

Barnsley Arts, Museums and Archives Service

Cannon Hall Museum, Park and Gardens

Cooper Gallery, Barnsley

Worsbrough Mill Museum

Experience Barnsley, Barnsley Town Hall

Policy for the Care and Conservation of Collections

Reviewed: 20th December 2017

Next Review: 20th December 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Caring for the collections is a fundamental duty for all museums. Our policy for the care of the collections is based on a combination of preventative and remedial conservation, both designed to ensure preservation.

1.2 Preventative conservation covers the measures necessary to retard or minimise deterioration of museum objects and specimens and structures. The necessary preventive measures are based on a thorough understanding of how objects and specimens react to their environment and deteriorate physically or chemically. Remedial conservation involves a treatment to an object or specimen to bring it to a more acceptable condition or state in order to stabilise it or enhance some aspects of its cultural or scientific value.

1.3 We will pursue 'best practice' in our preservation and conservation procedures as established in such documentation as BS 5454 'Recommendations for Storage and Exhibition of Archival Documents', and the MLA Benchmarks in Collection Care.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

A primary aim of the Museum service is to conserve its collections. We will care for the collections by providing the best conditions for the preservation of all objects and specimens through:

- providing an optimum climate of temperature, relative humidity, light levels, etc., in a pollution and pest free environment that achieves a satisfactory compromise between the long-term preservation of the objects and specimens, and accessibility to public and staff
- providing storage and display conditions to meet current preservation and conservation standards in order to maintain all collections in a state of high protection and security at all times
- carrying out conservation assessments of the collections prior to acquisition, loan and display, assessing objects on inward loan and regularly monitoring the condition of all specimens
- prioritising conservation requirements within the framework of resources available;
- achieving the highest standards of conservation through the use of professional, qualified staff and state of the art practice and materials (where possible any

conservation agencies contacted should be included on the Conservation register operated by the Institute of Conservation (ICON))

- documenting all conservation measures undertaken while objects and specimens are in our care
- working within an awareness that some treatments could prejudice the future research value of an object;
- promoting best practice in handling and care of objects, and minimising the risks to their long-term preservation

3. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We will take measures over and above those necessary for the day to day protection of collections, to provide emergency arrangements and facilities in the event of disastrous damage (as from flood, fire etc.). These measures include:

- provision of Disaster Response documentation as part of the Emergency Procedures Handbook, in all collection holding areas
- provision of appropriate training in disaster protection and response and providing suitable equipment and materials in Disaster stores at all sites
- identifying external bodies whose services may be used in specific emergency situations

4. CONCLUSION

In all matters regarding the acquisition and use of objects or specimens, we will consider that the care and conservation of the collections is paramount.