist's practice and the display impact of large works will be important factors in deciding on acquisition.

- The Museum will not seek to collect the whole output of one artist or to fill existing categories within the collection. Instead, it will look to acquire a representative selection of different aspects of an artist's work, or a type of work, choosing the most significant item from any group of works as a priority.
- Artistic quality will be the deciding factor in the selection of works. The Museum will only acquire high quality works of historic significance. This is a matter of interpretation, and decisions about quality rest with the curatorial team. The curators may refer to other specialists, and any consultation will be recorded at the time of acquisition. The significance of the individual piece within the artist's practice, its aesthetic merit and the quality of craftsmanship (where relevant), and the wider art historical context will be taken into consideration. Decisions will be monitored by the Acquisition Group.
- While there is a presumption to sample the Museum may acquire a complete collection of art works if the integrity of the collection is essential to its meaning.

4.2.2 Active and reactive collecting

The Museum recognises that it does not have the resources for active collecting of many works, or to respond to all the opportunities that arise. To focus collecting in this area, different approaches to collecting different types of work have been designated. Most art works will be collected reactively but some will only be considered if offered as a gift while others can be considered if for sale. The table below outlines the acquisition status of each part of the Art collection:

Acquisition status definitions
CLOSED – The Museum will not collect this type of work
REACTIVE (gift) – The Museum may collect this type of work if it is offered as a gift
REACTIVE (gift/purchase) – The Museum may collect this type of work if it is offered as a gift or for sale
ACTIVE – The Museum will find appropriate work of this type to acquire

Type of work	Acquisition status	Explanation
ART & CRAFT		The Museum recognises that strict definitions of Art and Craft work by media are losing their relevance. The Museum will no longer collect by media or unnecessarily add to existing strengths in the collection. The categories below could include work in any medium if it is of exciting enough artistic intent/merit. This may include new media such as video, digital, sound-works etc., which are not at present represented in the collection.
1. Local Portraits	REACTIVE (gift/purchase)	Artistic quality will be the most important criterion. Issues of accuracy and social relevance will be considered under the Social History policy. The Museum will encourage partners to commission portraits of contemporary local figures.
2. Local Topography	REACTIVE (gift/purchase)	The Museum will concentrate on collecting works of high artistic merit that represent Reading and its close environs. The Museum will focus on pre-20th century work, and issues of topographic accuracy and selectivity will be considered from a Social History point of view (Appendix 1.3). Regional views will only be collected if of

Type of work	Acquisition status	Explanation
		exceptional historic interest or artistic quality and in consultation with other relevant institutions.
3a. Local Artists with regional reputations– pre-1970	REACTIVE (gift)	The Museum will collect work by local artists with a regional reputation. It will be highly selective and seek to represent different aspects of an individual's practice.
3b. Local/Regional Artists with national reputations – pre-1970	REACTIVE (gift/purchase)	The Museum will collect work by local and regional artists with a national reputation. The Museum will focus on seeking funding to acquire work by nationally significant 20th century artists/makers whenever the opportunity arises. It will seek to represent different aspects of individuals' practice.
3c. Local/ Regional Artists – contemporary	REACTIVE (gift/purchase)	The Museum will focus on representing contemporary groups of artists/makers within the region, for example Jelly artists, Open Hand artists, Reading Guild of Artists, University and Reading College tutors. It will be highly selective.
4. The Havell family	REACTIVE (gift)	The Museum will be highly selective, looking only to add historic or topical depth to the existing collection or to illustrate process.
5. Local Collectors	REACTIVE (gift)	The Museum recognises that a collection of works illustrating an individual's taste and judgement can develop new strengths within the collection as well as reflect local connoisseurship. The principle of sampling will apply but the Museum recognises that a complete collection can mean more than its constituent parts and that in some cases a collection should be kept in its entirety.
6. Pre-20th century British Art - general	CLOSED	The Museum will concentrate on conservation and making the existing collection more accessible. The only exception to this will be if work is part of the gift of a significant local collection.
7. Baxter Prints	CLOSED	
8a. 20th/21st century British Art – general	REACTIVE (gift)	The Museum will acquire work if part of a local collection or as part of a national scheme to distribute important work, for example Contemporary Art Society (CAS), Art Fund.
8b. 20th/21st century British Art – small-scale sculpture	ACTIVE	The Museum will actively collect small-scale British sculpture. Neither the work or the artist will need to be restricted by the usual geographic considerations. The main criteria will be that the materials involved, or the content of the work requires it to be made on a small scale. Museum will not collect multiples or maquettes unless the maquette relates to public sculpture with a local connection. This is intended to develop the Museum's British collection with an emphasis on contemporary work. At most two or three projects per year will result in acquisitions (see Appendix 1.7) This includes active collecting and

Type of work	Acquisition status	Explanation
		commissioning in partnership with RFFA and CAS.
9.Prints, Printed Books & Book Illustrations	REACTIVE (gift)	The Museum will only collect work with a regional significance focussing particularly on process, i.e. artist's proofs, plates, blocks, and on local presses such as the Two Rivers Press and the Golden Cockerel Press.
10. Artists' Archives	REACTIVE (gift)	The Museum will only collect archival material associated with significant local artists/makers whose work is represented in the collection. The Museum will consult with other institutions with related material.
11. European Art	CLOSED	The Museum will concentrate on research and conservation of the few works it cares for. The only exception to this will be if work is part of a gift of a significant local collection.
12. Art related to Reading's Twin Towns	REACTIVE (gift/purchase)	The Museum will acquire work by artists or makers with a national or international reputation connected with Reading's Twin towns of Düsseldorf, Clonmel, San Francisco Libre and Speightstown.
13. 20th/21st century Studio Craft	REACTIVE (gift/purchase)	The Museum will add to its British Studio craft collection, particularly focussing on ceramics and textiles made during the 1980s. The focus will be on craft produced within the region.
DECORATIVE & APPLIED ART		
14a Ceramics – historic British domestic ware	CLOSED	
14b. Ceramics –Tin glaze earthenware	CLOSED	
14c. Ceramics - Pot Lids & Pratt ware	CLOSED	
14d. Ceramics - Elton ware	CLOSED	
15. European Glass, metal, wood, ceramics	CLOSED	
16. Non-European Art/Craft	CLOSED	Unless collected as part of the contemporary collecting policy or as part of a local collection.

4.2.3 Authenticity

Wherever possible the Museum will acquire unique pieces, and signed works. An exception will be prints where printmaking is an important part of the artist's work. Then the Museum will try to acquire numbered and signed prints. It will not acquire multiples, maquettes or artist's proofs unless to illustrate the artist's working practice.

4.2.4 Conditions applying to acquisitions

While there is a presumption not to acquire work that has any special conditions attached to it, the Museum is sensitive to artists' intentions. Wherever possible it will seek to identify and agree with the artist any conditions to do with the use and presentation of their work at the time of acquisition.

4.2.5 Documentation of acquisitions
All these points apply to artworks.

4.2.6 Copyright and intellectual rights
The Museum will in all but exceptional circumstances ensure it can obtain licence to use images of a work, at least for non-profitable purposes, at the time of acquisition. It recognises that this is a sensitive issue for many artists.

The Museum will respect the intellectual rights of artists and makers and seek to clarify any wishes to do with the use and presentation of the artwork and its image before acquisition is agreed.

7.0 Collecting policies of other museums

- The Museum will cooperate with established visual arts organisations within the town.
- As the geographic base for collecting is wider than Reading and its environs the Museum will need to consult with other institutions with overlapping acquisition policies when acquiring works, for example the regional museums set up since 1960 and the Stanley Spencer Gallery.
- In exceptional circumstances the Museum will consider jointly acquiring a work with another museum to keep a work of a very substantial purchase price in a public collection. In general, the individual nature of works of art and the importance of keeping certain works in the public domain should foster co-operation between public institutions.
- The Museum will not collect archival material other than archives directly relating to groups of works in the collection.
- The Museum will not collect mass-produced topographic prints that are collected by the Local Studies Library or Royal Berkshire Archives.

APPENDIX 1.3

SOCIAL HISTORY – subject clarification and interpretation

The social history appendix is a supplement to the main Collection Development Policy and should be read alongside it. It provides additional notes on social history acquisitions including costume, archives and ephemera, photographs and oral history recordings. **(Numbering of the subsequent sections follows that of the main policy, so there are gaps in the numbering sequence where there is no relevant addition to the corresponding section in the main policy.)**

2.0/3.0 History and overview of the Social History collections

The Museum began collecting objects, including images and ephemera, for their social historical significance in the mid-1970s. A major donation in 1980 was the Reading Chronicle Collection of around 80,000 negatives, taken by the newspaper between 1938 and 1964, recording the changing face of our town. In the early 1980s there was a peak in the rate of collecting with the creation of Blake's Lock Museum that presented the history of small workplaces, shops, and river-based trades and leisure about 1900. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the collection continued to grow largely passively.

The Museum also collected objects that have at a later date been transferred to the social history collection. For instance, all post-medieval items were originally classified as part of the archaeological collection.

In 1989 social history was established as a distinct collection within the Museum. The social history collection has also grown because objects have been transferred from the art and decorative art collection. For instance, the Huntley & Palmers collection was transferred into the social history collection in 1996.

The Museum has a collection of textiles, costume and costume accessories. This largely consists of fashionable women's dress of the 19th and early 20th centuries, but also includes some working clothes, banners and wedding dresses with Reading links. In 2008 there was a peer review of the costume, as part of the Museums Association's Effective Collections project, which identified items for subsequent disposal. The Museum also has a collection of ephemera and photographs of local places and people.

In 1995 the Museum began to collect audio recordings of Reading people's life stories and experiences. A new post, Curator of Social History and Contemporary Culture (later the Curator of Contemporary History), was created in 1996 to develop the collection and use of oral history and to initiate a programme of active collecting of Reading's contemporary history. In 2010 the role was redefined as Community Engagement Curator to emphasise the importance of involving Reading's communities in developing and using the collections and services.

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Criteria for the significance of the object

4.1.1 Geographic significance

The geographical limit of the policy is to objects that have an *association* with Reading Borough and the areas immediately surrounding its existing administrative boundaries, that is the conurbation of Greater Reading, including Tilehurst, Calcot, Earley, Lower Earley and Woodley.

The Greater Reading urban area is more precisely defined for this policy by the following boundaries:

- To the east, a line from the Borough boundary at the edge of Thames Valley Business Park to the top of Shepherds Hill roundabout where the railway line crosses the A4
- The line of the railway from this point as far as Beggars Hill Road
- Beggars Hill Road, then a line around the outside of the Woodley development, through the intersection of Colemansmoor Road and Sandford Lane to the Bader Way
- The Bader Way from this point across the junction with the A329/A329(M)
- B3270 going south/west up to the Borough boundary just east of M4 Junction 11
- To the west, the Oxford Road from its intersection with the Borough boundary to the junction with Long Lane
- Long Lane then Tidmarsh Lane to Little Heath Road
- Little Heath Road, then Pincents Lane down to M4 junction 12
- M4 until it crosses the railway line, then the railway line up to the Borough boundary

Purley, Theale, Sonning, Twyford and Winnersh do not fall within the scope of the collecting area.

The policy will not be countywide. A connection with the County of Berkshire alone will not provide sufficient reason for the Museum to collect an object.

4.1.2 Cultural and contemporary significance

Fundamental to this policy is that the Museum collects objects to represent a people-centred, rather than an object-centred social history. The Museum collects objects of cultural or contemporary significance on behalf of and for the benefit of the people of Reading today and in the future. The Museum is committed to collecting objects that are representative of Reading's social and ethnic diversity in the past and present.

To achieve these aims requires an active programme of people-based collecting rather than dependence on passive collecting. The Museum will empower existing, self-defining groups within Reading to collect objects for the Museum within a strategy devised and approved by the Museum's Acquisition Group. The community group's association with the objects and their reasons for collecting will be fully recorded. This programme of active collecting will either be linked to a specific theme (e.g. food) or a specific locality (e.g. Newtown) and will often have an immediate public outcome, such as a display, reminiscence box, school loan box or web page (see Appendix 1.7).

Occasionally, to represent fully Reading's social and ethnic diversity, important Reading events, or aspects of Reading people's working life or leisure, it will be necessary to collect an object as a generic example of something which would have been widely sold or used in Reading. Typically, this will be a mass-produced object and in these instances the onus will be on the Museum to research and record its link with Reading.

4.1.3 Significance for learning and creativity

To fulfil the Museum's learning objectives, it may sometimes be necessary to acquire social history objects that are not significant from a Geographic, Contemporary and Cultural or Environmental point of view. This should only take place when there are no alternatives available from the existing social history collection and where there is an immediate learning use. The reasons for collecting such objects should be fully recorded at the time, such as a school loans box or reminiscence box. Objects will not be permanently acquired solely for use in a temporary exhibition.

4.1.4 Environmental significance

It is unlikely that the Museum would collect objects for the social history collection solely for their Environmental Significance. The Museum will usually only acquire objects of Environmental Significance that also fulfil the Geographic and/or Learning and Creativity criteria.

4.2 Limitations on collecting

4.2.1 Selectivity and sampling

Care will be taken not to acquire objects for which the Museum does not have the resources or facilities to provide proper care and access.

The Museum will not collect objects in poor physical condition, which are incomplete or which are too large to be stored or exhibited by the Museum. However, the significance of an object in poor or fragmentary condition or a very large object which, because of its rarity, or unique association with an important Reading person, event or aspect of the town's social history, would be balanced against considerations of its physical condition, incomplete state or size.

The key criteria for collecting will be the significance of an object to Reading people rather than the creation of exhaustive type series with no direct relevance to Reading, as was sometimes attempted in the past. Objects will not be acquired to create typological collections or fill typological gaps. Existing typological collections, notably handguns and cameras and related photographic equipment, are considered closed.

The Museum will consider objects individually for acquisition whether or not they form part of a pre-existing collection.

The Museum will seek in almost all instances to acquire only a representative sample of objects from a pre-existing collection. This will have particular relevance when a personal or institutional collection, or the fixtures, fittings and contents of a workplace, shop or domestic interior, are being considered for acquisition.

The Museum will not normally acquire architectural fragments, features, fixtures or fittings from Reading buildings and would encourage their retention or reinstatement within the building/structure or new buildings on the same site.

It would be neither possible nor meaningful to collect every object in Reading today, historic or contemporary. Selection is inevitable and necessary to create a representative social history collection for Reading.

Although the difficulty of selecting from the viewpoint of the future is self-evident the Museum has a responsibility to intelligently collect objects and information about them that will allow future generations to discover what life was like in Reading in the

past and present. Collecting contemporary objects for future generations will have more validity when they have been chosen through a programme of people-based collecting by groups within Reading.

4.2.2 Active and reactive collecting
To collect in a way that is truly representative requires an active programme of collecting rather than dependence on passively collecting objects that are offered to the Museum or have been placed on sale at auction.

Active collecting has inherent resource and capacity implications, so collecting projects require a clear strategy approved by the Acquisition Group (see Appendix 1.7).

4.2.3 Authenticity
The Museum will not usually acquire replica items in this subject area, unless the replica itself has its own historical, artistic or cultural significance, such as the Bayeux Tapestry replica.

4.2.4 Conditions applying to acquisitions
The Museum will not usually acquire objects to which any conditions are applied by the previous owners. However, the Museum will be sensitive in their use of items of a personal nature, especially during the lifetime of the previous owner. This particularly applies to oral history recordings.

The Museum will pay special attention to the ethical considerations of collecting oral history. The Museum will collect oral history in accordance with the Oral History Society's Ethical Guidelines. It is important that oral history recordings should not be used without the interviewee's consent, or in a way in which they might make them unhappy. The Museum will always obtain written clearance from every interviewee using its standard copyright and clearance form. The Museum will abide by any restrictions of use required by the interviewee.

4.2.5 Documentation of acquisitions
Objects are collected by the Museum largely because of the information that they can provide about Reading's past or present. The historical value of an object in the Museum's collection is reduced if there is little or no information about its user or use, or its association with an individual, group or place in Reading.

The Museum will ordinarily only collect an object if it is supported by contextual evidence, either documentary, oral or photographic, linking it to Reading.

For objects collected by community groups as part of the active contemporary collecting programme, the Museum will document the group's association with an object and their reasons for collecting it.

The Museum will document any restrictions of use for oral history recordings required by interviewees.

4.2.6 Copyright and intellectual rights
Collecting oral history audio recordings and photographic prints, negatives or transparencies has important copyright implications. The Museum will seek to obtain copyright of its acquisitions in line with the main Policy.

When the Museum does not hold copyright of images or recordings the Museum will obtain the right to make at any time copies that it considers necessary for exhibition, preservation and access.

7.0 Collecting policies of other museums

The local museum or a similar institution within Berkshire, or if more appropriate an institution within a neighbouring County, will be notified of an object that is more relevant to their collection.

The Museum will not collect agricultural objects more appropriately collected by the Museum of English Rural Life at the University of Reading.

The Museum will not collect film or video that is more appropriately collected by the Wessex Film and Sound Archive, Winchester.

The Museum will not collect purely topographical photographs, specifically of individual buildings, street scenes or landscapes, which are more appropriately collected by Reading Local Studies Library. The only exception will be non-duplicate images of Huntley & Palmers Biscuit Factory, where the Museum holds the company's archive.

The Museum will collect photographs of Reading people at work and play, and images by important Reading photographers, particularly Fox Talbot's Reading Establishment and the Adams of Reading.

The Museum will collect printed ephemera related to Reading that has good supporting documentation and contextual information. Ephemera without supporting documentation and contextual information may be more appropriate to Reading Local Studies Library.

The Museum will not collect manuscripts and archival material more appropriately collected by the Royal Berkshire Archives or the University of Reading Special Collections.

The Museum will not collect printed secondary materials; these are more appropriately collected by the Reading Local Studies Library.

APPENDIX 1.4

NATURAL HISTORY - subject clarification and interpretation

The Museum will collect natural history objects in accordance with the principles and criteria set out in the main Collection Development Policy. The appendix for natural history is a supplement to the main Policy, containing specific information relevant to the acquisition of natural history objects. **(Numbering of subsequent sections follows that of the main policy, so there are gaps in the numbering sequence where there is no relevant addition to the corresponding section.)**

2.0/3.0 History and overview of the Natural History collections

The Museum holds a collection of approximately 218,000 biological and geological specimens, accumulated since Reading Museum was founded in 1883. Before television and cheap travel, broad-based collections had a vital role in bringing the natural world to people, and in the absence of other museums in the immediate region the Museum collected widely within pre-1974 Berkshire and adjacent counties, Britain and overseas. With public interest in natural history now catered for by specialist national and regional organisations and with the establishment of local museums in the area the Museum's role has shrunk geographically. But natural history objects still contribute to the Museum's programme of activities and exhibitions, the loan service to schools and outreach. The collections provide opportunities for life-long learning for Reading people, visitors and enquirers from all over the world, including artists, academics, students and enthusiasts.

Plants and Fungi
The herbarium collections consist mainly of economic botany collected by J.B. Hurry in the 1920s, and vascular plants collected in the late 1920s-1940s by Rev. S.O. Ridley and V.E. Murray. Smaller collections include lichens collected by Humphrey Bowen, the Vear timber collection, European wildflower albums, seaweeds, mosses, small numbers of dried fungi, and microscope slides.

Insects
This regionally significant collection is the largest, comprising nearly 150,000 specimens. All common orders of insects are represented, with a good cross-section of British species, but over two thirds of the collection consist of Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths). Notable collectors include Baker, Dolton, Holland, Sitwell, Newton and Bretherton (British Lepidoptera), L.M. Parlett (foreign Lepidoptera), Cocks and Allen (British Coleoptera (beetles)), Burtt, Carter and Cole (British Diptera (flies)), Carter and Burtt (British Hymenoptera (bees, wasp and ants)), E. E. Green (British Hemiptera (true bugs)), Baker (British Trichoptera and small orders (all other insects)). Includes alcohol-preserved specimens and microscope slide preparations. Most of Bretherton's European Lepidoptera and some of his British specimens are on loan to the British Entomological and Natural History Society, based at Dinton Pastures.

Molluscs (shells)
The Museum holds a large collection of British and tropical land, freshwater and marine shells. The British land and freshwater shells are mainly from the collections of Rev. S.O. Ridley, Holland, Tomlin, V.E. Murray and Arthur Price. The British marine material is mainly from Tomlin's collection. The exotic marine material is mainly from the 19th century founding donation of Horatio Bland.

Other invertebrates
This collection includes a wide range of specimens of a variety of taxa, including corals, crustaceans, sea urchins, starfish, pseudoscorpions, horseshoe crabs, millipedes, centipedes and spiders. It includes alcohol-preserved specimens and microscope slides.

Vertebrates (Birds, Fish, Mammals, Reptiles and Amphibians)
There is a modest collection of taxidermy, mainly early 20th century. This includes a representative collection of British deer including a red deer group by Rowland Ward, and birds set up by the local taxidermist G.A. Topp and by George Bristow ('Hastings rarities'). Later additions have been made to the taxidermy collection from road casualties. There is a birds' egg collection, including cabinets of Arnold W. Hughes which may be nationally important. Most of the fish are anglers' trophies, including cases by Cooper. Reptiles and amphibians are represented by casts and some other herpetological material. The Museum also holds a reference collection of bones, which is used for identifying bone remains from archaeological sites. Includes small alcohol-preserved and microscope slide collections.

Geology
The collection is divided into Mineralogy, Palaeontology (fossils), and Petrology/Stratigraphy (rocks). There is good local material, but much is from elsewhere in Britain and there are also many overseas specimens. The nationally significant Bayley mineral collection consists of high quality; mainly foreign specimens collected in the early 19th century. The fossil collection is the largest and includes a collection of fossil reptiles published by Delair. There are a small number of microscope slide preparations and some casts and models.

Archive
The natural history archive collection includes photographic prints, glass-plate negatives, letters and manuscripts. Notable items include material on the genetics of albino amphibians compiled by William Smallcombe and others, including correspondence with the famous professor of genetics J.B.S. Haldane.

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Criteria for the significance of the object

4.1.1 Geographic significance
Acquisitions will be made from:

- Reading and the Greater Reading urban area as defined in the Social History Appendix section 4.1.1
- The area of the West Reading Woodlands and Reading Local Nature Reserve Biodiversity Opportunity Area
- The area of Kennet Valley and gravel pits between the railway line, Borough boundary and M4 motorway
- The area of Thames Valley gravel pits north of the river and bounded by the A4155 (Henley Road) and B478, and the area south of the river between the B478, B4446 and A4 except Sonning village

Acquisition of specimens from sites outside these areas in South Oxfordshire, West Berkshire or Wokingham that are near Reading (within 2 miles of the Borough boundary) may be made in exceptional circumstances.

Acquisition of specimens from other areas may be made only if they form a minor part of a collection whose integrity is of overriding importance.

Acquisition of non-British material will only be made under sections below.

4.1.2 Cultural and contemporary significance
The Museum may collect natural history objects of cultural or contemporary significance representing Reading's social and ethnic diversity in the past and present - for example, to tell the story of local natural historians.

4.1.3 Significance for learning and creativity
- Objects will be acquired that have a strong significance for learning and creativity, but they should also have significance for at least one of the other criteria as well, to enhance their educational value.
- Acquisition of natural history objects that are not significant according to any of the other three criteria will only be considered when there are no alternatives available from the existing collection and there is an immediate learning use (for example, for the development of school loans boxes). The reason for acquisition will be fully recorded.

4.1.4 Environmental significance
The Museum will collect natural history objects that represent the biodiversity and environment of the Reading area as defined in section 4.1.1, to reflect changes through time and space in the natural environment, including the impact of the climate emergency.

This material may include voucher specimens and their data resulting from habitat recording work or similar surveys. The Museum will cooperate with conservation or planning bodies where opportunities arise to acquire material that documents nature reserves or areas of conservation significance, or that supports environmental impact assessments and other planning investigations.

4.2 Limitations on collecting

4.2.1 Selectivity and sampling
The Museum will not acquire objects for which it does not have the resources or facilities to provide proper care and access. These include:
- Objects which are in poor physical condition, incomplete or very large, unless they have exceptionally strong significance.
- Primary type specimens and specimens requiring special storage conditions (e.g. radioactive minerals) - these will be referred to other Accredited museums with appropriate facilities and staff.
- Objects which are considered to present an insurmountable health and safety risk.

Dead animals for taxidermy will only be accepted when arrangements can be made to send them for immediate preparation, as the Museum does not have suitable storage facilities. Offers of such specimens must meet criteria in sections 3.3 and 7.0 and must fill identified 'gaps' in the existing collection.

Many natural history collections comprise thousands of specimens which must all be fully catalogued if they are to form a useful resource. Offers of large collections may not be accepted if the work involved in documenting them is likely to take longer than 3 months.

It is neither possible nor meaningful to collect every natural history object, although there is no such thing as a 'duplicate' in nature. Selection is inevitable and

necessary, and the Museum may seek to acquire only a representative sample of objects from a pre-existing collection. The degree of selectivity applied must be appropriate to the collection and its uses.

However, natural history systematic collections are useful identification tools. They are essentially typological and to maximize their usefulness all common variants of a species that are likely to be encountered in the region must be represented. For biological recording temporal and spatial series are valuable to track the abundance and distribution of species. Acquisitions of specimens representing missing species, sexes, life-history stages, variants and range extensions will therefore be made.

Priority collection areas where significant gaps have been identified (in consultation with interested local groups) are:

- Insects: Diptera (flies, especially the families Tachinidae, Fanniidae and Muscidae), Hymenoptera (bees, wasps and ants), Coleoptera (beetles), Odonata (dragon- and damselflies), Orthoptera (grasshoppers and crickets) and Hemiptera (true bugs).
- Other invertebrates, particularly molluscs, centipedes, millipedes, Collembola, spiders and woodlice.

Clear gaps have not yet been identified in the collections of plants, vertebrates and geological material, so caution is needed to avoid acquiring types already well represented.

4.2.2 Active and reactive collecting

Collecting to represent the local environment and the interests of local people requires a programme of active collecting rather than passively collecting objects that are offered to the Museum. However, active collecting has major resource implications, so any collecting projects must be approved by the Acquisition Group. Any active collecting will only be undertaken in consultation with relevant local groups.

4.2.3 Authenticity

The Museum will not acquire replica natural history items or models unless they aid interpretation of a real object (for example, a reconstruction of an extinct animal to interpret its fossilised bones).

4.2.4 Conditions applying to acquisitions

The Museum will not usually acquire objects to which conditions have been attached by previous owners. However, it will be sensitive in its use of specimen data where the publication of locality details may prejudice the conservation of threatened species or sensitive sites.

4.2.5 Documentation of acquisitions

Natural history objects are more useful when they come with full data (e.g. ‘voucher’ specimens of habitat surveys, new range extensions, publications or databases), so the Museum will not usually acquire specimens or samples without well-documented provenance.

For objects collected by community groups as part of the active contemporary collecting programme, where such data may be lacking, the Museum will document the group’s association with an object and reasons for collecting it.

4.2.6 Copyright and intellectual rights
Collecting biological information has important implications with respect to intellectual rights to use and pass on data. The Museum will seek to acquire those rights necessary to make data accessible to local biological recorders and groups.

Collecting audio recordings and photographic prints, negatives or transparencies has copyright implications. The Museum will seek to obtain copyright of its acquisitions in line with the main Policy. When the Museum does not hold copyright of images or recordings it will obtain the right to make copies at any time for exhibition, preservation and access.

5.0 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal
Following the completion of retrospective documentation, it is likely that common natural history specimens in poor condition and lacking significant provenance may be identified, which will be considered for disposal.

7.0 Collecting policies of other museums

The Museum does not generally collect from areas outside those specified in section 4.1.1, whether or not there are museums with natural history collections in the adjacent counties and unitary authorities. Items not falling within the Museum's Collection Development Policy will be referred either to the relevant museum or to the Natural History Museum, London, or (if appropriate) to other environmental education organisations.

For areas where there is likely to be policy overlap with another Accredited museum, in particular Oxfordshire Museum Service for the area of south Oxfordshire near Reading, and West Berkshire Museum for areas to the west of the Borough boundary, then that museum will be contacted to resolve the issue.

The Museum will cooperate with other organisations in the region to coordinate the recording of natural heritage. In particular, the Museum will discuss shared collecting interests in the Thames Valley with adjacent county museum services and the museums of Reading and Oxford University.

The Museum will not acquire manuscripts and archival material more appropriately held by Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) or the Berkshire Record Office, unless they relate to specimens in the collection (such as collectors' field notebooks).

13 Human remains
The Museum will collect natural history objects legally and ethically by not collecting human remains that would require a licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004.

14 Biological and geological material
The Museum collects within the context of a range of wildlife legislation, principally:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, recent annexes and related legislation relating to badgers etc.
- EU Council Regulation EC 338/97 and EC Commission Regulation EC 939/97 (which give legal force to the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species, CITES), or its equivalent post-Brexit.
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (SI no. 2010/490) which implements the EU Habitats Directive in the UK, or its equivalent post-Brexit.

The Museum will collect natural history objects legally and ethically by:

- Not collecting biological and geological specimens that have been acquired in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty except with the consent of the appropriate authority.
- Holding an Article 30 certificate (for scientific institutions undertaking commercial activities in connection with specimens of internationally endangered species under EC Commission Regulation EC 939/97).
- Operating under the terms of possession licence WML Gen-L02, a general licence for possession of dead specimens of any plants or animals that feature on the European Protected Species list and were obtained after 1994, for museums, research and educational establishments.
- Not killing animals for display purposes.
- Employing only DEFRA/Natural England registered taxidermists.
- Only acquiring natural history objects when proper legal title can be obtained and obtaining permission to collect from landowners.
- Ensuring good collecting practices are adhered to, following the Code for Insect Collecting formulated by the Joint Committee for the Conservation of British Insects in 1972 and other relevant codes for responsible collecting (e.g. of fossils).

APPENDIX 1.5

HISTORIC WORLD OBJECTS – Subject clarification and interpretation

2.0/3.0 History and overview of the Historic World collection

From the late 19th century, the Museum collected objects from around the world. This group of objects has been called the Ethnology collection and more recently the Ethnography collection. It is now called a collection of Historic World Objects or World Collection. This is in line with current thinking within museums and is a more accurate description of the collection, as only a small percentage of the objects were collected using ethnographic methods. It now contains almost 3000 objects. Many of the objects fall into categories such as weapons, domestic objects and costume and they come from all over the world, particularly West and South Africa, North America and South America, Asia and Southeast Asia, but they are not a comprehensive enough collection to allow comparisons between peoples to be made. They are better considered as an eclectic group of worldwide objects, most of which are 19th to early/mid-20th century.

The Museum was never involved in field collection, and few items were actively collected. Almost all these objects were gifts from local people, usually gathered during overseas visits, missionary work, or while they were involved in some way in Britain's colonial activities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A few were collected by expeditions and subsequently deposited at the Museum, and a small number were given to the Museum by institutions. The objects probably tell us as much about the collectors as the people that made or used them. Some of the ethnographic objects are part of the founding Bland collection and Stevens collection.

There are a few notable collections, for example Japanese ivories and other objects collected by Ambrose Petrocokino. He also gave the museum many high-quality Greek ceramics. There are important objects collected by Reading missionaries particularly the Congolese objects collected by John Lawson Forfeitt and William L. Forfeitt while working for the Baptist Missionary Society.

In 1952 a decision was made to stop acquiring objects from around the world and some of the most significant objects were transferred to the Horniman Museum, London. At the same time parts of the collection were identified as suitable for inclusion in the Museum's loan service to schools and have been circulating to schools ever since. There was also some ensuing collecting of world objects specifically for the Museum's school loan box service. Subsequently some of the archaeological material, such as the Swiss Lake-Dwellers tools, were incorporated into the Archaeology collection (see Appendix 1.1, Foreign Material), natural history specimens integrated into the Natural History collection and particularly interesting decorative art objects included in the Decorative Art collection.

Following the completion of basic cataloguing of this collection a significant proportion was photographed and made accessible online in 2013-14 through the Reading Connections project. This was a partnership between Reading Museum and the Museum of English Rural Life funded by Arts Council England.

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting

The Historic World Objects collection has effectively been closed since 1952, and the Museum will continue this policy. The only exceptions to this will be objects which are offered to the Museum that are intricately linked to objects already in the collection.

Objects from around the world will be collected as part of the Social History Collection Development Policy (see Appendix 1.3) and particularly as part of the Contemporary Collecting Strategy (Appendix 1.7). They will not be collected to illustrate typologies or to make comparisons between similar tools and technologies from different world cultures. They will be collected because of their links to local people, whether Reading people today or historic collectors from the area.

The Museum will concentrate on improving access to the existing material.

APPENDIX 1.6

NUMISMATICS – Subject clarification and interpretation

This section is applied to the collection of numismatics which includes coins, banknotes, tokens, medals and medallions. **(Numbering of subsequent sections follows that of the main policy, so there are gaps in the numbering sequence where there is no relevant addition to the corresponding section.)**

2.0/3.0 History and overview of the numismatics collection

Many items in the numismatic collection have been acquired in relation to their archaeological or social historical significance, but others have been collected for numismatic reasons, often with specialist advice. They have come from excavations, casual finds, private individuals, coin dealers and private specialist collectors, such as the Bevan Collection acquired by bequest in 1945. The amount of information with the coins has varied according to their source.

All British coins can be considered to have local significance because they were the coin of the realm in use in the local area and no historical interpretation is complete without examples of the currency in use in daily life. Similarly commemorative medals and campaign medals illustrate the local repercussions of national events.

The largest single numismatic group is the collection of coins from Roman Calleva (Silchester). These were originally catalogued by Mill Stephenson, one of the Society of Antiquaries' excavators who later became Honorary Curator of the Silchester Collection in Reading Museum.

The Museum also holds other Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Medieval coins from chance finds and excavations predominantly from pre-1974 Berkshire. This includes hoards of coins of various periods which are significant numismatically and historically as a reflection of the social conditions that led to hoarding.

The collection also contains a reasonably representative selection of post-medieval money of the types which would have been in use in the locality. Many of these are in good condition and were acquired as good examples of coins that would have been in circulation, in preference to coins in poor condition that had seen more use.

The Museum has an extensive collection of local trade tokens from the 17th, late 18th and early 19th centuries, and examples of banknotes issued by local banks.

The Museum holds examples of commemorative, military and school medals, some associated with local events and people. It also has a small collection of prize medals connected with local businesses.

Finally, the Museum has some examples of medals with no local connection and a small collection of foreign coins.

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting

The Museum will continue to collect numismatic items that fulfil the criteria of the Archaeological collection development policy or the Social History collection development policy.

No foreign material will be collected unless it has a social significance for current citizens of Reading.

Most collecting will be reactive with the following exceptions:

- The Museum should actively seek to complete its collection of Iron Age coins associated to the Atrebates tribal area.
- The Museum should actively seek to complete its type series of coins struck for the Abbot of Reading.
- The Museum should seek to complete its collection of Berkshire 17th century tradesmen's tokens.

APPENDIX 1.7

ACTIVE CONTEMPORARY COLLECTING STRATEGY

(Numbering of subsequent sections follows that of the main policy, so there are gaps in the numbering sequence where there is no relevant addition to the corresponding section.)

4.0 Themes and priorities for future collecting
The Active Contemporary Collecting Strategy will follow the acquisition criteria outlined in the main Policy including the four significance categories:

- Geographic significance
- Cultural and contemporary significance
- Significance for learning and creativity
- Environmental significance

The most important category to this Strategy is cultural and contemporary significance. This identifies people-based collecting as the method of actively collecting contemporary objects.

4.1.2 Cultural and contemporary significance
An active approach to contemporary collecting should be taken for specific areas of the collection. High priority will be given to collecting art and social history objects that reflect the social and ethnic diversity of contemporary life in Reading.

Active collecting will be a people-focused activity, working with existing, self-defining groups within Reading rather than individuals. For acquisition purposes 'contemporary' is defined as the last thirty years.

Active contemporary collecting will usually be a project-based exercise, allowing existing, self-defined community groups to select objects on the Museum's behalf. These groups will be provided with clear selection guidelines by the Museum and selected items will be subject to the same acceptance procedure as any other acquisition. The final decision to accept an item will be made by the Museum's Acquisition Group.

Active collecting will either be linked to a specific theme (e.g. food and drink), cultural group or a specific locality (e.g. Newtown) and will usually have an immediate public outcome, such as a display, reminiscence box, school loan box or web page.

The Museum's Acquisition Group will monitor all active contemporary collecting projects. A method statement should be prepared for each collecting project and submitted to the Acquisition Group for comment and approval. It will be necessary to limit the number of collecting projects in a year due to financial, staff and resource constraints.

The method statement should:

- State the aims and objectives of the collecting project
- Outline the project's specific collecting criteria (based on the Collection Development Policy)
- Describe the self-defined group or groups involved, including the number of people and background information about the group

- Identify the resource and cost implications (including staff time, expenses and the long-term cost of caring for the objects)
- Identify the type and number of objects being sought (and what is not being sought)
- Produce the selection guidelines for the group
- Outline the selection process
- Describe the acquisition and documentation process
- Show how the link with the selectors and their reasons for collecting will be recorded at the time of acquisition.